

BUDDHICA BRITANNICA

SERIES CONTINUA IV

**THE CULT OF
THE DEITY VAJRAKĪLA**

*According to the Texts of
the Northern Treasures Tradition of Tibet
(Byang-gter phur-ba)*

by

MARTIN J. BOORD

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Contents

Abbreviations	ix
List of Illustrations	xi
Acknowledgement	xiii
INTRODUCTION	1
rNying-ma-pa Literature	10
The Byang-gter Kila texts	13
Part One: The Northern Treasures	
CHAPTER ONE: The Byang-gter Tradition	21
Concealment of the treasures	22
Rediscovery of the hidden treasures	23
Maintaining the continuity of the tradition	28
Northern Treasures Studies in Tibet	31
Second State Oracle	33
The Byang-gter Tradition in Modern India	35
Part Two: The Kila	
CHAPTER TWO: Buddhist assimilation of the <i>kila</i>	39
Vedic antecedents	39
Architecture	40
<i>Vetāla</i> : ghouls at the limit of life and death	41
The <i>sūtras</i>	45
Dawn of the <i>kīlamantra</i> (<i>dhāraṇī</i>)	46
<i>Sīmābandha</i> in the lower Buddhist <i>tantras</i>	48
<i>Sīmābandha</i> in the <i>Anuttarayogatantra</i>	52
Other <i>kila</i> rituals	53
Chronological summary	55
Coda	68

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Contents

Abbreviations	ix
List of Illustrations	xi
Acknowledgement	xiii
INTRODUCTION	1
rNying-ma-pa Literature	10
The Byang-gter Kīla texts	13
Part One: The Northern Treasures	
CHAPTER ONE: The Byang-gter Tradition	21
Concealment of the treasures	22
Rediscovery of the hidden treasures	23
Maintaining the continuity of the tradition	28
Northern Treasures Studies in Tibet	31
Second State Oracle	33
The Byang-gter Tradition in Modern India	35
Part Two: The Kīla	
CHAPTER TWO: Buddhist assimilation of the <i>kīla</i>	39
Vedic antecedents	39
Architecture	40
<i>Vetāla</i> : ghouls at the limit of life and death	41
The <i>sūtras</i>	45
Dawn of the <i>kīlamantra</i> (<i>dhāraṇī</i>)	46
<i>Sīmābandha</i> in the lower Buddhist <i>tantras</i>	48
<i>Sīmābandha</i> in the <i>Anuttarayogatantra</i>	52
Other <i>kīla</i> rituals	53
Chronological summary	55
Coda	68

CHAPTER THREE: Iconography of the Kīla	71
High aspirations and low activities	71
Māra and Rudra: embodiments of evil	75
Conquest of evil and the birth of Vajrakīla	76
The nature of the conqueror	78
Manifestation in the form of symbols	79
Embodiments of paradox	87
The divine retinue	88
Variations on a theme	90
A handful of nails	91
CHAPTER FOUR: The religious chronicles	95
The texts	95
The revelation of <i>Mahāyoga</i>	95
Apportionment of the <i>sādhana</i>	99
Ācārya Padmasambhava	102
The Kīla <i>Vidyottama-tantra</i>	105
The Mahottarakīla cycle	111
Iconic scorpions and <i>kīlas</i> .	115
The transmission to Tibet	117
Later lineages of practice	120
Part Three: The Northern Treasures Kīla	
CHAPTER FIVE: The Byang-gter Vajrakīla <i>tantras</i>	129
CHAPTER SIX: Rites of empowerment	143
CHAPTER SEVEN: The Activities	163
CHAPTER EIGHT: Gaining the power of the Deity	177
CHAPTER NINE: Gaining control of the mischievous spirits	181
CHAPTER TEN: Displaying the Activities	197
Scattering	197
Burning	198
Pressing Down	204
CHAPTER ELEVEN: Activities for the benefit of <i>yogins</i>	207
CHAPTER TWELVE: Rites to make good deficiency in yogic praxis	215
CONCLUSION	223
APPENDIX I: Three collections of Byang-gter Vajrakīla literature	227
APPENDIX II: <i>The Black Razor Tantra</i> (Tibetan text)	239

BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Tibetan texts	253
Sanskrit texts	254
Western language publications	256
INDEX	265

Abbreviations

A, B, C	The three collections of Byang-gter Vajrakīla texts upon which the present study is based. See Appendix I.
BRT	<i>The Black Razor Tantra</i> . See Appendix II.
CIHTS	Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath.
BEFEO	<i>Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient</i> .
BHS	Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit.
GOS	Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Baroda.
GST	<i>Guhyasamāja-tantra</i> . ed., F. Fremantle, 1971.
HT	<i>Hevajra-tantra</i> . ed., D. L. Snellgrove, 1959.
IASWR	The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, New York.
IIBS	The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo.
JA	<i>Journal Asiatique</i> , Paris.
JASB	<i>Journal of Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i> .
JIABS	<i>Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies</i> , Madison.
JOI	<i>Journal of the Oriental Institute</i> , Baroda.
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i> , London.
LTWA	The Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamsala.
MCB	<i>Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques</i> .
MLB	Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi.
MMK	<i>Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa</i> . ed., G. Sastri, 1925.
NGB	<i>rNying-ma'i rgyud-'bum</i> . Reproduced from a manuscript preserved at gTing-skyes dgon-pa-byang monastery, Thimbu. Published in 36 vols., 1973–1975. Catalogue by E. Kaneko, Tokyo, 1982.
NGMPP	Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project. Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

- NSTB *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism; its Fundamentals and History* by 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, trans. & annot. by G. Dorje & M. Kapstein, 2 vols., London, 1991.
- OUP Oxford University Press.
- P Peking *bKa' 'gyur* and *bsTan 'gyur*. Catalogue and Index of the Tibetan *Tripitaka* kept in the library of Otani University, Kyoto, ed., D. T. Suzuki. Suzuki Research Foundation, Tokyo, 1962.
- PTS Pali Text Society, London.
- RAS Royal Asiatic Society, London.
- RKP Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.
- SBB Sacred Books of the Buddhists, London.
- SBE Sacred Books of the East, gen. ed., Max Müller, Oxford.
- SDPT *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra*. ed., T. Skorupski, Delhi, 1983.
- SOAS School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London.
- STTS *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*. eds., L. Chandra & D. L. Snellgrove, Delhi, 1987.
- SUNY The State University of New York.
- T Taisho edition of the Chinese *Tripitaka*, Taisho Issaikyo, ed., Takakusu Junjoro & Watanabe Kaigyoku, Tokyo, 1924–1929.
- TPS *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, G. Tucci, Rome, 1949.
- VKMK *Vajrakīlamūlatantrakhanda* (P 78).
- WZKSA *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, Wien.
- ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Wiesbaden.

List of Illustrations

gTer-ston Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem (© Gega Lama)	20
The deity Vajrakīla (©Jamyang)	38
<i>Kilamudrā</i> (© A.Snodgrass)	48
Black hat sorcerer	128
Pit for the destruction of enemies	186
Altar for the wrathful fire rite	199
Dragging forth the enemy	251

Introduction

The present work surveys the cult of the wrathful deity Vajrakīla as represented by the literature and living tradition of the Northern Treasures (Byang-gter) school of Tibetan Buddhism. Divided into three parts, it focuses its attention, in turn, upon the Byang-gter (Part One), the *kīla* (Part Two) and the Byang-gter Kīla cult (Part Three).

Part One: the Northern Treasures

The first part seeks to trace the origin and development of the Northern Treasures tradition and to indicate its vitality and relevance as a school of spiritual development within the modern world. Much of the information for this section is derived from Tibetan hagiographies dealing with the lineage of masters through whom the tradition has been transmitted, as well as from various notes and references to be found in the works of western scholars. The latter works are mainly short papers on diverse topics, for this tradition until now has not been the subject of any major research.

The Byang-gter is concerned exclusively with the esoteric tenets of Vajrayāna Buddhism and thus its documentary records consist of largely psychological narrative replete with religious symbolism, a stream of apparently miraculous events brought about by wonder-working sages (*siddha*). It claims a place within the more general fabric of Buddhism by recognizing each of its principal protagonists as the reincarnation of an earlier historical personality of acknowledged religious significance,¹ the purpose of each rebirth being to carry on the work begun in a former life (sometimes several centuries earlier) on a deeper, more esoteric, level. These reincarnations, moreover, are said to have been prophesied by the earlier Buddhist masters and thus the importance of their roles in the grand design of Buddhist history is placed beyond dispute among the faithful. We find the ‘treasures’ of this school to consist of an admixture of extraordinarily profound and subtle methods of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* (yogic preoccupations of the earliest Buddhists, brought here to their apogee in the teachings of *Atiyoga*²) with magical rites of every weird and wonderful sort, so beloved of the medieval Indian *siddha* tradition.

According to the Byang-gter chronicles, cultic texts and practices concerning the wrathful deity Vajrakīla were among the many teachings transmitted to Tibetan devotees in the eighth century by the visiting Indian *siddha* Padmasambhava.³ A number of these esoteric

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1. For a study of the rNying-ma *gter ma* tradition see Tulku Thondup, *Hidden Teachings of Tibet*.
 2. See Samten Karmay, *The Great Perfection, passim*.
 3. In the view of the Byang-gter tradition, the three principal recipients of these Kīla *upadeśa* were the king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, the princess Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal and the *yogin* sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms.

teachings, said to consist of sacred texts from India and the *guru*'s oral instructions concerning them, were specifically entrusted to the *yogin* sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms before being sealed up in a casket, together with a vast quantity of other material, and hidden away for several hundred years in a cave in La-stod-byang to the north of the Brahmaputra river. When they were eventually rediscovered and revealed to the world in 1366, this particular collection of teachings became famous as 'The Northern Treasures' and the doctrines of Vajrakīla found among them were widely acclaimed as being of paramount importance.

As knowledge of the Byang-gter spread throughout Tibet, it gradually became established as a major religious system with over fifty monasteries propagating its teachings, chief among which was the mother monastery of rDo-rje-brag. Monks of this seminary, properly trained in its rituals, have always been highly prized for their religious expertise. One such monk, for example, was invariably required in the sKu-lnga shrine in the Jo-khang in Lhasa, another at the lHa-mo-khang and eight in the mGon-khang at the base of the Potala palace engaged in the worship of Mahākāla. Four monks from rDo-rje-brag annually performed the 'Gong po ar gtad ritual for the suppression of demons at the Lhasa Rigs-gsum shrine and the oracle of dGa'-gdong was regularly consulted to divine the whereabouts of deceased lamas. The chapter concludes with a brief note on the Byang-gter monks and monasteries now established among the Tibetan refugee population of Northern India.

Part Two: the history and form of the vajra spike

The second part of this study consists of three chapters. In the first of these (Chapter Two) I have attempted to clarify the cultural milieu out of which the Kīla deity arose. To this end I have looked at the social context as well as the religious and have drawn upon both historical and mythological sources.

With regard to the name 'Vajrakīla', *vajra* as a prefix is almost ubiquitous within the Buddhist *tantra*. Originally meaning 'the hard or mighty one' and referring in particular to the thunderbolt as a weapon of Indra, it subsequently became so intimately associated with the development of tantric ideas in Buddhism that the entire system of practice came to be known as the Vajrayāna or *Vajra Vehicle*. Indeed, as a symbol within the Buddhist *tantra* it is as pregnant with meaning as the very texts themselves. Characterized as 'unbreakable' (*abhedyā*) and 'indivisible' (*acchedyā*), the term may be said to represent nothing less than the full enlightenment of the *Samyaksambuddha* who himself came to be referred to as Vajradhara (He who holds the *vajra*). The Sanskrit word *kīla* means 'nail', 'peg' or 'spike' and thus Vajrakīla may be taken to mean "the unassailable spike" or, on a higher level, "(He who is) the nail of supreme enlightenment".

The roots of *kīla* mythology, however, may lie buried deep within the pre-Buddhist religion of ancient India where, in the *Ṛgveda*, the story is told of the god Indra who slew the demon Vṛtra.⁴ It is said that at that time, Indra stabilized the earth and propped up the

4. The name Vṛtra derives from the root *vṛ* with the sense of "to surround, enclose, obstruct". Hence the noun *vṛtra* means restrainer, enemy or hostile host. It also stands as "the name of the Vedic personification of an imaginary malignant influence or demon of darkness and drought supposed to take possession of the clouds, causing them to obstruct the clearness of the sky and keep back

heavens and thus, at the outset, we have clearly discernable indications of a path along which a humble wooden stake might travel so as eventually to become deified as a terrifying god of awesome power, one by whom all demons are vanquished.

The idea of stabilizing the earth by pinning it down with a *kīla* was taken up by architects and priests who projected a magical function onto the wooden pegs employed by them in the process of marking out a plot of ground chosen as the site for a temple or other building. Since Buddhists also used wooden pegs and lengths of string to mark out the ground plan of a *stūpa* or *vihāra*, they naturally enough also adopted the concept of those pegs as magically potent items. In particular, the pegs struck into the four corners of the site or around its periphery were regarded as establishing a protective boundary (*rakṣācakra*) capable of repelling all harm.⁵ This idea may have been established in Buddhist practice at a remarkably early period because literary evidence for the use of the *kīla* as a magical implement is to be found in the *dhāraṇīs*, some of which conceivably date right back to the third or fourth centuries BC.

The earliest extant pegs of this type in which the form of the *kīla* unambiguously reflects its identification with a wrathful divinity, are believed to have been carved in the first century BC. They were discovered by the archeologist and explorer Sir Marc Aurel Stein among the debris associated with the ancient watchtowers situated at the southwest extremity of the frontier defence system to the north of Tun-huang. In the detailed reports of his expeditions, Stein describes a watchtower (which he identifies as T.VI.b) and the artifacts discovered there, among which are a number of *kīlas* to which were originally attached loops of string. He describes these items as resembling tent pegs and exhibiting evident signs of having been pegged into the ground and yet “certainly not strong enough to have served as real tent pegs”. Similar finds were made at the watchtowers T.VI.c and T.VIII. Some of these pegs bore Chinese inscriptions that could only make sense if read as personal names but no indication is given as to whether they might be the personal names of men or gods. The evidence put forward by Stein for dating these finds to the first century BC seems overwhelming.⁶

The theme of the apotropaic spike, having come to the surface in the early *dhāraṇīs*, was subsequently developed extensively within the *Kriyā-* and *Yogatantra* of the later periods. Throughout this time spikes came to be employed increasingly in rituals of mundane sorcery

the waters”. M. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. We shall meet with the *kīla* as an implement employed in the magical control of weather below, Chapter Two.

5. All that has a terrible aspect (*ghora*) is traditionally regarded in India as *vighna*; an impediment, obstacle, interruption, hurdle, difficulty or trouble. Indeed, the vast size of the problem of *vighna* led to its being associated with the boundary or circumference which, it is said, the Vedic Prajāpati finally overcame by taking control of the centre (an inconceivable subtlety totally devoid of extension) so that “the very root of (demonic) arrogance and conceit, viz. the vast size, ceased to have any meaning”. V. S. Agrawala, “The Meaning of Gaṇapati”, 1–4. So, too, we will observe throughout this study that the *kīla* that protects the circumference is also the instrument through which the centre is conquered.
6. M. A. Stein, *Serindia*. Stein’s description of the watchtower and his finds is to be found in vol. III, 644–51, and the *kīlas* themselves are depicted in plate LII (vol. IV). More recent photographs of two of those *kīlas*, currently housed in the British Museum, are to be seen in R. Whitfield & A. Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Chinese Art from the Silk Route*, 174.

which seem to have posed no moral dilemma for their perpetrators even within a Buddhist context.

Although the *mantra* of Vajrakīla is to be found in the fundamental *Yogatantra* STTS and, as pointed out by authorities on tantric practice, “the *mantra* is the god”, the absolute deification of the sacred spike and its transformation into an awesome god of terrible wrath seems not to have been finally completed until the period of the *Anuttarayogatantra*. By this time the spike that brought death and destruction to its opponents came also to be regarded as the harbinger of liberation, a bestower of *nirvāṇa*. As a symbol of absolute stability, the paradoxical nature of the magic spike is expressed in the religious myth and ritual of the deity which everywhere depicts chaos as the natural condition of *samsāra*. The *maṇḍala* of the deified spike is a bloody charnel ground in the centre of which dwells the god in a palace of skulls, astride a throne of demonic corpses. His sanguinary sport (*līlā*) is the archetype of violent behaviour, leading to a distinct antinomian trend in the religious ideals of his worshippers.

Within the sacred texts of both this deity and others like him, it is said that the function of ‘wrathful compassion’ is to kill sentient beings and thus apparently to violate one of the primary ethical precepts of Buddhism. The question naturally arises: Is this vile injunction to be taken literally, or is it symbolic? In fact, it is to be taken both ways. The major commentary on the *Kālacakra-tantra* says that provisionally (*neyārtha*) “a Buddha may kill those who are really committing the five immediacies, who break their vows, and who damage the teaching. But a *mantrin* who has not attained the five special knowledges (*abhijñā*) should not perform such fearful actions.” On the definitive level (*nītārtha*), however, killing refers to the yogic practice of holding the semen at the top of the head.⁷

Klong-chen-pa in his commentary on the *Guhyagarbha-tantra* says that the skilful *yogin* should kill wrongdoers and release them into an exalted realm, thus saving them from the certainty of rebirth in limitless evil existences. The rite itself has two main parts (1) destruction of the evil body, speech and mind and (2) guiding the consciousness of the deceased to a ‘Pure Realm’ (*Buddhakṣetra*). There is no hatred in the rite, only an altruistic mind of awareness and compassion.⁸ As it says in the *Samvarodaya-tantra*, “Ah! Marvellous is the rite of killing. It kills the transmigration which is only imagination. It does not kill the mind recognizing suchness (*tathatā*, the real state of things).”⁹ Finally, Śubhakarasiṃha says that ‘killing’ expresses the basic concept of the vow to cut away the life of all beings, where ‘life’ means ‘beginningless ignorance and passion’ (*kleśa*).¹⁰

The various biographies of those whose practised this magical art of slaying, however, provide us with evidence of occasional, all too human, lapses from such noble altruism. Mortal nature is such that there have inevitably arisen in the past certain self-centred, power-hungry *yogins* who have been tempted to turn this philanthropic ‘white magic’ into ‘black’ for their own nefarious purposes. In the chronicles of the Byang-gter, for example, is

7. M. Brodido, “Killing, Lying, Stealing and Adultery: A Problem of Interpretation in the Tantras”, 73.

8. G. Dorje, *The Guhyagarbha-tantra*, 918.

9. S. Tsuda, *The Samvarodaya-tantra*, 279.

10. A. Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Maṇḍalas in Shingon Buddhism*, 481.

recounted the story of combative sorcery between Lang-lab and the translator of Rva which is told below in Chapter Four.

Following the introduction of these ideas to Tibet, the *kīla* as a weapon of ritual magic became immensely popular among both Buddhist and Bon-po; both within the Kila cult in which the deity Vajrakīla is worshipped, and independent of that cult.

To date there have been several western studies published concerned with the ritual *kīla* and the Kila cult, although none of them could be called in any way major. The first book to be published was by John Huntingdon (*The Phur-pa; Tibetan Ritual Daggers*. Ascona, 1975) in which a number of ritual *kīlas* are described in terms of length, weight, material of manufacture, etc. It contains almost nothing that has any bearing on the present research.

The second book is by Thomas Marcotty (*Dagger Blessing: The Tibetan Phurba Cult: Reflections and Materials*. Delhi, 1987) in which more is said concerning the rituals in which *kīlas* are symbolically employed. This book also presents translated excerpts from four Tibetan texts, including the canonical *Vajramantrabhīrusandhi-mūlatantra* (P.467) but is, unfortunately, highly subjective in nature and riddled with unwarranted and spurious assertions. Its many shortcomings have been adequately brought to light by Cathy Cantwell in her review for the *Tibet Journal*, 1989, 61–4.

Many other books have carried passing references to either the deity Vajrakīla or to symbolic *kīlas* as encountered in iconography or ritual, foremost among which is the classic *Oracles and Demons of Tibet* by René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz. The large number of instances cited in this text clearly demonstrates the ubiquity of the ritual *kīla* as a magic weapon throughout the entire realm of Tibetan tantrism, especially following the importation from India of the cult of Vajrakīla.

Several papers have also been published in academic journals and the like which have a bearing on our topic. One of the most interesting of these is the study by Bischoff and Hartman¹¹ on the manuscript from Tun-huang listed as ‘Pelliot tibétain 44’. This is said to be “possibly the oldest document in existence referring to Padmasambhava” and is considered by Prof. Tucci as a major proof of the *siddha*’s historicity. Its theme is the summoning of the Kīla *Vidyottama-tantra* from Nālandā University to the Asura cave in Nepal. In their introduction to the text, the translators deal with the problem of the widespread assertion in Tibetan literature that the Sanskrit term for *phur-ba* is *kīlaya* (with or without a long *i*) when all dictionaries and Sanskrit works agree the word to be *kīla* (or *kīlaka*). I suppose this to result from an indiscriminate use by Tibetans of the dative singular *kīlāya*. This form would have been familiar to them in the simple salutation *namo vajrakīlāya* (homage to Vajrakīla) from which it could easily be assumed by those unfamiliar with the technicalities of Sanskrit that the name of the deity is Vajrakīlāya instead of Vajrakīla. It should also be noted that the term (*vajra*)*kīlaya* is frequently found in Sanskrit texts (as well as in virtually every *kīlamantra*) legitimately used as the denominative verb ‘to spike’, ‘transfix’, ‘nail down’, etc.

11. F. A. Bischoff & C. Hartman, “Padmasambhava’s Invention of the Phur-bu”, 11–28.

John Huntingdon made the assumption that the precursor of Vajrakīla was Mahākāla.¹² Such an identification appears quite plausible for Mahākāla is, indeed, one of the earliest wrathful deities to become clearly defined in the Vajrayāna pantheon and among his many epithets and guises he is widely renowned as the destroyer of obstructors and misleaders,¹³ a role subsequently taken up by Vajrakīla. Mahākāla is, of course, a deity known to both the Buddhists and Hindus and in the opening chapter of the Hindu *Uddīśa-tantra* there is given a rite for the destruction of an enemy which involves burying “a terrible pin made of copper” in the chest of his effigy. Sitting on a seat of tiger skin, the *yogin* should mutter the *mantra* “OM Honour to the Lord Mahākāla whose lustre is equal to the fire of destruction; Liquidate liquidate, destroy destroy this enemy of mine called So-and-so; HŪM PHAṬ SVĀHA”.¹⁴ Such a procedure differs in no way from its Buddhist counterparts. There is, furthermore, an attested Buddhist form of Mahākāla with *kīla* legs which was worshipped in Khotan,¹⁵ a place known to have accepted early on the notion of the *kīla* as a god¹⁶ and culturally connected via the ‘silk route’ with those Central Asian finds of Sir Aurel Stein.

There is also the widespread opinion that ritual *kīla* evolved to a certain extent from tent pegs¹⁷ and it is certainly true to say that tent pegs are viewed by the *yogin* as *kīlas*.¹⁸ In rites of meditation, *kīlas* are employed to effect a protective tent (*pañjara*) around an area that is to be kept ritually pure¹⁹ and the special form of Mahākāla with the *kīla* feet is known as ‘the Lord of the Tent’ (Pañjaranātha). That god also has *garuḍa* wings and other details of iconography that match exactly those of the later Vajrakīla. On the face of it, therefore, one might suppose Huntingdon’s theory of the identity of Mahākāla and Vajrakīla to be correct. In Chapter Two of the present work, however, I have drawn together several strands of literary evidence that clearly reveal not Mahākāla but Amṛtakuṇḍalin (a god also associated with the protection of boundaries) to be the precursor of Vajrakīla.

This identification of Amṛtakuṇḍalin with Vajrakīla remains valid even in the Byang-gter literature of a much later period. The short Byang-gter text *Phur pa’i dam can gnad rem*, for example, gives proper names to the *Kīlas* of the three families: Buddhakīla is called Yamāntaka, Padmakīla is Hayagrīva and Vajrakīla is Amṛtakuṇḍalin.²⁰ This grouping of three families (*kula*) belongs to the system of *Kriyātantra*²¹ and therefore indicates an early provenance for this material said to have been unearthed in 1366. Such primitive features are widespread in the Byang-gter literature and I see no reason to doubt that much of it could indeed have been brought to Tibet from India in the eighth century AD.

The Byang-gter text *sGrub thabs rgyun khyer* exemplifies the manner in which the *yogin* mystically identifies himself with the deity Vajrakīla as he takes the ritual nail into his hands.

12. J.C. Huntingdon, *The Phur-pa*, 32.

13. More than one dozen rites of Mahākāla are to be found in the *Sādhanamālā*.

14. T. Goudriaan & S. Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature*, 120.

15. René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, 51.

16. R. E. Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts Concerning Khotan*, 46–7.

17. P. Pal, *Art of Tibet*, 244 *passim*.

18. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, 324.

19. J. Hopkins, *The Yoga of Tibet*, 98–100.

20. C8, 99.

21. F.D Lessing & A. Wayman, *Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems*, 103.

Thinking of himself as the single-faced, two-armed god with the lower half of his body in the form of a triple-edged spike blazing in a mass of fire, the *yogin* blesses the ritual *kīla* by contemplating his right hand as the *maṇḍala* of the sun from which arise the *bījas* of the Five Tathāgatas and his left hand as the *maṇḍala* of the moon emanating the *bījas* of their five consorts. Then, as his hands are brought together with *mantras*, the male and female Buddhas unite and the *bodhicitta* of their union flows into the *kīla*. Rolling it between his palms, the *yogin* exhorts the *kīla* to fulfil the four magical acts. He places the deity Hūmkāra on the top of the spike and Mahābala at its lower tip. Upon the upper ‘vast knot’ he places the *krodha* kings of the four cardinal quarters and the kings of the intermediate directions are installed within its lower knot. Then, as the *yogin* rolls the empowered spike between the palms of his hands, he recites the *mantra* and simultaneously blesses the entire *traidhātuka* with ‘liberation’.²²

Chapter Three of the present work discusses the iconographic details of the principal *kīla* deities in the retinue of the supremely wrathful Vajrakīla.

The ‘history’ of the *Vajrakīla-tantra* as described in cultic documents is outlined in Chapter Four. Although the several short Tibetan texts²³ (*lo rgyus*, ‘chronicles’) dealing with this subject may not be regarded as historical works according to our own definition of the term (they tell us, for example, that the doctrines of Vajrakīla were once taught in a cremation ground by a gigantic iron scorpion with nine heads), they nevertheless throw considerable light upon the subject. According to these traditional accounts the canon of Vajrakīla arose in a previous aeon at a time when the Buddhas felt impelled to subdue the arch-demon Rudra.

The myth of the subjugation of Rudra in fact constitutes the central theme of the entire genre of wrathful *tantra* of *Mahāyoga*. In the light of comparative literature and iconography, this myth may be regarded as indicative of the final formulation of *Mahāyoga* tenets (including the cycle of teachings of Vajrakīla) as a conscious development designed to present a direct challenge to the perceived evils of the growing cult of Śaiva (Rudra) tantrism.²⁴ The Buddhist view, however, is that the appearance of Rudra in the world is a skilful expedient (*upāya*) for the sake of those to be converted.²⁵

Having been taught among the gods and *nāgas*, the doctrines of Vajrakīla were transmitted to the human realm where they were spread in India by Indrabhūti, Dhanasamskṛta, Śṛisimha, Prabhahasti and an unnamed *kāpālika* brahmin. In Nepal they were taught by Śilamañju and Śākyadevī. Śilamañju is said to have taught a prostitute by the name of Śānti who, in her turn, transmitted the doctrines to Guṇapatala (a prince of Nepal) so that they then became widely known in that country²⁶ and Śākyadevī is said to have

22. A29, 199–200.

23. As far as possible for this section I have drawn upon texts of the Northern Treasures tradition but, in fact, the ‘history’ of the deity as outlined here is broadly accepted (discounting endless variations of detail) by followers of all Vajrakīla lineages in Tibet.

24. An idea currently being investigated by Robert Mayer (SOAS) and Alexis Sanderson (Oxford).

25. Explained in detail by Klong-chen-pa in his commentary to the *Guhyagarbha-tantra*, XV.

26. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa'i chos 'byung*, 171. Nepalese *kīla* rituals and the spread in that country of the Kīla cult have, as yet, been inadequately studied. This lamentable situation will surely change as further Nepalese manuscripts are brought to light.

taught them to Dharmakośa by whom they were subsequently propagated throughout Oḍḍiyāna.²⁷ The doctrines are also said to have been taught in Khotan by Vairocana²⁸ and in Tibet by Padmasambhava, Vairocana and Vimalamitra. Since one of the stated aims of the Kīla doctrines is to provide a method for the subjugation of “all enemies and obstructors”, the cult was readily able to assimilate troublesome local gods and demons wherever it spread. In particular, Padmasambhava is said to have employed the occult power of Vajrakīla to tame the spirits of the Himalayan regions on his journey to Tibet and convert them all to defenders of the Buddhist faith.

Part Two concludes with the observation that Indian traditions of Vajrakīla must have reached their peak in the early eighth century AD, just when the cult was transmitted to Tibet. In Tibet, subsequently, a large number of Vajrakīla lineages became firmly established while in India worship of the deity seems to have been abandoned.

Part Three: the Byang-gter Kīla

The primary sources for this entire study are three collections of Byang-gter Kīla texts made available in recent years under the American Library of Congress PL480 acquisition scheme.

(A) The first of these collections, the *Phur pa dril sgrub*, was published in Leh in 1973 as volume 75 of the *Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod* series and consists of manuscripts from the libraries of Padma Chos-ldan and sTag-lung-tse-sprul. From its short preface we learn that the Byang-gter tradition contains three cycles of teachings related to Vajrakīla. The largest (*rgyas pa*) is the Che-mchog (Mahottara) cycle in fifteen sections,²⁹ the medium (*'bring po*) is the sPu-gri (*Kṣura) cycle and the shortest (*bsdus pa*) is the Drag-sngags (Mantrabhīru).³⁰ The *Dril sgrub* is a combination of these three cycles with the proper name *Byang gter phur pa lugs gsum gcig tu dril ba'i chos skor*, “the religious cycle of the three traditions of Northern Treasures Kīla rolled into one”. This name acts as a pun in Tibetan because Kīla meditation is accompanied by the ritual act of rolling (*'dril ba*) a symbolic nail between the palms of the hands. The collection itself comprises 364 folios (727 pages).

(B) The second collection, in two volumes, was published in Dalhousie in 1977 under the name *Phur-pa Texts of the Byang-gter Tradition*. The title page says that it is a reproduction of a rare collection of manuscripts held in the Tibetan Library at Dharamsala. Its contents also encompass the three cycles listed above but, in 614 folios, it is a much larger collection than either A or C.

(C) The third collection was published in Darjeeling in 1984 with the title *Byang gter phur pa'i skor*. The reproduction of a manuscript on 288 folios belonging to Yol-mo bla-ma rdo-rje, it is similar in scope to the others.

27. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa'i chos 'byung*, 170.

28. Vairocana is held to have learned the doctrines of Vajrakīla in India from Śrīsiṃha. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 25.

29. In fact, however, only thirteen of these fifteen sections are to be found in the currently available Byang-gter literature as demonstrated, below, in this Introduction.

30. Of these three divisions, it would appear that the Mahottara cycle is unique to the Byang-gter school, the black Kṣura and Mantrabhīru cycles being the common property of all Kīla lineages (each of which, however, has its own texts).

The title of every text contained in these three collections is listed together with its page number in Appendix I of the present work, thus facilitating reference to these original sources. The texts themselves are referred to throughout the present book by their sequence numbers: A1, A2, etc. All three collections include original material said to have come from the treasure trove of Zang-zang lha-brag, unearthed by the revealer Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem in the fourteenth century, as well as commentarial material, liturgical arrangements and the independent compositions of various historical holders of the lineage. The texts vary in length from those that merely cover a single side of a single folio to those that extend to over one hundred sides (50 folios). It is invariably the original *gter ma* material that is brief, the later compilations and commentaries tending to be more expansive. The *gter ma* material consists of a few texts of supposedly Indic origin not found elsewhere, as well as a large number of esoteric teachings on the Vajrakīla system said to have been taught by Padmasambhava to a select few among his close disciples. From the colophons of these texts, it would appear that Padmasambhava gave many of the teachings in Bhutan and that transcripts were also hidden there.

There are only two root *tantras*³¹ at the heart of all this material, neither one of which is accompanied by any commentary. This would seem to reflect their transmission through a lineage more concerned with meditative experience and mystic praxis than philosophical theory.³² The overwhelming mass of material in the collections is devoted to *sādhana* and ritual, and there are also several chronicles that place these rituals within a more or less mythological context. These consist of both original *gter ma* texts and later elaborations.

Authors of the latter texts range from the famous to the obscure. The most illustrious name, perhaps, is that of the Fifth Dalai Lama whose own recently published *Secret Visions* (Samten Karmay, London, 1988) show him to be a firm believer in the power of the ritual *kīla*. The Fifth Dalai Lama is also shown in Eva Dargyay (*The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet*, 173) to hold the opinion that the Byang-gter system is the most reliable of all the rNying-ma-pa schools. Better represented, however, is his disciple Padma 'phrin-las (1641–1718), traditionally regarded as the fourth incarnation of the Byang-gter's founder and widely acknowledged as the greatest scholar in the history of this tradition.

All the texts are written in headless (*dbu med*) script with only a couple of exceptions, both of which are found in collection A. A45 is a short xylographed *sādhana* on six folios and A48 is a hand written ritual for turning away evil, calligraphed in *dbu can* on twenty-four folios. All the other texts abound with shorthand abbreviations as well as orthographic and grammatical irregularities so that deciphering and editing them has been a major task. The handwriting of collections A and B is quite similar (although not uniform throughout) and seems to conform to a type categorized by John Stevens as “originated by Vairocana the

31. These are the BRT on seven folios listed as A2, B31 & C19, and the *Vajrakīlacittaguhyakāya-tantra* on ten folios found at A3, B10 & C1. A31 & C13 are said to be the twenty-first chapter of a lost *tantra* called *Phur pa me lce'i 'phreng ba*.

32. Tāranātha claims that tantric adepts, in general, had no interest in philosophical speculation and the only religious works they composed were “great and small *sādhana*s and empowerments as well as major and minor texts concerning *saṃpannakrama*. The *siddhas* themselves did not speak at all about commentaries and explanatory works ...” D. Templeman, *Tāranātha's Life of Kṛṣṇācārya*, 45.

translator”.³³ Collection C is not very different but I found it the most difficult to read. My chief native informant (Prof. C.R. Lama of Viśvabharati University, West Bengal) describes the handwriting of A and B as “East Tibetan style” and I suppose C to have been written in Nepal (Yol-mo) where the Byang-gter tradition has long been established.³⁴ A particular problem, of course, is presented by the *mantras* with which this kind of tantric literature is inevitably saturated. After so many centuries in isolation from their Indian matrix, these *mantras* which may originally have been encoded in formal Sanskrit interspersed with various vernacular phrases and nomenclature as well as the usual non-semantic *bījas* and expletives, are found within the manuscripts rendered more or less unintelligible in Tibetanized forms. Despite (or, in some cases, because of) the repetition of the most salient *mantras* in several texts which present us with an enormous number of variants from which to choose, a ‘correct’ reading could only be hoped for in a minority of the more obvious cases.

What is surprising about these three collections is that they contain so little in common. Each of them was once in the possession of an initiate who presumably considered his own collection complete, or at least sufficiently so for his purposes. Since they had never before been published, perhaps no-one until now has been aware of just how much material exists in this tradition. One cannot help but wonder whether more material has yet to come to light as refugee lamas of the Byang-gter tradition sort through their own manuscript holdings and compare their private collections with the three now made public.

rNying-ma-pa literature

Only one of our source materials attempts to place the Northern Treasures Kīla doctrines within the context of rNying-ma sacred literature as a whole and that is B4, the *Nor bu'i do shal* (‘Necklace of Gems’), in seventeen folios by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. From the colophons of his several commentarial and liturgical works to be found in collections B and C, it is evident that this lama was a student of Rig-'dzin tshe-dbang nor-bu and a teacher of Chos-kyi dbang-phyug. Since the former died in 1755 and the latter was born in 1775,³⁵ we may confidently place this author in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The text of his that concerns us here was composed as an introduction to the doctrines of Vajrakīla for a group of his disciples about to become initiated into the cult. The author states at the outset his belief that a single Vajrayāna empowerment encompasses within itself every aspect of the path and goal. “For those who cannot grasp this immensity within a single *maṇḍala*”, however, he says that the Buddha taught the two vehicles known as ‘the causal vehicle of

33. J. Stevens, *Sacred Calligraphy of the East*, 75.

34. Yol-mo in northeast Nepal (marked on maps as Helambu) is one of the seven ‘hidden lands’ (*sbas yul*) deemed preeminantly suitable as sites for meditational retreat, a “place where the *Dharma* will flourish after its disappearance in Tibet”. G. Clarke, “A Helambu History”, 7. See also, 'Gu ru'i ga'u bdun ma: *A Collection of Prophecies of Guru Padmasambhava on the Location of the various Treasure caches Concealed for Future Revelations and the Concealed Lands Destined for Future gTer-ston to Reveal*, Delhi, 1983. For a modern ethnographic account of life in that region see G. Clarke, “Lama and Tamang in Yolmo”. In his “A Helambu History” Clarke says (p. 11) that the main Byang-gter temple in that region is brTsu-ri dgon (Temple of the Curved Antelope Horn), founded by Śākya bzang-po.

35. Dates supplied by the publishers of collection B.

dialectics' (*mtshan nyid rgyu yi theg pa*) and 'the resultant vajra vehicle' ('*bras bu rdo rje'i theg pa*). The teachings of the former being contained within the *sūtras* and those of the latter within the *tantras*.³⁶

The various *sūtras* and *tantras* followed by the rNying-ma-pa were translated into Tibetan from the languages of India, China and Central Asia, from the reign of Srong-btsan sgampo (629–710 AD) up until the last of the early translators, Smṛtījñāna, in the tenth century.³⁷ Later, however, when the *bKa' 'gyur* and *bsTan 'gyur* were compiled as canons of sacred literature for the followers of the gSar-ma traditions, many of the early *tantras* were excluded on the premise that no Sanskrit original could be found as verification of authenticity. As a consequence, many followers of the New Translation schools (*gsar lugs*) tended to reject the rNying-ma texts as unrepresentative of the true teachings of the Buddha. Followers of the Old Translation schools, however, embrace all the texts of the *bKa' 'gyur* and *bsTan 'gyur* and study them in the monasteries although the philosophical viewpoints of the old and new traditions often diverge from one another quite radically.

'Phrin-las bdud-'joms continues his explanation by saying that the two *yānas* known as 'the vehicle of cause' and 'the vehicle of result' may, alternatively, be considered under three rubrics as 'the vehicle which controls the source of suffering' (*kun 'byung 'dran pa'i theg pa*), 'the vehicle of the outer *tantras* of austere awareness' (*phyi dka' thub rig pa'i rgyud kyi theg pa*) and 'the vehicle of overpowering means' (*dbang bsgyur thabs kyi theg pa*).³⁸ Each of these three *yānas* has three divisions and thus there are the nine vehicles of the 1) *Śrāvaka*, 2) *Pratyekabuddha*, and 3) *Bodhisattva* (followers of the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna *sūtras* that control the source of suffering through renunciation, wisdom and compassion), 4) *Kriyātantra*, 5) *Ubhayatantra*, and 6) *Yogatantra* (which, by means of austere awareness, gradually transform the universe and its inhabitants into a sacred *maṇḍala* populated with deities), 7) *Mahāyogatantra*, 8) *Anuyogatantra*, and 9) *Atiyogatantra* (which, respectively, emphasize the skilful means of the *utpattikrama*, the discriminative awareness of the *saṃpannakrama* and the pristine cognition free of duality that is the great perfection of the final result).

'Phrin-las bdud-'joms then informs us that, within this ninefold scheme, the canon of Vajrakīla embodies the skilful means (*upāya*) of the *Anuttarayogatantra*, a general term for the teachings of the seventh, eighth and ninth *yānas*.³⁹ Generally in rNying-ma literature these three are known as 'the inner *tantras*' within which category the doctrines of Vajrakīla

36. B4, 176.

37. It is said that during the time of persecution of Buddhism in Tibet in the early ninth century by king Glang dar-ma, lay tantric *yogins* were spared the excesses of ill treatment suffered by their monastic brethren because the king had been frightened by demonstrations of occult power displayed to him by the *kīla-siddha* Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. T. Thondup, *The Tantric Tradition of the Nyingmapa*, 153. gZhon-nu-dpal comments that those tantric adepts hid away the *śāstras* and *sūtras* that had been translated before the time of Ral-pa-can and it is thanks to them that the early doctrines survived the ensuing years of chaos between 901 and 973 AD. G. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 60–1.

38. These three divisions are said to have been outlined in the *Anuyoga* text *sPyi mdo dgongs pa'i 'dus pa* and elaborated by teachers in the sMin-grol-gling tradition. G. Dorje, *The Guhyagarbhatantra*, 18.

39. B4, 176–7.

mostly pertain to *Mahāyoga*.⁴⁰ They are classified as ‘*tantras* of skilful means’ because of their strong bias towards enlightened activity (*’phrin las*) but this is not to say that they lack the view of transcendental wisdom (*prajñā*). As well as the *Anuyoga* techniques discussed below in Chapter Eight, Kīla literature is thoroughly pervaded by the viewpoint and terminology of *Atiyoga* (the system of rDzogs-chen)⁴¹ and the Byang-gter cycle even contains two *sādhanas* (A32 & A35) that purport to have been taught by Śrīsimha, one of the greatest luminaries of the *Atiyoga* tradition.⁴² It should be noted, however, that in at least one early *Atiyoga* document, the word *kīla* is used disparagingly as an indicator of only the relative aspects of Buddhist religious practice: the accumulation of merit, contemplation and the purification of *samsāric* traces.⁴³ ’Phrin-las bdud-’joms goes on to say:

“Furthermore, in this country of Tibet having both early and later transmissions of the doctrine, especially with regard to the transmissions of secret *mantra*, it is the early transmission of the Vajrayāna that has the two great systems of *bka’ ma* and *gter ma*. Now within this system, the tantric doctrines of Vajrakīla under consideration here are classified as *gter ma* because they were taken out of hiding during a later period.”⁴⁴

Thus, with regard to the transmission of the doctrines, the received texts (*bka’ ma*) of the rNying-ma school are divided into three categories: *rGyal ba’i dgongs brgyud* (“intentional lineage of the *Jina*”), *Rig ’dzin brda’ brgyud* (“symbolic lineage of the *vidyādhara*”) and *Gang zag snyan brgyud* (“aural lineage of mundane individuals”). The discovered texts (*gter ma*) moreover, have three additional lineages called *bKa’ babs lung bstan brgyud* (“lineage of prophetically declared spiritual succession”), *Las ’phro gter gyi brgyud* (“lineage of treasures of karmic maturation”) and *Tsig brgyud shog ser gyi brgyud* (“lineage of transmitted words on yellow scrolls”). The Byang-gter doctrines of Vajrakīla are said to have been transmitted along all six of those lines.⁴⁵

The Byang-gter Kīla texts

The received Byang-gter Kīla literature consists of a chaotic confusion of texts dealing in large part with ritual formulae and their magical correlates, the open-ended nature of which appears to imply no theoretical limit to their exegesis. Many of the texts seem verbose and repetitive in their opening and closing, largely panegyric, vignettes but cryptic in the extreme with regard to central content. I have tried to reflect a little of the original literary flavour of the source materials in my study but have, of necessity, to a certain extent abbreviated the flowery rhetoric and opened up the more obscure passages in order to shed a

40. They are found under that heading, for example, in the *rNying-ma’i rgyud-’bum* (NGB).

41. A fact already noted by Eva Dargyay, *The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet*, 35. In Chapter Three of the present work, in which the nature of the *kīla* as well as its form and function are explored, we note the *kīla* in both material (relative) and philosophic (absolute) guises: “Annihilating enemies and obstructors by means of symbolic *kīlas*, grasping thoughts of ignorance are cut off by the actual *kīla*.” A47, 471.

42. The emphasis in both these *sādhanas*, found in all three collections and dealt with below in Chapter Seven, is on the absolute, non-dual nature of the *kīla*.

43. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 72.

44. B4, 177.

45. B4, 178.

modicum of light into the cryptic gloom. In order to facilitate cross-referencing this material with the data of other Buddhist schools I have included a number of Sanskrit key terms in parentheses throughout the study, generally employing Tibetan terminology only when the Sanskrit appeared doubtful.⁴⁶ The Tibetan-Sanskrit equivalents of most of these words are to be found in the index.

Even though the texts overlap with much repetition of data, it is noted that a fresh element or novel twist is introduced with each retelling so that the material seems to grow in organic fashion, quite unlike the lineally structured logical progression of modern western writing. The discrete title applied to the individual sections of the literature and their idiosyncratic assemblage within the three collections here studied indicates a random structure to the whole within which any given text may or may not be included with impunity.

The texts put forward an interconnected, self-sustaining dogma of symbols and ritual technique designed to serve as a means through which the initiate may both express this symbolic world and interact with it. Growing ever more skilful in this interaction, the *yogin* supposedly develops ritual power, the magical ability to control events in the world at large. Despite a preponderance of technical vocabulary and cosmological/religious dogma, the texts are clearly intended to convey not physical but rather psychological truths. Their purpose is conveyed to the emotion rather than the intellect so that the *yogin* realizes their validity within his heart not his head. Indeed, it is axiomatic that mystical insight into the 'truth' of the *maṇḍala* is experienced by the *yogin* as a knowledge utterly free of propositional content.

Such a result is a phenomenologically potent spiritual ecstasy equated with the higher *siddhi*. The meditator is imbued with a profound sense of well-being that is understood in the Kīla tradition to be the result of having banished the evil hordes of Māra beyond the confines of the *maṇḍala*, the *yogin*'s symbolic world. Within that context the lower *siddhis* are indicated by omens encountered either in dreams, visions or the ordinary waking state. Thus, through his practice, the *yogin* learns to sustain the condition within which the world is experienced in the image of the sacred *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla.

Although among Tibetans there exist several important lineages of Vajrakīla teachings, at no time during the writing of this book did I feel impelled to refer to parallel texts from traditions other than the Byang-gter, either to clarify my doubts or verify my conclusions. As I worked I found that each document studied, although presenting enigmatic riddles to ponder, shed fresh light on the significance of others in the cycle so that the entire tradition seemed to fit together like a jigsaw puzzle, each small text being meaningful only within the context of the whole.

The three available collections of Northern Treasures Vajrakīla texts at the heart of the present study together comprise a total of 158 separate titles, all of which are listed in Appendix I in the form in which they appear at the head of the texts themselves. When these texts are checked for duplications, however, their number is reduced to 112, among which

46. Although based entirely upon Tibetan sources I am in no doubt that the material presented here has an Indic origin, as argued below in Chapter Two. It is understood, however, that the implications of these key terms gradually shift with time so that modern Tibetan usage may not coincide exactly with that of ancient India.

are two that are not relevant to our purposes. B8 is neither a Northern Treasures text nor does it relate to the Vajrakīla cycle. C37 is a Northern Treasures text but unrelated to the Kīla cycle. This leaves us with 110 separate texts, the overwhelming majority of which claim to have been among the original treasures revealed by the *gter ston* Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem in 1366. Fewer than twenty texts have been added to this collection in later years by named authors, an indication of the inherent clarity of the original tradition. Each of the three collections contains texts that are not found elsewhere, as well as texts that it holds in common with either one or both of the other collections. The full details of these correspondences are also listed in Appendix I.

The systematic ordering of the eight chapters of Part Three is based upon an arrangement set out in the very first of numerous minor commentaries to be found within this Northern Treasures Kīla literature, the *Phur pa che mchog gi them byang rin chen gter mdzod*, in which we are presented with a list of the essential elements of the Vajrakīla cycle.⁴⁷ Scarcely more than a single folio in length, this valuable text groups the Byang-gter Kīla literature into five sets, each of which consists of three elements:

- 1) The fundamental elements that underpin the sacred tradition are the three called *rgyud* (*tantra*), *dbang chog* (rites of initiation and empowerment, *adhiṣṭhānavidhi*) and *'phrin las* (ritual activities, equivalent here to *sādhana*).
- 2) The methods which are taught so that a *yogin* may appropriate the *siddhi* of the deity are the three called *dKar po lam gyi sgron ma* ("Lamp of the White Path"), *bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka* ("Iron Cloak of Attendants") and *Nag po dug gi 'khor lo* ("Wheel of Black Poison").
- 3) The heart of the fierce activities is said to be the three called *zor* (a magic weapon to be hurled against the enemy), *sbyin sreg* (ritual burning, *homa*) and *mnan gtad* (forcing down, subduing).
- 4) For the benefit of a *yogin* are taught the three called *tshes sgrub* (for the attainment of long life, *āyurvidhi*), *nor sgrub* (for the attainment of wealth) and *bza' tshogs* (the presentation of offerings for a sacramental feast).
- 5) As supplements to make up for any deficiencies are taught the method of making *sācchas* (*tsha tsha*, miniature reliquaries, the preparation of which fulfills broken vows), *rgyud rims* (*sic.*) and the *zur 'debs* (appendix).⁴⁸

None of the texts at our disposal teach independent procedures for the attainment of wealth (*nor sgrub*), considered by the *them byang* to be an essential part of the Vajrakīla cycle and taught for the benefit of the *yogin* under section 4. Collection A apparently once contained a wealth rite that focussed upon the deity Jambhala,⁴⁹ for the publishers of that collection have listed such a text between our A27 and A28. No such text is to be found there now, however. There remains also a question mark over the term *rgyud rims* in section 5. *Rims* means 'infectious disease' so the word is surely a misspelling (despite its recurrence

47. Found independently as A1, also included within C15. Although the title of the text indicates a specific relationship to the Mahottarakīla cycle, its analysis of the doctrines appears equally valid for the Kṣura and Mantrabhīru cycles.

48. A1, 2–3.

49. Jambhala is a god of wealth popularly worshipped by Mahāyāna Buddhists in general, having no specific connection with the Kīla cycle.

at C15) of *rim* for *rim pa*, ‘order, series, succession’. *rGyud rim* could then mean either the successive stages of tantric practice—the *bškyed rim* (*utpattikrama*) and *rdzogs rim* (*sampannakrama*)—or ‘the succession of *tantra*’ more commonly referred to as *brgyud rim*, the succession of masters through whom the tantric tradition was transmitted (*paramparā*). Among the texts in the three collections are found several *brgyud ’debs* (prayers to the lineage masters) and these could perhaps be thought of as “supplements to make up for deficiencies in the *yogin*’s practice”. Our text C15 contains the words *rgyud rims* in its title and the text itself deals, among other things, with the transmission of the Vajrakīla doctrines from the primordial Buddha Samantabhadra to Vajrasattva, Vajrapāṇi, Karmendrāṇi, Padmasambhava and finally to sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-’joms who was the last to receive them before they were hidden away as treasures to be rediscovered by sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-’joms’ own later incarnation as a *gter ston*. This, however, is unsatisfactory and thus we are left with no texts at all in the three collections that pertain unmistakably to either the category *nor sgrub*, the meaning of which is clear, or *rgyud rims*, the meaning of which is problematic. The remaining thirteen sections of this fifteenfold system of categorizing the Northern Treasures Vajrakīla literature, on the other hand, are all well represented by precisely those texts which are to be found in common within all three collections.

1) The first group of (a) *tantra*, (b) *adhiṣṭhānavidhi* and (c) *sādhana* are represented by:

(a) The two root *tantras* called *Śrīvajrakīlapotrihala-tantra* (*sic.*) (BRT, A2, B31, C19) and the *Vajrakīlacittaguhyakāya-tantra* (A3, B10, C1). These two *tantras*, which form the subject matter of our Chapter Five, present the fundamental mythology of the Vajrakīla cycle as accepted both within and without the Byang-gter school. The *tantra* from the black iron cache is observed to correspond remarkably closely to the fragment included in the *bKa’ ’gyur*, translated by the Sa-skyā paṇḍita from a Sanskrit original thought to have been brought to Tibet by Padmasambhava himself. The Mahottarakīla text from the golden southern section puts forward the origin myth of the demon Rudra and the deity Vajrakīla as well as a paradigm for the fierce rites of the Vajrakīla cult utilizing the device of questions and answers between Vajrapāṇi and the lord of the *maṇḍala*, a traditional format of Buddhist texts.

(b) The *Phur pa che mchog gi dbang chu* (A8, B12, C5) and the *sPu gri nag po’i dbang chog* (A14, B63, C20) are analysed in Chapter Six. These are the rites of empowerment enacted in terms of a symbolic palingenesis through which the *yogin* who aspires to membership of the Kīla cult may be introduced to its doctrines and authorized to participate in its sacred mysteries. Within this chapter the *yogin*’s ‘price of admission’ to the cult is considered⁵⁰ as well as those benefits he may seek to gain by his entry.

(c) The *Phur pa’i thugs kyi ’phrin las* (A45, B42, C35) and the *rTsa ba dril sgrub kyi sgrub thabs* (A32, B41 & 53, C33) examined in Chapter Seven are the fundamental rites through which the *yogin* expresses his commitment to the cult and through which he seeks

50. By ‘price of admission’ is meant not only the fee paid to the teacher at the time of empowerment but also the vows and commitments (*samvara* and *samaya*) to which the neophyte is subsequently bound for the rest of his life. According to Śrīsiṃha, the essential *samaya* to be observed by Vajrakīla initiates is that they should carry with them at all times a symbolic *kīla* made of iron. A32, 227.

to draw upon its power. Essentially these rites may be viewed as a reenactment of his own first ceremony of initiation (or ‘empowerment’) which, in turn, sought to recreate the primordial state of purity described in the deity’s *tantra*. It is by means of these rites that the *yogin* seeks to transform his view of the world until he is able to maintain it in his mind as being nothing less than the deity’s sacred *maṇḍala*.⁵¹ His image of himself, meanwhile, has simultaneously to be transformed into that of the deity. This process of *sādhana*, through which both the deity and his *maṇḍala* are generated, is known as *utpattikrama*.

In accordance with the tripartite schema ubiquitous in Buddhist tantric praxis, the *sādhaka* effects the total identification of himself with the deity by absorbing his mind in the *samādhi* of the deity, causing his speech “to resound with the unceasing recitation of *mantra*” and ‘sealing’ his body by *mudrā*.⁵² The significance of this last term is by no means restricted to a simple ‘gesture of the hands’ but may include the physical placement of the practitioner in the deity’s favoured abode (a fearful charnel ground where wild animals roam) where he dwells within a hut made of skulls, besmearing himself with ashes and drops of blood and grease, consuming the foodstuffs of the god (especially meat and alcohol) and wearing the deity’s apparel of animal skins with ornamentation of bone.⁵³ Through this process of *utpattikrama* the *yogin* aims to gain direct and intuitive insight (the antidote to ignorance) and thus, as part of his *sādhana*, he is instructed to “gulp down *saṃsāra*” and experience the one taste (*ekarasa*) of all phenomena and phenomenal processes. With the whole world in his belly he is no less than the god himself.⁵⁴ He has ‘liberated’ and ‘blessed’ all beings by killing them and, having gained control over worldly ‘demonic’ forces (the hosts of Māra), has become master of his own destiny. Thus the *yogin* obtains the ‘dual benefit’ of the Mahāyāna: freedom from *saṃsāra* for others as much as for himself.

2) The second group consists of three named texts. The *dKar po lam gyi sgron ma* (A9, B15, C6) examined in Chapter Eight describes the climax of the *utpattikrama* process. Building on his success in appropriating for himself the outward appearance of the deity, the

51. In fact the distinction between ‘the mind’ and ‘the world’ is not much maintained in these texts. Although the theatre of *sādhana* praxis is generally the imagination of the practitioner himself (with body, speech and mind all having their role to play), in the Black deity cycle the ritual is thematically projected upon the outer world whereas the Mahottarakīla cycle deems it to occur almost entirely within the *yogin*’s own body. The anthropocosmos, however, is ritually homologized with the containing macrocosmos, especially with its underlying process of endless becoming based on ignorance and its resultant suffering, defined as birth in any realm under the sway of Māra.

52. Such a simplistic outline, however, is belied by the texts themselves within which the boundaries of ‘self’ and ‘other’, ‘inner’ and ‘outer’, remain remarkably fluid.

53. Vajrakīla meditation is concerned with the nature of *saṃsāra* and not *nirvāṇa*. HT, I, X, 34, 36 describes the calmness of the innate (*sahaja*) specifically as being “without waves” (*nistarāṅga*) whereas the violently agitated nature of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* is repeatedly stressed. Indeed, the *maṇḍala* itself is stated in the *sādhana* to rest upon ‘a churning ocean of blood’ indicative of the waves of *saṃsāra*.

54. This expansion of the *yogin*’s perception from that of a merely theoretical knowledge of the dynamic principles of existence (such as the twelve *nidānas* and so on) to a first-hand (if interiorized, mystical) experience of the totality of created being is enhanced by his psychic ‘growth’ to a gigantic form of many colours with nine heads and eighteen arms in which he holds all manner of symbolic attributes, etc.

yogin now purifies his internal nature until it, too, becomes 'divine' in the process known as *sampannakrama* brought about by close meditation upon light.

The *bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka* is found as A10 and the *Nag po dug gi 'khor lo* as A11. In collections B and C, however, the two texts are found together under a single title as B19 and C7. These documents are studied in Chapter Nine together with related texts of the Black deity cycle which detail the manner in which the *yogin*, having achieved total self-identification with the deity and being thus empowered to "roll the ritual nail between the palms of his hands", may strive to bring all 'lesser' spiritual beings⁵⁵ under his majesty. Once adept at controlling those powers, the *yogin* is able to dispatch them against his enemy in a display of violent sorcery. This chapter, then, is permeated with the darkest images of witchcraft and yet the texts themselves claim to rank among the most profound of spiritual practices. Much of their content is almost indistinguishable in kind from that encountered in the grimoires of late medieval Europe where procedures of black magic are taught for gaining the upper hand in a struggle for power over the forces of nature, personified in the guise of 'elementals' or mischievous sprites. Publicly disavowed by Buddhist hierarchs throughout the course of religious history, these texts nevertheless claim huge rewards for any sorcerer *yogin* who masters their apparently appalling methodology.

3) All three collections link *zor*, *sbyin sreg* and *mnan gtad* together within the single text called *mNan sreg 'phang gsum* found at A13, B20 and C11. Under these three rubrics, dealt with in Chapter Ten, the hitherto highly introspective yogic procedures for the destruction of foes are simplified and recast in the form of rituals that readily lend themselves to the involvement of the *saṅgha* as a whole. In particular, this group involvement may be coordinated in the monastic masked dances (*gar 'cham*, *nartana*) during which participants don the divine accessories specifically "designed to set the individual free from any naturalistic expression, so that all the codified elements (gestures, postures, utterances) may fall into place with the structural rigor of a veritable body writing".⁵⁶ Thus the mythology of the Kīla cult is transmitted in the form of sacred drama to the wider audience of lay faithful whose pious offerings support and maintain the monastic establishments enacting these colourful rites.

4) The *rDo rje phur pa'i tshes sgrub* is found at A18, B22 and C12 while the *bZa' tshogs* is found at A23, B24 and C14. There are no *nor sgrub* texts to be found in any of the three collections. Chapter Eleven therefore investigates the two remaining techniques said to be of direct benefit to the *yogin* in his personal life: the means to prolong his youth and vitality, and the contemplations through which he may bless all that he eats and drinks.

55. These 'lesser spirits' are included within the mythology of the Vajrakīla cult as local deities who, having submitted to the authority and power of Vajrakīla (in the guise of Padmasambhava or other adept) were subsequently given seats around the periphery of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala*.

56. M. Thevoz, *The Painted Body*, 90. The impersonal nature of the rites in the case of the Vajrakīla cult is further reinforced by their scatological nature. The painted faces of the Kīla sorcerers make play with "the very things (modern man) is so intent on averting; the dissociation of the body, the break-up of the physiognomy, the release of wild impulses, the disintegration of the Ego" (*ibidem* 25). In this remarkable book, Thevoz points out that the function of makeup has always been essentially magical and that ritual body decorations "are all polarized by the supernatural world, by the magical powers that govern and order reality, by their reference to the elemental forces and primordial causes which are external to and dissimilar to the society of man". (p. 33.)

5) *Sācchas* are taught at A24, B24 and C14 and *zur 'debs* at A28, B25 and C16. The final chapter of the book is dedicated to an investigation of these procedures through which the *yogin* is instructed to make up for any deficiencies in his practice and pays particular attention to the symbolic value of the various sacraments utilized within the Kīla cult for the celebration of community feasts (*gaṇacakra*). Spontaneously generating the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* within his body, speech and mind, each *yogin* presents his own defilements (*kleśa*) as offerings to the deities. He thus seeks to eradicate from himself all traces of imperfection, “the obscurations to enlightenment”, and achieve the divine purity of his goal. His oath of *bodhicitta* is fulfilled by contemplatively offering a boundless quantity of blood (= *prajñā*) and nectar (= *upāya*).

Throughout this study it is observed that the religious system of the wrathful deity Vajrakīla requires its followers to abandon entirely all preconceived views of the mundane world and immerse themselves instead in a world of symbols, a fantastical model that adheres solely to its own internal system of logic based upon earlier Buddhist concepts of cosmology and psychology. That model, it is claimed, will liberate the *yogin* who is successful in its realization so that he may dwell in a state of permanent bliss. More than that, however, it will also bestow upon him a number of occult powers which may be used at his discretion for the benefit and ultimate liberation of all his fellow creatures. The work concludes with the observation that it is this intention of great compassion that is offered as the legitimizing factor for the inclusion of the cult within the general framework of Mahāyāna Buddhism⁵⁷ and points to a profound psychology underlying its somewhat bizarre approach to the age-old problem of man’s quest for enlightenment and spiritual fulfilment.

57. The Mahāyāna (“Great Vehicle”) is so called by its adherents precisely because of the emphasis it places on great compassion (*mahākaruṇā*). Within the Vajrayāna, this great compassion takes the form of such magical activities as the slaying of demons—acts considered to be great expedients (*mahopāya*) for the ultimate benefit of all living beings.

PART ONE

THE NORTHERN TREASURES



Chapter One

The Byang-gter Tradition

Although a significant force within the rNying-ma group of religious traditions in old Tibet, very little as yet has been published in the west concerning the Byang-gter and its revealer dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan. Brief references to the Byang-gter tradition, the fortunes of which have suffered a severe decline in the modern age since the invasion of Tibet by the communist Chinese, are to be found in a number of textbooks on the history of Buddhism in that country, especially those written from the rNying-ma-pa point of view, but no western scholar to date has attempted an exhaustive study of the subject.

A condensed history of the tradition is to be found in the form of an anonymous English language foreword to the *dGongs pa zang thal*, Leh, 1975, and the biography of its *gter ston* as compiled by dDud-'joms Rinpoche in his rNying-ma-pa history has been translated by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein, NSTB, I, 780–3. Eva Dargyay in her earlier publication, *The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet*, 129–32, also utilized bDud-'joms' biography, comparing it with the version of sKong-sprul padma gar-dbang from the *Rin chen gter mdzod*. Further information is to be found in a pamphlet entitled *A Brief History of Dorje Tag Monastery in Tibet and its Lineage holders*, written by sTag-lung-tse-sprul Rinpoche and published in Leh, 1985, as well as among the notes to the many translations of Byang-gter ritual texts produced by Prof. C.R. Lama of Viśvabharati University, West Bengal, in collaboration with James Low. More recently, a paper by Jeremy Russell and Tsepa Rigzin entitled “Taglung Tsetrul Rinpoche, Dorje Drak and the Northern Treasure Tradition” was published in the *Chos Yang* journal from Dharamsala in order to commemorate the reestablishment in India of rDo-rje-brag Monastery, the chief monastery of the Byang-gter tradition.

The present account is based primarily upon three Tibetan texts: (1) The biography of our *gter ston* as told in the *sPrul sku rig 'dzin rgod kyi ldem 'phru can kyi rnam thar gsal byed nyi ma'i 'od zer*, written by Nyi-ma bzang-po and photographically reproduced from a manuscript in the possession of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, published in Paro, Bhutan, 1985. (2) The *Rig 'dzin ngag gi dbang po'i rnam thar*, written by the Fifth Dalai Lama and published in volume 37 of the *Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod Series*, Leh, 1972, and (3) the autobiography of bsKal-bzang padma dbang-phyug, entitled *lHa rigs kyi btsun pa bskal bzang padma'i ming can rang nyid kyi rtogs par brjod pa 'jam gnyen utpal gzhad pa'i dga' tshal gzhon nu byung ba'i yid 'phrog*, published as volume 43 of the same series in 1973. Also of interest is our text B4, the *Byang gter phur pa'i dbang gi lo rgyus* by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms.

Derived as it is from these later Tibetan hagiographies rather than contemporary historical documents, this short chapter cannot pretend to the status of ‘proper historical research’ and the picture presented herein may seem to some to have about it an air of fanciful romance. Its Tibetan sources take for granted a view of life that is the norm within their own culture—an ‘otherworldly’ view quite removed from the prevailing ‘rational materialist’ outlook of the modern west. As pointed out recently by Michael Aris, “Indeed one does not need to look very far into Tibetan literature of any period to see that every traditional account rests on a fundamental basis of magic”.⁵⁸ In my opinion, however, the Tibetan concern is less with magic than with psychology, for the devout hagiographer sees it as his primary function to record the all-important ‘inner’ or subjectively experienced aspect of the situation he chronicles.

The various sources offer conflicting dates for the episodes with which they are concerned and I have chosen to deal with them by the simple expedient of deciding the most probable in the light of all the ‘evidence’ before me. Disparate views are to be found in the footnotes. The outline as I have given it, however, is important in that it collates for the first time all that has so far been published on the Byang-gter tradition in European languages and it is my hope that perhaps the present survey will inspire future scholars to delve more deeply into its fascinating history. It is offered here in brief simply in order to provide a context for the materials that constitute the focal point of my research: the cult of Vajrakīla as it is found within this Northern Treasures tradition.

Concealment of the treasures

Traditional Tibetan historians regularly preface their work with an attempt to locate the origins of the events or period with which they are primarily concerned as far back in time as possible, even to the beginning of the universe itself.⁵⁹ In keeping with this tradition, the various ‘biographies’ of the treasure revealer dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan (1337–1408)⁶⁰ begin by equating him with the *dharmakāya* Samantabhadra and then with the *sambhogakāya* Vajrasattva. Only after this is he supposed to have manifested physically in the world for the benefit of living beings.

His *nirmānakāya* career reputedly commenced in India with his manifestation as the *Jinaputra* Vajragarbha and the sources credit him with a further two dozen incarnations on the subcontinent, including one as Śākyamitra who played an important role in the early dissemination of the Vajrakīla doctrines, before he is said to have been born in Tibet.⁶¹

58. M. Aris, *Hidden Treasures and Secret Lives*, 1.

59. Even the modern work on *Ancient Tibet* (Yeshe De Research Project, Berkeley, 1986) discusses the formation of the great Himalayan plateau during ‘eons of geologic time’ before beginning to talk of its earliest inhabitants.

60. Janet Gyatso, “Signs, Memory and History”, 32, gives 1490 as the date of the *gter ston*’s death, which I suppose to be a misprint for 1409.

61. The Fifth Dalai Lama lists the prior incarnations of the Byang-gter *gter ston* in India and Nepal as: (1) Samantabhadra, the *dharmakāya*, (2) Vajrasattva, the *sambhogakāya*, (3) Vajragarbha, the *nirmānakāya*, who gathered together all the doctrines of esoteric Buddhism, (4) Khye’u-chung she-la rog-po, (5) rGyal-sras deva bzang-skyong, (6) Byang-sems ye-shes snying-po, (7) bKa’i sdud-po Nam-mkha’i mdog-can (also known as Vajragarbha II), (8) sKye-rgu’i bdag-mo, (9) mKha’-gro bde-ldan-ma, (10) mKha’-gro rig-byed bde-ma, (11) Yid-byin (sbyin) dpal, (12)

When the eighth century ruler of Tibet and great Buddhist patron, Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, sent messengers to India with offerings of powdered gold in order to invite the assistance of Padmasambhava in the founding of bSam-yas monastery, one of the messengers that he sent was his own uncle and close companion sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms. Following his arrival in Tibet, Padmasambhava gave a large number of esoteric instructions to sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms who remained one of his five innermost disciples⁶² throughout the period of his most intense teaching activity. These magico-religious instructions were said to be of vital importance for the protection of the future descendants of king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan and they were all carefully entrusted to sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms before being concealed in the mountains as a treasure to be revealed in the future for the benefit of Tibet in general and for the welfare of the royal line in particular.⁶³ In 1173 sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms was born again in Tibet, this time as the translator of Khro-phu, Byams-pa-dpal.⁶⁴

Rediscovery of the hidden treasures

In 1337, on the tenth day of the first month of the fire ox year, he was reborn in the area known as gNyan-yul (the place of snake demons) or Tho-yor nag-po (the country of the black stone cairn), his name in this incarnation being given as dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan. Upon his body were seen many auspicious marks including sacred seed-syllables (*bīja*) and black and white moles (*sme ba, tilaka*) upon his head. Native biographers cite a large number of 'prophetic texts' concerning this *gter ston*, intending thereby to demonstrate the enormous significance for the rNying-ma tradition of both the person and the Byang-gter treasures that he revealed. Throughout these biographies much is made of 'auspicious signs', discernable omens appearing on his physical form and in the events of his life.

dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan's mother, Jo-lcam bsod-nams khye-'dren, was a lady of noble descent and his father sLob-dpon bdud-'dul (Sri-'dul-dpal) belonged to the family of sNa-mo-lung living on the estate (*gzhi kha*) of sNa-mo⁶⁵ whose ancestry was said to trace back to the Mongolian king Gur-ser.

the *Dharma* minister (*chos kyi blon po*) Blo-gros-mchog, (13) Byang-sems nam-mkha'i snying-po, (14) Sems-dpa' chen-po nor-bu 'dzin-pa, (15) bDe-ba'i rdo-rje, (16) Drag-po gtum-po, (17) Śākyamitra, (18) the *bhikṣu* Zhi-ba'i snying-po, (19) Lha-lcam Mandāravā (Yid-'dzin lha-mo), (20) the beer-seller Vinasā, (21) the *Dharma* minister Ye-shes-gsal, (22) bTsun-mo 'od-'chang-ma, (23) bDe-ba'i 'byung-gnas, (24) the *dākinī* Gar-gyi dbang-phyug (Narteśvarī), (25) the *dākinī* Suṣatī (bDe-'byung II), (26) Ded-dpon ka-kha-'dzin, and (27) the Nepalese Jinamitra.

62. *Las can dag pa'i 'khor lnga*, "the fortunate circle of five", consisted of sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms, king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, his son prince Mu-khri btsan-po, Nam-mkha'i snying-po and the lady Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal. Furthermore, with regard to the doctrines of Vajrakīla, in the revelations of mChog-gyur gling-pa (1829–1870), rDo-rje bdud-'joms is praised as 'the sovereign of all *phurba*-holders in Tibet and Kham'. Erik Schmidt, *The Great Gate*, 26.
63. According to the legends attached to the various historical personalities responsible for the subsequent discovery and preservation of the Northern Treasures tradition, king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan himself (in the guise of his own later incarnations) was a major instigator in the unearthing of this cycle of teachings, said to be so important for his family line, and later played an important role in its preservation. See below, notes 66 & 86.
64. Tulku Thondup mentions a thirteenth century incarnation by the name of dPal-bo Ah Hūng. I suppose this to be the same person. T. Thondup, *The Tantric Tradition of the Nyingmapa*, 160.
65. G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 634.

sLob-dpon bdud-'dul was a tantric *yogin* with expertise in the practice of the *Phur bu ze'u smug gu*, an early cycle of the deity Vajrakīla, and the young dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan studied these doctrines together with those of the Māyājāla and Māṭṛ, and so on, under his tutelage. He is said to have demonstrated remarkable skill in both understanding and practice from a very early age, perfecting the *samādhi* of Vajrakīla by the time he was eight years old. Following the death of his father he continued to be educated by his mother.

When he was just eleven years old, three feathery growths appeared on the top of his head and when he was twenty-three there were five. Because these growths looked like the feathers of a vulture he became famous as rGod kyi ldem-'phru-can, “the one with vulture’s feathers”. These extraordinary signs had been foretold in the prophecies and were regarded with awe as the marks of a truly special being. He also became known as *Mahāvidyādhara* (*Rig 'dzin chen po*) and this is the title which has been held ever since by each of his successive incarnations.

In 1364 a lama by the name of Mang-lam bzang-po grags-pa⁶⁶ unearthed a number of treasure texts at Gyang Yon-po-lung. Among these texts were eight related to the concealed treasures of Zang-zang lha-brag, near to the place where Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem was born, and these included the essential inventory (*snying byang*) entitled *Man ngag gnas kyi don bdun ma*. In the new year (February/ March 1365) bZang-po grags-pa entrusted these texts to sTon-pa bsod-nams dbang-phyug⁶⁷ and two companions with instructions to pass them on to “a *yogin* carrying a statue or rosary in his hand” that supposedly they would encounter to the east of the Zang-zang mountain and who would begin to engage them in a conversation concerning the king of Gung-thang.

A week or so later, as the three travellers were eating their meal on the bank of a stream near Brag-lung monastery in northern gYas-ru, rGod-ldem-can arrived there from sNa-mo-lung carrying in his hands a brass image of Vajrakīla and a rosary. As they spoke together all the requirements of the prophecy were fulfilled and so, recognizing him as the one they sought, they handed over all the treasure scrolls and a sealed letter of good wishes.

Upon his return to sNa-mo-lung, Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem interpreted the rising of the planet Jupiter in the eighth lunar mansion⁶⁸ as a sign that the time had come to take out the key to the treasures. At the first crack of dawn on the eighth day of the snake month in the year of the fire horse (1366), there came from the east a beam of white light “like the trunk of the wish-fulfilling *kalpalatā*” that struck the summit of Mount bKra-bzang and a spot beneath that was indicated by a light fall of snow.

66. This lama is said to have been the incarnation of the former king of Tibet, Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan. T. Thondup, *op. cit.*, 151.

67. A *vinaya* master involved in the ordination of Rin-chen 'byung-gnas. G. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 634.

68. Janet Gyatso (“Signs, Memory and History”, 24) writes “the appearance of the star rGyal Phu on the horizon” but rGyal is the eighth constellation called Puṣya, and Phur-pa or Brhaspati is its ruling planet Jupiter. This auspicious configuration marked the birth of the Buddha (*Buddhacarita*, I, 9; II, 36).

Thus, from the vicinity of three obelisks (*rdo ring*) within the cavity of a projecting white rock (*'dzeng brag dkar po*) beneath the summit of Ri-bo bkra-bzang, rGod-ldem-can unearthed the next link in the chain of the Northern Treasures in the form of seven paper scrolls (*shog ril*). In order to compensate for the removal of these scrolls, Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem buried another treasure in their place and the resultant cavity known as rLung-seng ('Windy Hollow') is reported to be still in existence today.⁶⁹ During the new year celebrations on the following year, as Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem reached the age of thirty, a tree spontaneously grew up there which is also thought to have remained until now.

Two months later, on the fourth day of the sheep month 1366, Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem was engaged in the rite of bestowing upon his disciples the *abhiṣeka* of Vajrakīla. During the preliminary section of the rite, just as he was establishing the *maṇḍala* of deities within the bodies of his disciples, the *guru* arose and led his followers up into the mountains that look like a heap of poisonous snakes (*dug sbrul spung 'dra*). The hagiographies describe the air as sweetly scented and filled with rainbows as Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem guided his disciples to the southwest face of the mountain where the atmosphere glowed with ruby-red light in the splendour of the setting sun. They climbed up to a mountain cave and, leaving two disciples stationed beneath the entrance, rGod-ldem-can went inside and began to pray. As the sky grew dark following the setting of the sun, the rock cave began to tremor and shake as a sign that the master of the treasures (*gter bdag*) had arrived.

At midnight they lit a number of butter-lamps and by their light the group was able to discern upon the rock the clear image of a *viśvavajra*. When the *guru* pressed beneath that mark with his paper scroll (the symbolic key to the treasures) it seemed to open like a door onto a triangular chamber within which they found a pale blue snake with a yellow belly, as thick as a man's arm. It was lying in a coil with its face to the southeast upon a square blue stone, the top of which was marked in nine sections with silver coloured nails so that it resembled the back of a tortoise. The coils of the snake looked like an enormous eight-sided precious stone and upon its heart were three gem-like excrescences from which were extracted a roll of paper and a symbolic jewel (*rin po che'i rtags tsam cig*). Resting upon the blue stone slab, concealed within the serpent's coils, lay a maroon leather casket, the fivefold repository of the Northern Treasures.

From the central compartment of deep red leather Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem took out three *kīlas* wrapped in maroon silk⁷⁰ and the *Atiyoga* texts of Vajrakīla as well as the *Kun bzang dgongs pa zang thal* cycle in four volumes which subsequently became among the most famous and revered of all the expositions of *Atiyoga* doctrines in Tibet. These treatises have twice been carved onto xylographic plates, unlike the majority of Byang-gter literature which is preserved in manuscript form only. The teachings of *Bla ma rig 'dzin gdung sgrub* and other texts related to the *sādhana* of *guru, deva* and *dākinī*⁷¹ were also found within this section together with hair (*dbu skra*, of Padmasambhava?) and other sacred articles (*byin rlabs kyi rdzas*) and thirty paper scrolls wrapped in blue silk.

69. NSTB, I, 780.

70. These three *kīlas* are described in detail at A33, 239–40. See below, Chapter Four.

71. Known as "the three roots" of tantric practice.

The front (eastern) compartment of the box was fashioned of white conch shell and contained texts of the *rGyu 'bras la ldog pa* cycle (putting an end to cause and effect) as well as teachings on the similarity of the awakened mind to the sky (*dGongs pa nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i chos*) and the *tantras* of the *Ka dag rang byung rang shar* cycle concerning the natural presence and arising of primordial purity.

The golden southern chamber of the chest contained teachings on the fourfold practice of deity invocation (*sNyen sgrub rnam pa bzhi'i chos*) and the texts of the *gSang sgrub guru drag po rtsal* and *bKa' brgyad drag po rang byung rang shar*.⁷² These important ritual cycles became famous “like the sun and the moon” due to the brightness and clarity that they induced within the minds of those who practised them. Also in this chamber were found texts relating to Vajrakīla in his form as Mahottarakīla with nine faces and eighteen hands.

From the western compartment of red copper, Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem took out the *rTen 'brel khyad par can* and the *Phyi sgrub 'gro ba kun grol* which form part of the *rTen 'brel chos bdun* cycle. He also took out the *Tsan dan gyi sdong bu lta bu'i chos* and a volume in which were found the *rTa mgrin dregs pa dbang sdud*, the *'Khor 'das dbang sdud* and the *Lha chen* teachings, as well as a further volume containing the *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod dbang*.

Within the black northern compartment of iron were found the most violent of all the wrathful ritual texts. Most of the Vajrakīla teachings were taken from this chamber of the box as well as the *dGra bgegs thal bar rlog pa'i chos*, a text said to be as pernicious as the stem of a poisonous plant (*dug gi sdong po lta bu*). Eight treatises on the compounding of ritual medicine (*sman gyi tshad byas pa*) were also found there, together with further commentaries (*upadeśa*) and instructions on the making of ‘thread crosses’ (*mdos*)⁷³ but not all of these texts were transcribed and disseminated.

Having discovered these five treasuries of teachings (*mdzod lnga*), Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem is said to have organized each of the sections into one hundred and one parts and rearranged the folios of yellow paper (*shog ser po ti*) into pairs like mother and son, marked with the seed-syllables of the four goddesses of the gates. He then taught the doctrines contained therein to his chosen pupils.

These teachings became known as Byang-gter or Northern Treasures in order to distinguish them from the Lho-gter (Southern Treasures) that had been revealed in previous centuries by Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer (1136–1204) and Guru chos-dbang

72. It should be noted here that this cycle of ‘eight great *sādhanas*’ (*sgrub chen bka' brgyad, aṣṭamahāsādhana*) includes teachings on the *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla. See below, Chapter Four.

73. None of my sources list any Bon-po doctrines among his discoveries unless these are hinted at by the words “*mDos ... and further upadeśa*”. Both R. Prats and Tulku Thondup, however, say that rGod-ldem-can is revered by the Bon-po as a *gter ston* (Prats naming him dPon-gsas khyung-thog) but neither specifies the revelations attributed to him. R. Prats, “Some Preliminary Considerations Arising from a Biographical Study of the Early *gTer-ston*”, 259. T. Thondup, *Buddha Mind*, 110.

Thread crosses, although known in India, are not so widely employed there as they are in Tibet. The *Garuḍapurāna* (II, V, 14) recommends the placement of such a structure by the crossroads at night in order to propitiate the spirits of the dead. (See also below, note 99.)

(1212–1270). These three *gter ston* are widely renowned in Tibet as the *kāya*, *vāc* and *citta* emanations of Padmasambhava himself and thought to be the three greatest *gter ston* of all.

Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem is also credited with the discovery of seven 'hidden lands' (*sbas yul*) in which people could live in happiness in the peaceful pursuit of *Dharma*.⁷⁴ Having gone to Sikkim ('Bras-mo gshong)⁷⁵ he is said to have worked miracles there and blessed the 'White Rock Cave' of bKra-shis-lding as a powerful place for meditation. The Chronicle of the rulers of Sikkim⁷⁶ describes a local cult dedicated to the holiest mountain in that vicinity (Gangs-chen mdzod-lnga) as contained in the work of a later Byang-gter *gter ston*, Shes-rab me-'bar. Sacred dances in honour of the deities thought to reside on the five peaks of that mountain are annually performed by royal command on the full moon day of the seventh Tibetan month but of particular interest to us is the local belief that Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem himself recovered further *gter ma* from the central peak.⁷⁷ This secondary revelation was in the form of images: one of Padmasambhava in wrathful guise and one of the goddess mThing-kha. Letters announcing these discoveries were dispatched to Tibet suspended from the necks of vultures.

Apart from the *gter ma* which he himself revealed, Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem held the key to other lists of hiding places (*them byang*, *kha byang*) and was thus instrumental in the unearthing of many more texts and powerful cult objects.

In fulfilment of the prophecies that describe the treasures of Zang-zang lha-brag as being of particular importance to the dynastic descendents of Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, in 1389 at the age of fifty-two, Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem was appointed the role of personal preceptor to the king of Gung-thang, mChog-sgrub-sde. The special cult object that seems to be endowed with great power for the descendents of this line is named in our texts as 'the precious *Gong khug ma*'. It remains unclear as to whether this is a text or an actual ritual *kīla* that was always carried by the *siddha* Padmasambhava and inherited from him, together with appropriate oral instructions, by Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal.⁷⁸ In either case it is

74. Johan Reinhard in his article "Khembalung, the hidden valley" lists the seven hidden lands as: Khumbu, Helambu, Rongshar, Lapchi, Dolpo, Nubri and Sikkim. See note 34 to the Introduction of the present work.

75. Among the *gter ston*'s accredited revelations is the *rDo rje nyi ma'i gnas yig gsang ba'i dkar chag*, said to be a pilgrim's guide to the hidden land of Sikkim. The text was later carved onto wooden printing blocks by Rig-'dzin rtogs-ldan dpa'-bo and a modern photographic reproduction of that edition has been published by Sonam Topgyel in 1983.

76. René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, 218.

77. Byang-gter hagiographies credit Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem with the discovery of three major *gter ma*, about which it is poetically said: "One is like the eyes, a clear mirror of all possible appearances. One is like the tongue, a key to the indications of secret *mantra*. One is like the heart, a key to the significance of the resultant fruit." He is also thought to have revealed approximately one hundred minor treasures.

78. *Gong khug* means either a small pouch worn around the neck or the breast pocket of a shirt, etc. In either case, the *Gong khug ma* is that which was always kept by Padmasambhava close to his heart. Some indication that the item referred to here is indeed a ritual *kīla* is found in the *gter ma* revelations of mChog-gyur gling-pa where Padmasambhava is described as having a *kīla* of bell metal in his right hand with which the *māra* and *rākṣasa* are subjugated, a *kīla* of teak wood (*khadira*? Tibetan not supplied) with which the devoted disciples are protected, and an iron *kīla* worn around his neck which is indivisible with the deity. Erik Schmidt, *The Great*

reckoned to represent the power of Vajrakīla and embody the essence of the Vajrakīla doctrines.

Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem passed away at the age of seventy-one in 1408, the year of the male earth mouse. The large number of teachings and special tantric precepts that he handed down to posterity were transmitted through the three lineages known as the Mother, Son and Disciple lines. The successive holders of these doctrines are renowned as having attained many higher and ordinary *siddhis*.

Maintaining the continuity of the tradition

Having thus established the school of the Northern Treasures in Tibet, Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem remains, to this day, committed by his vows as a *bodhisattva* to propagate these teachings so long as they continue to serve the needs of humanity. Thus, in accordance with his religious precepts, he is said to have been reborn in mNga'-ris as the *gter ston* Legs-ldan bdud-'joms rdo-rje,⁷⁹ the younger brother of the mNga'-ris paṅ-chen and revealer of three further volumes of teachings.⁸⁰

The mNga'-ris paṅ-chen Padma dbang-rgyal (1487–1543),⁸¹ who was himself renowned as a scholar and adept in the Byang-gter lineage,⁸² established a temporary monastery⁸³ around his mountainside retreat cave, to which he gave the name *Evam lcog-sgar*. Anticipating the future expansion of this encamped community of monks, he composed a strict code of conduct⁸⁴ to be followed by all who dwelt there. In this way, the teachings of the *vidyādhara* householder rGod-ldem-can came to be the central field of study for a community of ordained *bhikṣus*. These teachings were further supplemented by Padma dbang-rgyal's own *gter ma* discovery, the cycle of *Rig 'dzin yongs 'dus*.⁸⁵ Encouraged by the *gter ston* Shes-rab 'od-zer, Padma dbang-rgyal continued to build up both the fabric and the reputation of this religious community and eventually established the monastery

Gate, 124. C. R. Lama, on the other hand, insists that the *Gong khug ma* is a condensed ritual text.

79. R. Prats ("Some Preliminary Considerations", 259, n. 11) remarks that "there seems to be some discrepancies" concerning the dates of this incarnation. Kong-sprul offers 1512–1625 but these dates are clearly impossible. Samten Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 145.

80. *Thugs rje chen po 'khor ba dbyings grol* (1 vol.), *Tshe sgrub bdud rtsi 'khyil pa* (1 vol.), and *Drag po dbu dgu* (1 small vol.).

81. cf. E. Dargyay, *The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism*, 156–60 and NSTB, I, 805–8, for a potted hagio-graphy of this lama. J. Gyatso ("Signs, Memory and History") gives his dates as 1487–1582 and Tulku Thondup (*The Tantric Tradition*) 1487–1542.

82. He is also said to have heard the Byang-gter doctrines from Drang-po gter-ston Śākya bzang-po. E. Dargyay, *op. cit.*, 157.

83. According to bDud-'joms Rinpoche: "The entire monastic community of their seminary became a wandering encampment as a result of the deprivations of Zhing-Shag-pa (Tshe-brtan rdo-rje), the governor of Tsang." NSTB, I, 783. The troubles caused by that governor are said to have come to an end, however, when he was killed by the wrathful magic rites of Byang-bdag bKra-shis stobs-rgyal who earned his title "Byang-bdag" (Protector of the Northern Treasures) as a result of this deed.

84. *bsGrigs kyi bka' yig rdo rje 'bar ba gzi byin*. He also composed the renowned *sDom gsum rnam nges* in which he demonstrated the interrelationship of the *prātimokṣa*, *bodhisattva* and *mantra* vows.

85. *Bla ma bka' brgyad yongs 'dus chos skor*.

of Thub-bstan gser-mdog-can. He died at the age of fifty-six in the village of 'On-sme-thang.

In 1550 Padma dbang-rgyal was reborn as bKra-shis stobs-rgyal (1550–1607)⁸⁶, the son of a clan chieftain in Northern Tibet. Furthering the work of his predecessor, bKra-shis stobs-rgyal unearthed three important cycles of teachings⁸⁷ from within a cave in gTsang-rong and became famous for his religious activities in both Khams and China. Wishing to heal the rift with the kings of gTsang that had disrupted the peace of the Byang-gter monastic community, and supported by his religious patron Pho-bo bka'-gnam rgyal-po, bKra-shis stobs-rgyal continued to build up the mountainside retreat centre mNga'-ris paṅ-chen evaṃ lcog-sgar which he now renamed Guru padma'i evaṃ lcog-sgar.

At the age of thirty, bKra-shis stobs-rgyal fathered a son who was recognized as the third incarnation of the *Mahāvidyādhara* rGod kyi ldem-'phru-can. Born in Byang ngam-ring, this great incarnation Ngag gi dbang-po (1580–1639) moved the residence of Evam lcog-sgar to the central province of dBus where, in 1599 (the year of the earth pig), he founded the monastery Guru padma'i evaṃ lcog-sgar thub-bstan rdo-rje-brag.⁸⁸ Since then, that monastery has been the main seat of learning for the lineage of the Northern Treasures and the see for all successive incarnations of its *gter ston*. During the lifetime of its founder it perhaps housed more than two thousand monks⁸⁹ and, growing even larger in later years, it became one of the principal rNying-ma-pa monasteries in Tibet. Even so, Rig-'dzin Ngag gi dbang-po was not satisfied with what he had been able to achieve by the end of his lifetime and he entrusted further plans for its development to his leading disciple bsTan-'dzin nor-bu of Yol-mo.⁹⁰

The great Fifth Dalai Lama, in the year of his birth in 1617, was given an empowerment of long life by Ngag gi dbang-po. As he grew up he came to receive the full series of

86. A. M. Blondeau, "Analysis of the Biographies of Padmasambhava", 51, n. 11, gives 1550–1602 but points to some cause for doubt. Both Padma dbang-rgyal and bKra-shis stobs-rgyal are traditionally thought to have been incarnations of King Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan.

87. These are the *Tshe sgrub sku gsum rig 'dus*, the *Karma guru'i chos skor* and the *Ma rgyud khrag rlung ma* (also known as the *Ma rgyud snying po don gsum*).

88. The name rDo-rje-brag derives from the natural image of a *vajra*, easily discernible within the folds of a nearby rocky ridge. Tulku Thondup in *The Tantric Tradition of the Nyingmapa* says that the monastery was built in 1632, probably the date of its final consecration. In his *Buddhist Civilisation in Tibet*, on the other hand, he gives the even later date of 1659, twenty years after the death of its founder.

89. This figure is given by Rigzin & Russell. Tarthang Tulku (*Crystal Mirror*, V) gives the figure as two hundred, whilst Wylie (*The Geography of Tibet*) and Ferrari & Petech (*mKhyen-brtse's Guide*) give four hundred. Tarthang Tulku also mentions that, at this time, the monastery had three incarnate lamas.

90. Revered by his followers as the third incarnation of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po who was responsible for opening up the 'hidden land' of Yol-mo (Helambu district in Nepal) where the Byang-gter has flourished to this day. On a pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the Kathmandu valley, Śākya bzang-po supervised a major restoration of the great *stūpa* at Svayambhūnāth during which a *cakra* and spire were placed on top of the edifice by gTsang-smyon (the crazy *yogin* of gTsang) Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan. K. Dowman, "A Buddhist Guide", 212. The date of this repair, patronised by King Ratnamalla, is said to have been 1504 (A. W. Macdonald & A. V. Stahl, *Newar Art*, 32) and yet Graham Clarke says that Śākya bzang-po founded the first temple in Yol-mo in the late 17th century. G. Clarke, "A Helambu History", 7.

tantric authorisations of the Northern Treasure tradition (some of which were said to have been received directly from the deceased master bKra-shis stobs-rgyal in mystic visions⁹¹), as well as the unbiased teachings of his own (dGe-lugs-pa) and other schools. Ngag gi dbang-po died in 1639.

Two years later, at Mon-mkhar rnam-sras-gling, the birth of Blo-bzang padma 'phrin-las (1641–1718)⁹² was marked by an unusually high number of auspicious portents and he was recognized as the fourth in the line of *Mahāvīdyādhara*. After the ceremony of his reenthronement by his former disciple bsTan-'dzin nor-bu of Yol-mo, Padma 'phrin-las became a disciple of the Fifth Dalai Lama from whom he received both *śrāmaṇera* and *bhikṣu* vows.

Studying intensively under some of the greatest teachers of his day,⁹³ Padma 'phrin-las received the empowerments and commentaries of a large number of tantric doctrines from both the old and new schools and he revised and greatly extended the teachings of his own incarnation line, the Northern Treasure school of rDo-rje-brag. Gathering together all of the teachings that had been handed down in the three streams of transmission from the original *gter ston* (the Mother, Son and Disciple lineages), he united them into a single line. He composed a number of new treatises and worked extensively to arrange the ritual texts of the Byang-gter in proper liturgical order, supplementing the original texts with extra parts wherever necessary. Correcting such errors as had arisen in the transmission, he reinstated earlier traditions of ritual activity which had become lost or confused, such as the proper systems of chanting, laying out of *maṇḍala*, preparing the sacrificial *bali* and so on, filling thirteen volumes with his work. Rig-'dzin padma 'phrin-las was killed in 1718 when the invading Dzungar Mongols razed the monastery of Thub-bstan rdo-rje-brag to the ground.⁹⁴

The fifth incarnation of Rig-'dzin rgo-dldem was bsKal-bzang padma dbang-phyug (1720–1770), born at Nyag-rong lcags-mdud in the district of sPo-'bor-sgang in eastern Tibet to a family claiming descent from the ancient lHa dynasty of Tibetan monarchs. Following his installation at rDo-rje-brag he thoroughly repaired all damage to his monastery. His own visionary teachings (*dag snang*) include the *bKa' 'dus chos kyi rgya mtsho* and the *Padma drag po* meditations upon the *guru* in ferocious aspect.

After him came Khams-gsum zil-gnon (Kun-bzang 'gyur-med lhun-grub rdo-rje, the sixth incarnation),⁹⁵ born at gSer-tog in the region of Dar-rtse-mdo where stands the easternmost branch monastery of the Byang-gter tradition; and Ngag-dbang 'jam-dpal mi-

91. See S. Karmay, *Secret Visions*, 66, 74, etc., also 34 where it is said that Padmasambhava himself gave the Fifth Dalai Lama instructions in the Byang-gter.

92. S. Karmay (*op. cit.*) gives his date of birth as 1640.

93. Among whom were Zur-chen chos-dbyings rang-grol, bKa'-gyur-ba bsod-nams mchog-ldan, Khra-tshang-ba blo-mchog rdo-rje, gTer-chen 'gyur-med rdo-rje, lHa-btsun nam-mkha' 'jigs-med and Se-ston thugs-mchog 'od-'bar.

94. See L. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early Eighteenth Century* and D.L. Snellgrove & H.E. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, for details of this troubled historical period.

95. Biographical outlines for the remaining incarnations are taken from sTag-lung-tse-sprul Rinpoche, *A Brief History of Dorje Tag Monastery*, 12–3.

'gyur lhun-grub rdo-rje (the seventh) who came from rNam-sras-gling in Mon-mkhar. Both of these lamas died while still quite young.

The eighth *Mahāvidyādhara* of rDo-rje-brag was bsKal-bzang bdud-'dul rdo-rje, born in upper La-yag in lHo-brag. Famous for his skill in fierce tantric rites, he is said to have repulsed the invading Gorkha army by means of his occult power, for which service to his country he was rewarded by the government with the title *Hu thug thu*.

Thub-bstan chos-dbang mnyam-nyid rdo-rje, the ninth successor to the throne, was born near Lhasa in the fifth month of the wood monkey year (1884). He passed away in the year of the water monkey, 1932.

The present incumbent is Thub-bstan 'jig-med rnam-grol rgya-mtsho who was born in Lhasa in 1936. Recognized as the tenth incarnation of the *gter ston*, he was ordained as a monk by Ra-sgreng Rinpoche, the regent after the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. As well as studying the Byang-gter tradition with 'Go-tsha mkhan-chen Theg-mchog bstan-'dzin, a disciple of his predecessor, he has been taught by mKhan Rinpoche of sMin-grol-gling and bDud-'joms Rinpoche. Despite the overthrow of Tibet by the communist Chinese, rNam-grol rgya-mtsho has remained in Tibet where he has lately been active in the rebuilding of his monastery which was almost completely devastated during the 'cultural revolution'.⁹⁶

Northern Treasures studies in Tibet

In general, the religious tradition of rDo-rje-brag and its affiliate monasteries includes daily recitations from the *Chos spyod rab gsal* collection of Byang-gter prayers, the entire volume of which is memorized by every monk.⁹⁷ More able students undertake arduous meditative retreats focussed upon the 'outer, inner and secret' *sādhana*s of the Byang-gter⁹⁸ and then the study of the wrathful deities including Yamāntaka and Vajrakīla. All inmates are expected to train in the arts of ritual chanting, music and dance, drawing the *maṇḍala* in coloured powder, sculpting the intricate *balis* and the weaving of *mdos*.⁹⁹ Regular examinations are held in the *sūtra* and *tantra* throughout the year, for the course of study includes all branches of Buddhist knowledge, not merely the special revelations of the Byang-gter.

On the day of the first half-moon of each year, at the end of the new-year celebrations, the *saṅgha* of rDo-rje-brag gather together in order to spend a week practising the Byang-gter *tshe sgrub* rituals for the health and longevity of the world. This is accompanied by meditation upon Sukhāvati, the western paradise of Amitābha, whose empowerment is bestowed upon the entire assembly on the day of the first full moon.

96. rNam-grol rgya-mtsho has repeatedly been invited to Dharamsala in northern India by the present abbot of dGa'-gdong monastery (see below).

97. cf. C. R. Lama, "The Twelve Months in the Life of a Monastery", in which the annual cycle of practice at 'Khor-gdong-dgon is discussed.

98. *Phyi sgrub thugs rje chen po 'gro ba kun grol, Nang sgrub rig 'dzin gdung sgrub* and *gSang sgrub drag po rtsal*.

99. The expertise of the Brag-thog monks in this art is mentioned in D.L. Snellgrove & T. Skorupski, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, vol. I, 102.

On the new moon day of the second month, the *bhūmividhi* is performed in preparation for the elaborate construction of the Avalokiteśvara *maṇḍala*. The deity is then worshipped for seven days, at the end of which he is presented with the concluding *homa* offerings and his empowerment is bestowed upon the assembly.

During the third month, five days are devoted after the first half-moon to the *Zhi khro* cycle of Karma gling-pa and at the end of the month the *maṇḍala* of Gar-dbang rdor-sems is constructed in accordance with the text *Thugs kyi me long*.

The fourth month begins with a week-long practice of Legs-ldan-rje's *Tshe sgrub bdud rtsi 'khyil ba* cycle and the worship of *sKu gsum rigs sdus*. A token of the 'longevity nectar' produced during these rites is always presented to the Dalai Lama. From the tenth to the fourteenth, the peaceful and wrathful deities of the *dGongs pa zang thal* are worshipped and one thousand butter-lamps are offered on the day of the full moon in honour of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and entry into *parinirvāṇa*. The month ends with a three day *gtor zlog* ritual.

Throughout the early part of the fifth month, rehearsals of the musicians and dancers are held in preparation for the elaborate worship of *Bla ma gsang 'dus*¹⁰⁰ which is performed on the tenth. The rites of *Srog gi spu gri* are performed on the eighth and a *gaṇacakra* offered on the ninth in accordance with the texts of *Rig 'dzin gdung sgrub*. This is followed in the evening by the dances of the *daśakrodha* kings. Crowds of pilgrims gather to witness the spectacular masked dances of the *Guru mtshan bryad* on the tenth and to receive an empowerment of long-life. The worship of *Bla ma gsang 'dus* continues in the temple through the eleventh and twelfth and this is followed by the rites of *Drag po rtsal* on the thirteenth and those of *Guru yon tan gter mdzod* on the fourteenth.

The fourth day of the sixth month is set aside for the offering of one thousand butter-lamps and the *poṣadha* ceremony for the restoration of damaged vows is performed on the fifteenth. The summer retreat for all the monks begins on the sixteenth, during which time all the known 'words of the Buddha' (*bKa' 'gyur*) are recited. From the twenty-first to the twenty-seventh, the elaborate rite of '*Khor ba dbyings grol* is performed using a *maṇḍala* constructed of coloured powders. This culminates in a peaceful *homa* and the bestowal of empowerment.

The seventh and eighth days of the seventh month are spent preparing the intricate offerings required for the five day cycle of rituals to be performed from the ninth. This begins with the worship of *Rig 'dzin gdung sgrub* on the ninth and continues with an empowerment of *Bla ma gsang 'dus* on the tenth, the Nyang system of *Guru drag po* on the eleventh, the Byang-gter *Guru drag po* on the twelfth and a final *gaṇacakra* ceremony of *Guru yon tan gter mdzod* on the thirteenth. During the morning of the twentieth, the *bhūmividhi* is performed so that the *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla may be constructed throughout the evening. The remainder of the month is then devoted to the worship of this deity,¹⁰¹ concluding with "the casting of the *bali*" on the twenty-ninth and the performance of four

100. Revealed by the early *gtor ston* Guru chos-dbang.

101. Apart from this annual ten-day festival in his honour, Vajrakīla is worshipped daily in his own chapel called Srid-gsum mam-rgyal on the premises of rDo-rje-brag.

types of *homa* rite on the thirtieth. Following the rite of “accepting the *siddhi*”, the accumulated annual donations to the monastery are distributed among the monks.

The eighth and ninth months are generally taken as a holiday but during this period a delegation consisting of the abbot and ten monks have traditionally gone to Lhasa in order to spend four weeks blessing (*gYang 'gug*) the government with the rites of *Nor bu mchog rgyal* and *Dur bdag*.

From the seventeenth to the thirtieth of the ninth month, twenty-two monks from rDo-rje-brag would reside in the southern gate shrine of bSam-yas monastery as guests of the rDzong dpon where they would perform the Yamāntaka rites called '*Char kha nag po*.

On the nineteenth of the eleventh month, those monks whose duty it is to attend upon the *Mahāvīdyādhara* (*gzim chung pa*) perform the *bhūmividhi* as a prelude to laying out the coloured powder *maṇḍala* of either the Byang-gter *bKa' brgyad khro rol* or the Zhang-khrom *Tshe bdag* cycle, alternating the one with the other on successive years. The main ritual practice then continues from the twenty-second to the twenty-eighth and the rite of hurling the *zor* takes place on the twenty-ninth. On the final day of the month, *bali* offerings are made and they perform the rite of “accepting the *siddhi*”.

The latter half of the twelfth month is especially devoted to rituals concerned with “casting out the demons of the old year” (*dgu gtor*). The most elaborate preparations of the site, the *maṇḍala* and the ritual offerings are made in accordance with either the *bKa' brgyad khro rol* or the *Tshe bdag* texts, these being alternated annually as before. The main *gtor zlog* rites begin on the twenty-second and continue until the end of the month, accompanied by dances on each of the four final days.¹⁰² To mark the end of the Tibetan year, the rites conclude with particularly auspicious prayers of benediction and the practice that “averts the Lord of Death”, as taught by Padma 'phrin-las.

Beginning with the *gter ston* himself, who travelled extensively throughout Tibet during his lifetime, the teachings of the Byang-gter have spread to all parts of the Tibetan Buddhist world. Its doctrines have formed a part of the study curriculum in a large number of unrelated monasteries and its own establishments have numbered over fifty, both large and small, from Brag-thog-dgon in Ladakh to Yol-mo-gangs and Shar-pa in Nepal,¹⁰³ bKra-shis-lding and others in Sikkim, and rDor-brag-dgon in Dar-rtse-mdo.

Second state oracle

Among these monasteries, of particular interest is the small establishment of dGa'-gdong-dgon, the seat of the second most important (after gNas-chung) oracle in Tibet. It is the function of the resident medium of that monastery to act as a mouthpiece for the protective deity Shing-bya-can.¹⁰⁴ This *yakṣa* 'With a Wooden Bird' is a member of the sKu-Ingā

102. The main *sgrol 'cham* and *zor 'cham* being elaborately performed on the twenty-ninth.

103. Byang-gter rituals are widely known and practised throughout Nepal, especially by the Tamang among whom the tradition was propagated by bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, the third Rig-'dzin yol-mo-ba sprul-sku, in the seventeenth century. Yol-mo and its temples are described in C. Jest, *Monuments of Northern Nepal*, 80–90. A brief description of Brag-thog-dgon is to be found in D.L. Snellgrove & T. Skorupski, *Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, I, 132.

104. René de Nebesky-Wojtkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, 5, 109–15, etc.

group¹⁰⁵ and the particular guardian of the people of Mi-nyag, the ancestral home of the Sikkim royal family and thus closely associated with the Byang-gter tradition. In a prophesy concerning the invasion of Tibet by the Mongols, the *Padma bka'i thang* recommend that this deity be invoked as a powerful protector.¹⁰⁶

Shing-bya-can is described as dwelling in a palace of gold to the south under the appellation 'King of Virtue' (Yon-tan gyi rgyal-po). Black in colour with one face and two hands, he wields a battle-axe and a snare and rides a black horse with white heels. He wears a cloak of snake and tiger skins and a cane hat covered with *garuḍa* skin. His queen is the black gSer gyi spu-gri-ma who has a single face and four hands in which she holds a sword, red banner, lance and trident. She wears a garment of rough yellow silk with a belt of snakes and a black silken headdress. She roams around at night on a donkey with a red spot on its forehead. Accompanying the royal pair are an 'emanation' of light blue colour, their 'minister' Bya-rgod thang-nag, who has the appearance of a young *upāsaka* carrying a *vajra* and hammer, and their train of messengers consisting of long-tailed monkeys, grey-haired apes and rats.

Noted for his particular power in controlling the weather, the human medium of this deity (the dGa'-gdong chos-rje) is regularly employed by the government of Tibet in this capacity. Of greater import, however, is his supposed ability to trace the movements of deceased religious dignitaries and thereby render great assistance to the various monastic officials (*bla brang*) in search of their high priest's reincarnation. During their initial meeting with the medium, the petitioners would generally not disclose the actual details of their quest, these being put directly to the deity himself only after the medium had entered his oracular trance. Part of the reason for keeping their mission secret is that not all parents were found to be happy at the prospect of losing their child simply because he had been recognized as the rightful occupant of the lama's throne in some far away monastery.¹⁰⁷

dGa'-gdong-dgon in Tibet, now totally destroyed, was home to approximately one hundred and seventy-five monks. The oracle, a married man whose family domicile lay only a few hundred yards from the monastery, was apparently expected to enter a state of trance in order to fulfill his role as Shing-bya-can's mouthpiece as often as twice a week. All the preparatory work for the ritual trance being the responsibility of the monks, the medium would go to the monastery only after everything had been made ready. Donning the elaborate costume of the deity, he would then be questioned by the interested parties and expected to deliver his prediction(s). The spectacle of the trance would be witnessed by any number of persons but the information divulged by the deity would be kept secret—even from the medium himself who would have no recollection of events after the trance had ended. Indeed, the medium would generally fall into a faint following his ordeal and, even after regaining consciousness, would continue to experience nausea and severe abdominal pains for some time.

105. Consisting of Pe-har, the oracular deity of gNas-chung-dgon, and his four companions.

106. Douglas & Bays, *The Life and Liberation of Padmasambhava*, vol. II, 392.

107. D. Barlocher, *Testimonies of Tibetan Tulkus*, vol. I, 310–24.

The role of the medium being an inherited one, the present dGa'-gdong chos-rje, bsTan-'dzin dbang-grags, was selected for the title from among the six eligible sons of the late oracle because he was sickly and slightly insane, such attributes being favourably regarded as indicative of a good candidate for the gruelling task of offering his body on a regular basis as host to a powerful foreign spirit. Afraid of causing offense to the deity, bsTan-'dzin dbang-grags accepted the role for which he had been chosen and began a period of ritual purification¹⁰⁸ under the guidance of the senior dGa'-gdong monks. He is now settled with his wife in Dharamsala, actively involved there in building up the new dGa'-gdong monastery.

The Byang-gter Tradition in modern India

As the power and importance of rDo-rje-brag monastery grew in Tibet, so the number of incarnation lineages within its hierarchy increased.¹⁰⁹ This number now stands at eleven, amongst which is that of sTag-lung-tse. The fourth incarnation in this line is the present sTag-lung-tse-sprul Rinpoche, bShad-grub nyin-byed 'phrin-las bzang-po, who was born in 1927. The foremost authority of the Byang-gter in India today, 'Phrin-las bzang-po was educated as a *sprul sku* at rDo-rje-brag monastery in Tibet from the age of eight, and at the age of twenty-three he became its elected abbot, a post which he held for six years.

Leaving Tibet in 1959 among the thousands of refugees fleeing from Chinese aggression, 'Phrin-las bzang-po was invited to act as the abbot of the only Byang-gter monastery in India at that time, Brag-thog-dgon in Ladakh. Within the last few years, however, he has successfully been able to reestablish Ewaṃ lcog-sgar rdo-rje-brag in his adopted home, Simla in Himachal Pradesh.

108. During the interviews recorded with Daniel Barlocher (*supra*) he stated that he could easily avoid ever becoming the deity's medium (a role which he had not at that time actually begun to perform) by the simple expedient of adopting a dissolute lifestyle so that the deity would naturally refuse to enter his morally contaminated form.

109. See the introduction to the *dGongs pa zang thal* for a list of these incarnation lineages and also for a comprehensive list of Byang-gter monasteries throughout Tibet.

PART TWO

THE KĪLA



Chapter Two

Buddhist Assimilation of the Kīla

Vedic antecedents

According to the first book of the *R̥gveda*, the demiurge Indra employed a *kīla*-like weapon before the world came into being in order to slay the primordial cosmic serpent Vṛtra within whose coils were trapped ‘the waters of life’.¹¹⁰ As the primeval ocean was released life began, thus revealing the *kīla* as an instrument of paradox: a weapon having the power of both life and death. As a religious emblem it appears to kill and yet it creates life.

It is also said that during his act of creating the world, Indra pinned down the earth and propped up the heavens. Prior to that, earth and heaven were not separated. Thus the spike can be seen to possess a cosmic dimension as a weapon that spans both earth and heaven. The special function of its lower part is to stabilize the earth, while its upper part leads to the realm of the gods.¹¹¹

These early themes remain discernible to the present day within the complex mythology of the Buddhist *kīla*. The idea of a spike that kills and liberates, a spike that strikes into the earth and reaches up to heaven, seems quite quickly to have become absorbed into Buddhism and eventually arose as the focal point of a tantric cult dedicated to the worship of the esoteric deity Vajrakīla who bears as his special symbol the ancient pointed spike adopted as a powerful instrument of ritual and magic.

A preliminary step towards the Buddhist assimilation of the *kīla* was probably the annual circumscription of an area within which the *saṅgha* would have been expected to remain for the duration of the summer season rains retreat. As the monks were engaged in pegging out the boundaries of their sacred domicile with wooden stakes and lengths of cord, they would undoubtedly have wished those boundaries to be secure against the onslaughts of Māra who could be relied upon to try and disturb their meditations. Thus, as the stakes were hammered into the ground, the myth of Indra *versus* Vṛtra may have come

110. See F. B. J. Kuiper, “Cosmogony and Conception: a Query”, 91–138. Cf. S. Kramrisch, *The Presence of Śiva*, 29ff.

111. A function often ascribed to mountains, popularly regarded in Indo-Tibetan culture as natural manifestations of the *indrakīla*. An apotropaic aspect of the spike is also to be noted in the *Atharvaveda* ritual of hammering acacia pegs into the ground in order to drive out demons of illness. G. U. Thite, *Medicine: Its Magico-religious Aspects According to the Vedic and Later Literature*, 148.

to mind and been recast in Buddhist form. Any demarcation of a circumference automatically creates a centre and, for all practical purposes, a wooden stake is again the natural implement with which to mark out the central spot.

Architecture

Indian treatises on temple architecture describe a number of operations for which the use of wooden pegs is required. For the most part these pegs are nailed into the earth in order to establish the outline of the building to be constructed. The texts simply describe the distances that are required to lie between these wooden pegs and the manner in which the whole area is to be divided up by further stakes and lengths of string so as to facilitate the delineation of the full temple plan upon the ground. Of course there is nothing extraordinary in any of this. We may suppose that similar instructions would have been included in a text devoted to the planning of a medieval kitchen garden, had any such tract been written. A temple, however, is consciously dedicated to the divine and so we may reasonably expect any mythological aspect adhering to the form or function of a wooden spike to be more expressly stated in a treatise on architecture than in a gardening manual.

The initial prescription in such treatises is to locate, by astrological methods, the earth-dwelling *nāga* within whose domain the architects wish to construct their edifice. It is then possible to stabilize the building site by fixing that *nāga* with a *kīla* judiciously driven into the earth.¹¹²

Stella Kramrisch,¹¹³ likening the temple to an image of a god, says that the *āmalaka* (high dome) of the building is regarded as the head and that the *brahmarandhra* (foramen in the skull) is pierced by the *kīla* which fixes the *stūpikā* (finial). This corresponds closely to the Vaiṣṇavite tantric meditation in which the *vajrakīla* is contemplated within a thousand-petalled lotus in the crown of the *yogin*'s head. There it pierces the centre of the six-pointed *mahāyantra*, an emblematic figure resembling the six-pointed *dharmodaya* pierced by the tip of the Buddhist 'cosmic *kīla*' (*bhavakīla*).¹¹⁴ The central axis of the Buddhist *stūpa*, also, is known as *indrakīla*¹¹⁵ and this has the function of stabilizing both the earth and the edifice itself.

So far, then, we have seen the *kīla* or wooden stake as both boundary marker and holder of the centre, where 'centre' refers not to a single point but to a vertical axis indicated by wooden stakes both above and below. We have also noted that Indra used a *kīla* to bring about liberation from a hostile force and that the ground where a *kīla* is implanted is considered to be firmly fixed and held in a stable condition with the upright line of the peg itself acting as a conduit to the realm of the gods.

112. R. Mayer, "Observations on the Tibetan Phur-ba and the Indian Kīla", 167. This practice of *vāstuvidyā* is condemned as a vile art in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, I, 9 & II, 87, etc. According to Trevor Ling its purpose was to ascertain before building a house whether or not the site is haunted by spirits. T. Ling, *Buddhism and the Mythology of Evil*, 19.

113. S. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 359.

114. *Brahmasamhitā*, V, 2. A. Avalon, ed., *Tantrik Texts*, XV.

115. John Irwin, "The Axial Symbolism of the Early Stūpas", 21.

In the lexicons we observe the word *indrakīla*¹¹⁶ to include ‘door bolt’ among its several meanings and in later Buddhist writings this word came also to mean the threshold of any door or gate, be it the entrance to house, palace or city.¹¹⁷ Robert Mayer mentions certain pillar-like *indrakīlas* which function as boundary markers indicating the rule of law within and separating the enclosed area from the lawless wilderness of no-man’s land without. In the case of the royal palace he shows them as markers of special reserved areas for which royal authority is required before admission can be gained.¹¹⁸ The prevailing form of these pillars is octagonal in cross section, the very shape that I described in a previous work as the one required for the columns supporting the *torāṇa* at the entrance to a tantric *maṇḍala*.¹¹⁹

Lily de Silva links the placement of the *indrakīla* with the establishment of the *bodhimaṇḍa*, about which she says (quoting from the *Pūjāvaliya*): “(it) is a great fortress protected by the majestic wall of the ten *pāramitās*, extending up to the cupola of the Brahmā world. Even Māra with his vast array of forces could not get past this formidable barrier”.¹²⁰ When we come to deal with the tantric rites of the *kīla* we shall observe how ten *kīlas* form just such a formidable barrier against Māra and his hordes, surrounding and enclosing the sacred palace (or fortress) of the *bodhimaṇḍala*. In the rite of initiation through which this protective power is transmitted, these ten *kīlas* are explicitly associated with the ten *pāramitās*.¹²¹

The *kīla* which marks the boundary is now seen to be associated with the protection of the enclosure against intrusion. A ‘border’ or ‘threshold’, of course, need not necessarily be visibly located in space. The threshold of a house, palace or city is perhaps more tangible than the threshold of life and death but the latter, too, provides us with themes that have since become incorporated into the general mythology of the *kīla* as an instrument of magic. One such theme is derived from popular folklore at a great remove from the lofty Vedic tradition of Indra *versus* the chthonic Vṛtra. This is the idea of the *vetāla*, a picturesque topic which bears all the hallmarks of a Haitian voodoo cult nurtured in the fertile ground of village superstition.¹²²

Vetāla: ghouls at the limit of life and death

The term *vetāla* (‘zombie’, corpse animated by rites of black magic) was perhaps coined by the Buddhists for these creatures made their first appearance in Indian literature within

116. Sir M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 166.

117. F. Edgerton, *BHS Dictionary*, 114. See also the *Pāli-English Dictionary* of the PTS where identical meanings are ascribed to *indakhīla*.

118. R. Mayer, *op. cit.*, cites the work of Lily de Silva, Jan Gonda and Charles Malamoud (among others) in order to show the pillar *indrakīla* to be a conflation of the door peg (*indrakīla*) with the sacrificial post (*yūpa*).

119. M. Boord, *Maṇḍala Meaning and Method*, Kailash Editions, London (forthcoming).

120. Lily de Silva, “The Symbolism of the Indrakīla in the Paritta Maṇḍapa”, 248.

121. See below, Chapter Seven.

122. The voodoo-like technique of bringing harm to an enemy by piercing his effigy with spikes is a significant feature of the later *kīla* rituals (dealt with in detail in Part Three of the present work).

the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*,¹²³ the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra*¹²⁴ and the ten-sectioned *vinaya* of the Sarvāstivādins.¹²⁵ Later references are to be found in the Buddhist *dhāraṇīs*, such as the *Mahāmāyūrī* and the *Pañcabuddhoṣṇīṣa-dhāraṇī*, and they are placed in the entourage of Śiva by the Śaivites of Kashmir.¹²⁶ In the first chapter of the *Vimalaprabhā* they are described as naked and emaciated, holding curved knives (*karṭṭikā*) and skull cups in their hands and uttering fearful howls of *phaṭ!* Fire issues from their mouths and they are said to be cruel-minded eaters of human flesh.¹²⁷

In a number of Buddhist tantric treatises, the *krodharāja* Yamāntaka is said to have as his queen the mistress of these un-dead ghouls called (appropriately enough) Vetālī. In the earlier texts, however, she is known as Śmaśānikā (Mistress of the Charnel Ground) and such is her name in the Byang-gter Vajrakīla cycle. She is said to have appeared in person to Kantali, a stitcher of rags, after he pierced his finger with a spike and to have become his *guru*. Kantali's success in following her instructions quickly elevated him to the rank of *mahāsiddha*.¹²⁸ Vetālī also occurs in the circle of eight *dākinīs* (Gaurī and the rest) found in the *maṇḍalas* of Hevajra, Jñānaḍākinī, Heruka, Yogāmbara, Vajraḍāka and others. Her seat in the circle is in the western direction of all these *maṇḍalas* and her colour is given as red/black.¹²⁹

In Chapter XXVI of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (MMK) (widely acknowledged as probably the earliest of all Buddhist *tantras*), two rites are given through which one may seek to animate a corpse and attain the *vetālasiddhi*.¹³⁰ According to the *yogin* Kāṇha, who was himself apparently adept at this art, this is one of the *siddhis* to be counted among 'the eight great accomplishments' (*aṣṭamahāsiddhi*).¹³¹ Narrative accounts of the *modus operandi* are to be found in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*¹³² and other sources,¹³³ all of which

123. Ed. Rahder, Paris and Louvain, 1926, 45.

124. Ed. J. Nobel, Leipzig, 1937, 104, 107.

125. T. 1435, first translated into Chinese in 404 AD by Kumārajīva.

126. K. Dowman, *Masters of Mahāmudrā*, 326, says that Vetālī, the mistress of these ghouls, was worshipped by the Kāpālikas in Orissa at the popular Kāpālinī Temple of Bhubaneswar. It is also said that Vetāla and Bhairava were twin sons born to Tārāvātī after she had been raped by Śiva. W. D. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*, 69.

127. J. Upadhyaya, *Vimalaprabhā*, 9. On p. 8 of that text they are listed among the two groups (or the extended group?) of the eight great fears (*aṣṭaghora*) and are identified with *piśācas*. Such an identity is not attested elsewhere however.

128. K. Dowman, *op. cit.*, 325–8.

129. As described in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.

130. MMK, 292.

131. This unusual occult accomplishment is not included among the *aṣṭamahāsiddhis* either in the *Sādhanamālā* or any other source consulted by me, unless it be equated with the *siddhi* of the sword (see below, note 139). It is listed as a minor *siddhi* in the *Vajrabhairava-tantra* (B. Siklos, 95). For the biography of Kāṇha see David Templeman (1989), within which Kāṇha's list of eight *siddhis* is to be found on p. 14.

132. Somadeva, *Kathāsaritsāgara*, book XII, chapter LXXIII. English translation by C. H. Tawney, *Ocean of the Streams of Story*, Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal, reprint 1968.

The popular "Twenty-five tales of the *vetāla*" (*Vetālapañcaviṃśati*) contained within this work are thought by A. W. Macdonald to be of Buddhist origin (*Matériaux pour l'étude de la littérature populaire tibétaine: Éditions et traduction de deux manuscrits tibétains des "Histoires du cadavre"*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1967, 16–7). Several Sanskrit

portray the rite very much in accordance with the details given below. This would seem to indicate that the practice of this peculiar occult art eventually became widespread, partly due perhaps to the fascination that it held for the more macabre elements in the public imagination. Having successfully animated the corpse, the *sādhaka* was free to employ it as his servant. In the Blue Annals¹³⁴ we read that the scholar Vāgīśvarakīrti gained the *siddhi* of great memory from a *vetāla*.

In both of the descriptions given in the MMK, it is said that the *yogin* should perform this rite on a corpse in sound condition (*akṣatāṅga*, “with unbroken limbs”). Such a corpse (according to the first rite) should be restrained by means of four *khadirakīlas*¹³⁵ and the *yogin* should sit upon it and perform a *homa* rite¹³⁶ in which he burns offerings of powdered gems. The second rite says that the corpse should be nailed down with *kīlas* of jujube wood (*badara*). In both cases the *kīlas* are presumably a precautionary measure against the *sādhaka* being overpowered by the monster when it arises.¹³⁷

If offerings of *lohacūrṇa* (which could be either red copper filings or powdered red iron rust) are placed into the mouth of the corpse it will poke out its tongue which the *sādhaka* must immediately sever. This magical fetish will be “as useful to its owner as a retinue of one hundred retainers”. The first version of the rite likens the tip of the tongue to a wish-fulfilling jewel (*cintāmaṇi*) obtained as a magical reward for the oblations of powdered gems. The owner of such a prize becomes “an emperor among knowledge-holders” (*vidyādhara* *cakravartin*) with the power to survive an ‘intermediate aeon’ (*antarakālpa*) and sport (with the gods) on the summit of Mount Meru. According to Tāranātha,¹³⁸ the

versions of these tales are known, the earliest still extant having been composed by Kṣemendra circa 1037 and included in his *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī*. Other versions were composed by Śivadāsa, Jambhaladatta and Vallabhadāsa and translations exist in many Indian vernaculars as well as Nepali, Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese, etc. T. Riccardi, *A Nepali Version of the Vetālapañcaviṃśati*, New Haven, American Oriental Society, 1971, 6.

133. Such as the detailed account to be found in Bāṇa’s *Harṣacarita*. English translation by E. B. Cowel & F. W. Thomas, MLB, reprint 1961, 90–2.

Varāhamihira mentions the rite several times in his *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (English translation by Ramakrishna Bhat, 2 vols., MLB, 1981). At LXIX, 37 he classifies it as *abhiçāra* (black magic), and at XCVIII, 7 he says that for maximum success the *vetālasādhana* should be performed under the *tikṣṇa* (*dāruṇa*, dreadful) asterisms Mūla, Ārdrā, Jyeṣṭhā or Āśleṣā. Sorcerers who perform such rites (*vetālakarmajña*) are themselves persons under the stellar rulership of Ārdrā.

134. G. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 757–8.

135. Acacia spikes. Acacia trees bear vicious barbs up to two or three inches in length and it may be these that are referred to here for, as written in the *Sādhanamālā*, 171, *kaṇṭakena ... kīlayet*, “one should fasten (it) with a thorn”. Later, however, the manufacture of ritual *kīlas* demanded the wood of the tree itself. Cf. note 193, below.

136. The *homa* is to be performed in the mouth of the corpse.

137. Alexandra David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*, 102–4, and Turrell Wylie, “Ro-Langs: The Tibetan Zombie”, 74ff, provide graphic descriptions of the menace said to be caused by these uncontrolled ‘walking dead’. Surprisingly, however, neither author mentions the role of the *kīla* in keeping them suppressed.

138. Chimpa & Chattopadyaya, *Tāranātha’s History of Buddhism in India*, 263. Tāranātha is said to have heard the biographies of many *siddhas* from his Indian teacher Buddhagupta “who was well travelled and a mine of stories”. D. Templeman, *The Origin of the Tārā Tantra*, 8.

severed tongue turns into a sword which bestows these powers¹³⁹ while the corpse itself turns to gold. The MMK says that the owner of the tongue may travel wherever he pleases and take possession of whatever he sees. After death he enters a pure realm or he becomes a king in the realm of men.

Almost identical accounts of these rites (including specifically the use of *kīlas* to peg down the corpse) are to be found in Chinese translations of the *Vajrakumāra-tantra*.¹⁴⁰ Bāṇa¹⁴¹ and Somadeva¹⁴² add colour to these descriptions by their observations that this *sādhana* is to be performed during the night of the dark moon (on the fourteenth night of the waning moon), within a *maṇḍala* illumined by the flames of lamps fed with human fat. The magic circle itself is to be drawn with powdered human bones and vessels of blood are placed in the corners. These authors confirm the view that the rite brings its successful practitioner to the state of a *vidyādhara*, warn of the dire consequences of failure and make note of the tongue as a magical fetish that enables its bearer to travel without hindrance.

A connection between severed tongues and the risen dead is noted in the Pāli *Jātaka* tale of Padukusalamāṇava,¹⁴³ thus demonstrating the antiquity of the motif in Indian folklore but the actual significance of the connection is unclear.¹⁴⁴

It is not the tongue gained from the *vetāla* which is of importance to us here, however, but the *kīla* as a means of keeping the animated corpse under control. With regard to this, Tāranātha recounts in his *sGrol ma'i rgyud kyi byung khung* the story of the slaying of a *vetāla* by Jñānadeva (a student of Śāntideva) who, “intoning Tārā’s *mantra* and wielding his *kīla* ... caused the zombie to fall backwards and collapse with the crown of its head caved in”.¹⁴⁵

Japanese tradition has it that the words KĪLI KĪLI found in some of the *kīlamantras* are onomatopoeic for the creaking sounds made by the doors of the *maṇḍala* palace as they close, thus preventing the entry of obstructing forces¹⁴⁶ but we return fully to the theme of the zombie and the *kīla* with the Nepalese tradition of architecture in which the threshold of a house is viewed as an actual or potential *vetāla*. In keeping with this view, every year the Nepali householder must drive a nail into the threshold of his dwelling in order to

139. René de Nebesky-Wojtkovitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, 65, notes a green form of Mahākāla (mGon-po ljang-khu) who carries as an attribute a sword made out of *vetāla* tongue. Possibly *vetālasiddhi* is simply another term for *khadgasiddhi* (“attainment of the magic sword”).

140. T. 1222. The significant contribution afforded by the Sino-Japanese tradition to a historical study of Vajrakīla is dealt with below. I am indebted, both here and below, to my colleagues Masahide Mori and Stephen Hodge for their invaluable assistance with all my enquiries into this field.

141. Cowell & Thomas, *Harsacarita*, 90–2.

142. Tawney, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 31, & vol. 2, 138, 206, 207, 208, 232, 233, etc. Dozens of references are to be found within these two volumes.

143. V. Fausboll, ed., *The Jātaka Together With its Commentary*, London, Trubner & Co., 1883, III, 511–512.

144. The commentary furnishes no information on this point.

145. D. Templeman, *The Origin of the Tārā Tantra*, 29.

146. Y. Hatta, *Shingon Jiten (A Dictionary of Mantra)*.

prevent this fearful monster from rising and it is particularly curious to note that this annual ritual is performed on *nāgapañcamī*, the day dedicated by the Nepalese to the worship of serpents, thus maintaining the intimate connection between the *kīla* and the *nāga* noted earlier.¹⁴⁷ *Vetāla* are also to be observed lying across the threshold of hypaethral shrines in Nepal, such as the one to whom bloody oblations are presented at the entrance to the sacred site (*pīṭha*) of Pacali Bhairava on the banks of the Bagmati river.¹⁴⁸

The sūtras

Within the early Buddhist *sūtras* in both Pāli and Sanskrit, the wooden stake is well known as a boundary-marker and so on but there is no discernable shift in emphasis in the direction of its apotheosis.¹⁴⁹ The single possible exception to this is the case of the *indrakīlas* placed for protection outside the city gates in Sri Lanka to which offerings of incense and flowers are made. But, in the words of de Silva, “this aspect of the *indrakīla* as an object worthy of honour is certainly an advancement made on the concept of *indrakīla* as revealed from Pāli and Sanskrit sources”.¹⁵⁰

The association of the *kīla* with doors, thresholds, boundaries and their protection being well attested, it is interesting to note the sixty-third *sutta* of the *Suttanipāta* in which the seven requisites for the protection of a fortress are described. This *sutta* specifically states the pillar (*esikā* = *indakhīla*) to be the chief of these because, being unmovable, it is the very symbol of stability. The seven are then likened to ‘seven forms of wealth’ (*saptadhanāni*) that give proper security to the ascetic. According to this list, the pillar is like faith (*śraddhā*), the moat shame (*hrī*), the citadel modesty (*apatrāpya*), the armoury of swords and spears like learning (*śruta*), the well-armed troops are like valour (*vīrya*) or renunciation (*tyāga*), the wise gatekeeper who refuses entry to strangers mindfulness (*smṛti*) or morality (*śīla*) and the tall, sturdy ramparts are like wisdom (*prajñā*).¹⁵¹

In a recent paper entitled “Buddhism, Taoism and the Rise of the City Gods”,¹⁵² Timothy Barrett highlighted a class of deity known as “gods in charge of cities” (*nagara-devatā*) mentioned in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. In a certain passage of that *sūtra*¹⁵³ strongly reminiscent of the above citation from the *Suttanipāta*, Ratnanetra (a god of this class) instructs the disciple Sudhana to guard and protect the city of the mind by strenuous endeavour in virtue. “Build strong walls about the city of mind by purification of mind in

147. M. Slusser, *Nepal Maṇḍala*, 362, 421. I am informed by a Nepali Hindu currently resident in London that this belief and its accompanying ritual are widespread throughout Nepal.

148. *ibidem*, 335, and plate 369.

149. A. K. Warder in his *Introduction to Pali*, PTS, 1975, 363, defines *khīlo* as a “stake (for marking boundaries...)” and *indakhīlo* as a “royal stake (marking the royal threshold, also as a symbol of firmness...)”. The *Pāli-English Dictionary* edited by T. W. Rhy-Davids & William Stede, adds, “a large slab of stone let into the ground at the entrance of a house ... Threshold”, to its definition of *indakhīla* and also lists the adjective *khīlaka* meaning “having stakes or stumps as obstacles”.

150. Lily de Silva, “The Symbolism of the Indrakīla in the Paritta Maṇḍapa”, 242.

151. E. Hardy, ed., *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, IV, PTS, 1899, 106.

152. T. Skorupski, ed., *The Buddhist Forum*, vol. II, SOAS, 1991, 13–25.

153. Ed. P. L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, 1960, 339.

carrying out the vow of practice of universal good".¹⁵⁴ This passage, says Barrett whose paper has much to say about the cult of gods of walls, "attracted a considerable amount of Chinese commentary". It also says much about the Buddhist attitude to religion in which all practical matters in the mundane world are seen to have their metaphysical equivalents of practical value in the realm of the sacred. It is this attitude that lies at the heart of the apotheosis of the *kīla*.

A curious parallel process of apotheosis is to be observed in the iconography of the four goddesses who guard the doors of the *maṇḍala* of Viśvaḍāka in which a white goddess in the east is the apotheosis of a lock or bolt (*tālaka*), a yellow goddess in the south is the apotheosis of keys (*kuñcikā*), a red goddess in the west is the apotheosis of a door panel (*kapāṭa*) and a black goddess in the north is the apotheosis of a dividing curtain (*kāṇḍapaṭa*).¹⁵⁵ Thus we should not be surprised to witness the eventual rise of the *kīla* as a deity, despite the absence of firm indications in the early Pāli sources.

Dawn of the kīlamantra (dhāraṇī)

Although very little in the earlier *sūtras* seemed to impinge directly upon the subject of our present enquiry, within the *dhāraṇīs* that became increasingly prominent as a genre of later Mahāyāna literature are definite signs of the initial stages of a process through which the *kīla* came to be incorporated into the Buddhist fold as an instrument of magical power.

With regard to its function of stabilizing the earth, there is the *Vasudhārā-dhāraṇī* for the goddess of the earth which closes with the words TADYATHĀ KILI KILI AKṢA AKṢA (which may include the meaning of snake) BHAGAVATI. Even following the rise of the wrathful Vajrakīla *tantra*, the *kīla* retains its prior function of pacification of the earth and, in particular, the subjugation of the 'earth serpent'. The main purpose of the *Mahāmāyūrī-dhāraṇī*, cited above in connection with *vetāla*, is in fact to turn away snakes and to counteract the poison of snakebite. A phrase occurring several times within the *Māyūrī* charm runs ILI MILI KILI MILI.¹⁵⁶ This and similar phrases are also to be found elsewhere¹⁵⁷ and the important thing to note here is that, wherever they are met with, ILI and MILI refer to snakes¹⁵⁸ and KILI can be linked to the *kīla*. In this instance the *kīla* functions simply to create a magical barrier against snakes but it has an association also with the yogic skill of weather control, one of the earliest rites to demand the use of the hand-held *kīla*. This feat is thought to be achieved by overpowering those cloud-dwelling *nāgas* held to be responsible for rainfall, itself reminiscent of the mythology of Indra.

The *Mahāmāyūrī-dhāraṇī*, even in its most primitive form, proclaims its usefulness as a magical means of protecting boundaries. By the early fourth century AD, however, this

154. Translation by T. Cleary, *Entry into the Realm of Reality*, Boston & Shaftesbury, 1987, 306.

155. Viśvaḍāka is the *ḍāka* of the *karmakula* in the group of five *ḍākas*. Abhayākara Gupta, *Niṣpanmayogāvalī*, 77.

156. A. F. R. Hoernle, *The Bower Manuscript*, (reprint) Delhi, 1987, 240e.

157. *Vidyādharaṇī-takā-aṣṭamahādharāṇī*: OM KILI MILI and RU RU MI HE KILI MILI ACITTA. *Āryottamamahāvīdyārāja-sūtra*: KILI (x9) followed by MILI (x9). *Mahāvajrameruśikhara-kūṭāgāra-dhāraṇī*: KILI KILI KILI MILI MILI MILI at one point and then KILI KILI MILI MILI LALALI at another. *Vajrajvālā-dhāraṇī*: MILI MILI (many times) and KILI MILI CANDE ..., etc.

158. cf. HT, I, ii, 32.

function had become so specifically marked that, in the appended notes to the text as translated into Chinese by Śrīmitra (circa 340 AD), “there are instructions for the delimitation of the ritual area which is then to be decorated with five swords, five banners, five mirrors, twenty-one arrows and twenty-one lamps. The site is to be annointed with perfumes, and mustard seeds are to be burnt to expel obstructing demons”.¹⁵⁹ This particular function of securing a protective boundary against evil (*sīmābandha*) gradually became almost the exclusive preserve of the *kīla*.

Among other very early references to the magical protective power of the *kīla* are those to be found in the *Mahābala-sūtra*,¹⁶⁰ a transitional text of the late Mahāyāna period displaying characteristics more commonly associated with *tantra* than *sūtra*.¹⁶¹ It is said to have been taught by Śākyamuni Buddha to a large gathering of Vedic divinities (including the *daśadikpālas*) who had assembled on the peak of Mount Mucilinda. During the course of the *sūtra* the *bodhisattva* Vajrapāṇi¹⁶² uttered the *dhāraṇī* of *vidyārāja* Mahābala and enumerated its virtues. The importance of the *kīla* is made evident within this text where it is stated that the *sūtra*'s very essence (*hr̥daya*) is contained in the word KĪLIKĪLA. Within the *dhāraṇī* itself occur the phrases NAMAŚ CAṆḌAVAJRAPĀṆAYE MAHĀ-YAKṢASENĀPATAYE OṂ KĪLIKĪLI VAJRAKĪLIKĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ ... CAṆḌAKĪLIKĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ. BĀLAKĪLI KĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ.¹⁶³ RATNAKĪLI KĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ ... VAJRAKĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ ... OṂ MUNI MUNI MAHĀMUNI KĪLIKĪLA VEKI KAṬA KAṬA ..., etc.

Magic spells such as these Buddhist *dhāraṇīs* played a significant role in the everyday life of the people of ancient India. From a very early date the Buddhists utilized their sacred scriptures in the *paritta* ceremony¹⁶⁴ and, according to Hsuan Tsang,¹⁶⁵ the Mahāsāṅghikas compiled a *dhāraṇīpiṭaka* during the fourth century BC. This was followed by a *vidyādharaṇīpiṭaka*, compiled in the north by the Dhammaguttas sometime during the third century BC.¹⁶⁶

From these sources may be surmised an evolutionary line of development of the rite of *sīmābandha* from the purely functional process of marking out a plot of ground by means of wooden pegs and lengths of string as outlined under the rubric of Architecture, above.

159. S. Hodge, *The Mahāvairocana-tantra*, introduction (forthcoming).

160. F. A. Bischoff, *Āryamahābalanāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, Paris, 1956. Mahābala is later to be found among the ten wrathful divinities in the primary entourage of Vajrakīla. His epithet used here, *mahāvidyārāja* (also noted in association with Amṛtakuṇḍalin), became in later texts freely interchangeable with the term *krodharāja*. Elementary characteristics of several of these *krodha* kings are clearly discernable in the *dhāraṇī* literature. To trace the evolution of each of them from such primitive sources, however, is a task outside the scope of the present work.

161. mKhas-grub-rje in fact, following the lead of ‘older authorities’, classifies this text within the *Kriyātantra*. F.D. Lessing & A. Wayman, *Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems*, 133.

162. Also called Caṇḍavajrapāṇi, whose role in the Vajrakīla *tantra* will be seen in Chapter Five, below.

163. In Chapter Three, below, Vajrakīla is styled ‘Son of Heruka’.

164. Y. Matsunaga, “A History of Tantric Buddhism in India With Reference to Chinese Translations”, 169.

165. E. Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 286.

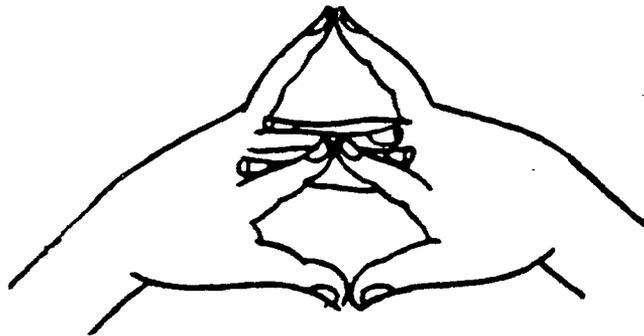
166. Y. Matsunaga, *op. cit.*, *ibidem*.

During the course of this development, a religious element has been absorbed whereby the pegs have become imbued with magical power and almost transformed into gods. Such rites are then fully elaborated within the earliest historical strata of Buddhist esoteric texts (*Kriyā*), in which ritual activity predominates.

Sīmābandha in the lower Buddhist tantras

The *Susiddhi-tantra*, classified by Paṅ-chen bSod-nams grags-pa as a general *tantra* of the *Kriyā* class dealing with the fierce rites of all three Buddha families (*Tathāgatakula*, *Vajrakula*, *Padmakula*),¹⁶⁷ “teaches in detail the rite of performing the *vidyā-dhāraṇī*” and “the protection according to *Kriyātantra*”.¹⁶⁸ Within this text the role of protection of the boundaries is allocated to Amṛtakunḍalin, a deity described as fierce guardian of the north and master of all *yakṣas*.¹⁶⁹ In the performance of his duty Amṛtakunḍlin mani-fests as Kīlikīla and, in association with his role as boundary protector, the *tantra* teaches the *kīlamudrā*.

The procedures of this *tantra* as practised in Japan are described in a recent study of Shingon Buddhism by Adrian Snodgrass¹⁷⁰ who writes: “The *sādhaka* first performs the rituals of ‘securing the boundaries’ (*bandhaya sīman*) in which he defines the boundaries of the maṇḍala and expels the demonic influences that might hinder the performance of the ritual or harm the ritualist. The *sādhaka* secures the boundaries of the maṇḍala by wooden (or less usually iron or copper) vajra spikes (*vajrakīlakam*)¹⁷¹ driven into the four corners of the *bodhimaṇḍa*. They not only delimit the borders of the maṇḍala but symbolize the firmness of the *sādhaka*’s Bodhicitta, which harmful influences cannot move. The *sādhaka* symbolically drives the spikes into the corners of the *bodhimaṇḍa* by making a *mudrā* (thus)”:



167. *rGyud sde spyi 'i rnam par bzhag pa skal bzang gi yid 'phrog*, LTWA, 1975, 38.

168. F.D. Lessing & A. Wayman, *op. cit.*, 137.

169. Later to become one of the *daśakrodha* deities in the primary retinue of Vajrakīla. The *Yoga tantra* SDPT states: “The wrathful Amṛtakunḍalin is common to the three families. Since he removes all obstacles he is said to be the lord of the *guhnyakas*.” SDPT, 76. Throughout the sources referred to in this chapter no distinction is made between Amṛtakunḍalin and Vajrāmṛta.

170. A. Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Maṇḍalas in Shingon Buddhism*. Quotation and *mudrā* drawing found on pages 58–61.

171. The Japanese tradition generally equates this *vajrakīlakam* with a single-pronged *vajra*, but more details of the form of the *kīla* in Japan are given below.

This procedure establishes and encloses the area into which the deities are subsequently to be invited and transforms the site into the indestructible *vajra* earth out as far as the *cakravāla*. Thus, according to the rite it becomes impossible for even the most powerful demons to enter and all evils within the ground are purified.

The Tibetan author Tsong-kha-pa, basing himself upon the same *tantra*, in his “Great Exposition of Secret Mantra” gives the *mantra* OM KĪLIKĪLA VAJRI VAJRI BHŪR BANDHA BANDHA HŪM PHAṬ and says that the *yogin* should use it to empower scented water which is then sprinkled around the boundaries of his place of meditation in order to establish the *rakṣācakra*. He also explains the *kīlamudrā*, as in the diagram above, and uses it to implant an unspecified number of *kīlas* in the form of fierce deities into the hearts of obstructors around the circumference of the meditation area. The above *mantra* is again recited as the trouble-making demons are thus being rendered powerless. Tsong-kha-pa also says that for a *yogin* in the *Vajrakula*, self protection is afforded by the *mantra* OM KĪLI KĪLA VAJRA HŪM PHAṬ. According to him, Kuṇḍali and Kīlikīla (thought of as one in the Sino-Japanese tradition) are two separate deities always associated with the protective walls, protective canopy and the circle of *kīlas* enclosing the ritually pure area.¹⁷²

I quote from A. Snodgrass; “The vajra spikes (*vajra kīlakam*) are variously referred to as the ‘boundary spikes’, the ‘boundary vajra spikes’, ‘ground spikes’, ‘vajra spike boundaries’, ‘vajra flame boundaries’, etc. The spikes are “twelve *shi*” long (about seven and a half inches) and are driven about one third of their length into the ground.... The *Darani shukyo* specifies not four but twenty-eight spikes: six on either side of the west gate, four at each of the other three gates, and one at each of the four corners. Annen’s *Dainichikyo gishaku* calls for fifty-two spikes: twelve at each of the four gates, and one at each of the four corners”.¹⁷³

Furthermore, the *dhāraṇī* that accompanies the *mudrā* of the *vajra* spikes is OM KILI KILI VAJRA VAJRI BHŪRA BANDHA BANDHA HŪM PHAṬ in which KILI KILI is “spike, spike”, referring both to the spike and to the action of spiking, VAJRA is ‘unassailable wisdom’ (*vajraprajñā*) and VAJRI is ‘unshakeable meditation’ (*vajradhyāna*). BHŪRA is ‘firmness’ and BANDHA BANDHA is “binding, binding”. HŪM is the seed syllable of terror and also of *bodhicitta* and PHAṬ is the seed syllable of crushing and destroying. The *dhāraṇī* thus means that unassailable wisdom and unshakeable meditation spike down, firmly bind and terrify the demons, crushing and destroying their great power. As he makes the *mudrā* and recites the *dhāraṇī*, the *sādhaka* mentally strikes each corner of the *bodhimāṇḍa*, three times, with a single- or triple-prong *vajra(kīla)*.¹⁷⁴

172. J. Hopkins, *The Yoga of Tibet*, 96–7. The Japanese Mantrayāna (Shingon) tradition follows this system exactly. The *kīlamudrā* given in Snodgrass (reproduced above) corresponds to that given in Hopkins and the *mantra* given in both Snodgrass and Hatta (*Dictionary of Mantra*) is OM KILI KILI VAJRA VAJRI BHŪRA BANDHA BANDHA HŪM PHAṬ which is little changed considering the amount of time and space that separates the two traditions.

173. A. Snodgrass, *op. cit.*, 60–1, n. 6.

174. *ibidem*, 64. This use of either a single-pronged or triple-pronged *vajrakīla* is understood in Japan to be authorized by the *Susiddhi-tantra*. Four *kīlas* which were brought to Japan by Kobo Daishi, now preserved in the Yamato Muro Temple, are of the single-pronged variety

In a chapter called *Vighnakīlanavidhi* (the rite of nailing down obstacles) in Kuladatta's *Kriyāsaṅgrahapañjikā* (Detailed Compendium of Rituals), instructions are given for the purification and protection of the earth prior to the building of a *vihāra*. According to this source, thirty-two *krodha* deities (an inner group of twelve and an outer group of twenty) are embodied in twenty-eight *kīlas*¹⁷⁵ which are arranged in two concentric squares enclosing the site designated for the construction. Each of the *kīlas* located in the four corners of the inner square is to be thought of as being occupied by two deities. The master of the rite meditates upon himself as the deity Vajrahūmkāra and utters the *sarvakarmika-mantra*, generally defined as the *mantra* of the deity presiding over the northern quarter of the *maṇḍala*. The *kīlas* (which are said to be eight inches long, made of either acacia wood or gold) are then fixed into the ground and as each one is hammered in, in due order, the *mantra* of the residing deity is intoned and he is called upon to subdue a particular *vighna* ("obstacle") in the form of a Hindu deity. This being done, some of the *kīlas* are then moved to new locations and details are given concerning the method of drawing lines for the plan of the *vihāra* utilizing lengths of string pulled out between the pegs.¹⁷⁶

An interesting story is told in the "Prophecy of the Li Country" in which a *kīla* made of juniper wood, which had been used in this way during the building of a *stūpa*, subsequently grew into a tree with five branches and began to preach the Buddhist *Dharma*, graphically illustrating the notion of the peg as the abode of a god.¹⁷⁷ The 'Li Country' (Khotan) is an area in which the Vajrayāna is known to have existed¹⁷⁸ and, thanks to

and thus this type is favoured by the Shingon school. The Tendai school also uses single-pronged *kīlas*. The tips of the Yamato Muro Temple *kīlas* have an eight-petalled lotus design with a moon disc on top of that, and then a round jewel shape. The jewel, however, is the specific emblem of the *ratnakula* and as an alternative to this, in association with the various ritual functions of a *kīla*, the spike may bear a *cakra*, lotus or *vajra* upon its tip. (The Tibetan method of distinguishing *kīlas* in association with the four or five *kūlas* of the higher *tantras* is by material of manufacture.) Other *kīlas* were taken to Japan by Engyo, Keiun and Chisho.

According to these sources for the Sino-Japanese tradition, the main material to be used in the manufacture of *kīlas* is *khadira* wood or else *nimba* wood (neem), iron or copper. According to T. 889, translated by Tensokuzai of Kashmir (Sanskrit name uncertain) who arrived in China in 979 AD, sappy wood should be used to make the *kīla* for pacification, *śrīvrkṣa* and *śirīsa* for enriching, *khadira* for subduing and iron for destroying. *Kālacakra-tantra* (III, 12) lists eight materials without, however, any indication of their particular functions.

175. According to Stephen Hodge, Śubhakarasiṃha's commentary on the *Mahāvairocana-tantra* also specifies the use of twenty-eight *kīlas* but their arrangement on the ground is different. Six *kīlas* are to be placed on either side of the western gate, four in front of the other three gates and one in each of the four corners, just as in the description given below taken from Bodhiruci's Japanese *Compendium of Dhāraṇī*.
176. cf. E. W. Marasinghe, *The Vāstuvidyāśāstra Attributed to Mañjuśrī*, 167. Also, a modern Newāri text on the rituals of *vāstuvidyā* (written in 1899 by Vajrācārya Jujumāna) describes the procedure of laying out the ground for the erection of a *stūpa* or other building using thirty-eight pegs, measuring a span and four fingers in length, with eighty-four cubits of thread spun with strands of five colours. S. Lienhard, *Nepalese Manuscripts*, Part 1, 107–8. For examples of similar rites in the Hindu tradition (where the pegs are called either *kīla* or *śaṅku*) see Tarapada Bhattacharyya, *A Study of Vāstuvidyā*; Alice Boner, *Śilpaprakāsa*; Bruno Dagens, *Māyāmata*; etc.
177. R. E. Emmerick, *Tibetan Texts Concerning Khotan*, 46–7.
178. H. W. Bailey, "Vajrayāna in Gostana-deśa".

discoveries made in Central Asia by Sir Aurel Stein, the use of *kīlas* in the region is confirmed, dating back to antiquity.¹⁷⁹ The configurations of those ancient *kīlas* unearthed by Stein also readily confirms the view that they were conceived in some measure as the abodes of gods or spirits.

The chapter entitled *Parikramaṇavidhi* in Kuladatta's 'Compendium of Rituals' outlines the method for establishing a protective circle around an area within which a tantric *maṇḍala* is to be constructed and this contains many additional elements derived from the later *Anuttarayoga* class of *tantra*. To begin with, four assistants in the rite are assigned the role of 'masters of the gates' (*dvārācārya*). They fix one *kīla* into each of the four corners of a square as they recite the *mantra* OM GHA GHA GHĀTAYA ..., etc.¹⁸⁰ and they are followed by the master of the rite (*karmācārya*) who, beginning in the northeast corner and moving clockwise, fixes eight *kīlas* around the perimeter of the site while he recites OM VAJRAKĪLA KĪLAYA SARVAVIGHNĀN BANDHAYA HŪM. In this way twelve deities are arranged around the square but, because the *ācārya* uses the four already fixed by his assistants, they are housed in only eight *kīlas*. The rite ends with the worship of the twelve deities who are presented with *bali* offerings and requested to subdue twelve *vighnas*.

Both Abhayākaragupta in his *Vajrāvalī* (see below) and Jagaddarpaṇa in his *Kriyā-samuccaya*, on the other hand, describe the wrathful *raṅgacakra* around the *maṇḍala* consisting of ten *kīlas*. This configuration is the norm for such rites in Tibet, leaving the tradition of Kuladatta as something of an anomaly.

In a recently published paper on "Monastic Initiation in Newar Buddhism", David Gellner describes an offering rite in which, one by one, ten Vedic gods are summoned and praised and then attacked by their counterparts from the set of *daśakrodha* deities. The attack is in each case instigated by the command KĪLAYA KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, in which the denominative form of our word for 'nail', 'spike' or 'peg' is used.¹⁸¹ The ten Vedic gods are a standard group known as the *daśadikpālas*, whose individual names have come to stand for the directions of the compass over which they hold sway. The Buddhist *tantras* are ambiguous in their attitude towards these ancient Indian deities. In the *Yogatantra Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* (SDPT), for example, these gods bow down before the Buddha and each one offers his *mantra* "for the benefit and happiness of all living beings". Īśāna, 'the lord of spirits' (Śiva, Rudra, the guardian of the northeast), then assumes specific responsibility for the counteraction of poison, the stability of borders and the protective circle of *vajrakīlas* and so on.¹⁸² Within the SDP *maṇḍala* they occupy seats of honour, as they do in the entourage of many Buddhist deities.¹⁸³ In the *Hevajra-tantra* (HT) offerings are made to these gods in a fairly standard fashion but then they are abused and trampled

179. R. Whitfield & A. Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas*, 174–5.

180. Given in full below in the section dealing with *Anuttarayogatantra*.

181. D. Gellner, "Monastic Initiation in Newar Buddhism", 89–93. This section of the rite seems to be derived from Abhayākaragupta's *Vajrāvalī* (36–7) but the placement of the deities accords with the Akṣobhya *maṇḍala*. Cf. A. Wayman, *Yoga of the GST*, 243.

182. SDPT, 51–3. Īśāna's vow in this source corresponds remarkably with the subsequent role of Vajrakīla.

183. eg. Yogāmbara, Bhūtaḍāmara, Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara, etc., as described in Abhayākaragupta's *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.

on by low caste women. It is clear, however, that in the latter case their names are being used merely to designate the arrangement of the women (*dākinī*) into a circle around their lord.¹⁸⁴ In the *Vimalaprabhā*, on the other hand, Indra (foremost of the group and lord of the east) takes on the role of the arch demon Māra, whose messengers seek to destroy the concentration of *yoga*¹⁸⁵ and in the more wrathful *tantras*, such as the *Vajrakīla*, these deities are called *vighnas* and described as being held captive and tormented by their Buddhist counterparts (the ten *krodharājas*) who mercilessly pin them to the ground.

In the majority of Vajrayāna rituals in which ten spikes are nailed around the periphery of the site to be protected, those spikes are meditated upon as the actual embodiments of the ten wrathful kings and they are driven into the hearts of the ten Vedic gods. The final 'canonical' word on the subject may be attributed to *Kālacakra-tantra*, III.27: "... in order to protect the site, stabilizing *kīlas* of acacia wood are stuck into the ground with blows of a hammer in the positions of the ten *krodha* kings".¹⁸⁶ Exceptions to this pattern have now fallen into disuse in Tibet although they are still to be encountered within the Japanese tradition as a legacy of archaic Indian praxis. According to the teachings of the *Vajrahṛdayālankāra-tantra*, in order to qualify as a *vajraguru* with the competence to grant *abhiṣeka*, an *ācārya* must be skilled not only in the technique of drawing the *maṇḍala* but also in "the rite of accomplishing the fierce act of tying down the gods with the magic *kīla*".¹⁸⁷ A basic knowledge of *kīla* rites therefore appears to have been widely regarded as essential to the tantric adepts of India, an assumption that I believe to be confirmed by the legends and teachings of the early *mahāsiddhas*.¹⁸⁸ Several centuries after the institution of these *kīla* rites in ancient India it was stated in very matter of fact fashion by the Tibetan master mKhas-grub-rje that all tantric adepts, no matter to which school they belong nor the nature of the *maṇḍala* they are effecting, protect and bless the site by nailing the obstructing demons with *kīlas*.¹⁸⁹

Sīmābandha in the Anuttarayogatantra

The final evolutionary phase of Buddhist *tantras* is marked by those texts in which all aspects of yogic praxis are internalized so as to be dealt with in the mind. This is not to say that adherents of these doctrines perform no outer rituals. On the contrary, the texts describe a great number of elaborate rites to be performed with strict observance of *minutiae*. Their theoretical premise, however, stresses the supremacy of mind to such an extent that all ritual activity is considered to be merely the play (*līlā*) of the god within.¹⁹⁰

The *Guhyasamāja-tantra* (GST) describes the procedure for blessing the *yogin*'s meditation area thus: "(Imagine) Vajrakīla as an embodiment of the great king Vajrāmṛta and

184. HT, II, iv, 91 ff and II, v, 37.

185. Ed. J. Upadhyaya, 1986, 10.

186. B. Banerjee, *Śrī Kālacakratāntra-rāja*, 96.

187. Lessing & Wayman, *Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems*, 272.

188. *Kīlana* ("pegging down") is included among the magical activities mentioned by the *mahāsiddha* Matsyendranātha in Chapter IV of his *Kaulajñānanirṇaya*, ed. by P. C. Bagchi, Calcutta Sanskrit Series, III, 1934, 9.

189. F.D. Lessing & A. Wayman, *op. cit.*, 282.

190. "The mind itself is the perfect Buddha and no Buddha is seen elsewhere." HT, II, iv, 75.

stab it, blazing with fire, into the circle of the ten directions".¹⁹¹ This rite called *jagadvinayaśāntivajra* (*vajra* which rules and pacifies the world) is apparently an abbreviated, almost entirely internalized version of the rite of ten *kīlas* outlined above. This citation also seems to suggest that the implement employed in the rite is no longer the humble wooden peg or *kīla* of the earlier texts but a sophisticated and essential item of ritual paraphernalia now known as the *vajrakīla*. Note the continuing identification of *Vajrakīla* with *Vajrāmṛta* (*Amṛtakunḍalin*).

In the *Śrīcakrasaṃvara-tantra*, in order to place a protective circle around the *maṇḍala* the *sādhaka* is instructed to imagine a syllable HŪM in his heart from which he causes to emanate a multitude of *vajra* nails and *vajra* hammers. These hammers and nails are placed into the right and left hands of assistants (*dūta*) who then drag forth all obstructing forces, chief among whom are the Vedic *daśadikpālas*. Being summoned, those with virtuous minds take refuge in the *triratna* and are established in the mind of enlightenment, while those of an evil disposition are transfixed through the head with a *kīla* to the accompaniment of the *mantra* OM GHA GHA GHATAYA GHATAYA SARVADUṢṬĀN PHAṬ! KĪLAYA KĪLAYA SARVAPĀPAM HŪM PHAṬ! VAJRAKĪLAYA VAJRADHARA ĀJÑĀPAYATI SARVAVIGHNĀN KĀYAVĀKCITTAṀ KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ! (Om begone, begone all evil ones! PhaṬ! Nail, nail all sins! Hūm phaṬ! Vajradhara instructs all obstacles to be nailed down with the *vajra* nail of body, speech and mind! Hūm phaṬ!) And they are pounded down to pulp with the hammers whilst reciting OM VAJRAMUDGARA VAJRAKĪLAYA ĀKOṬAYA HŪM PHAṬ! (Om *vajra* hammer (you) must nail down, must beat! Hūm phaṬ!)¹⁹²

Other kīla rituals

Thus far we have seen *kīlas* chiefly in groups as boundary markers and (violent) protectors. They have been seen as magical pegs standing at the threshold preventing the intrusion of harm. As the guardians of order and stability they have served to destroy the power of *vetālas* and *nāgas* at one extreme and to stabilize the *samādhi* of religious at the other. Indra, however, stabilized the earth by pinning it down with a single *kīla*, not with a circle of *kīlas* around the boundary.

A single *kīla* of acacia wood (*khadira*)¹⁹³ is mentioned within a long ritual in the MMK.¹⁹⁴ The passage in question concerns solicitation of the beautiful Manojñā in order

191. GST, XIII, 75.

192. K. Dawa-Samdub, *Śrīcakrasaṃvara-tantra*, 171. Variants of the GHA GHA *mantra* are to be found in a number of *Anuttarayoga tantras*.

193. *Khadira* is *Acacia Catechu*, one of several varieties of acacia tree. Throughout the present work, however, the name "acacia" is everywhere used to refer to *khadira* alone. Wood of this type is employed in many violent rites in a number of Buddhist *tantras* (e.g., *Samvarodaya*, X, 22, etc.) and is considered by Indian doctors to cure obstinate skin diseases including leprosy (V. B. Dash, *Materia Medica*, 181). Leprosy is held to be caused by vicious *nāgas*, those troublesome subterranean spirits that are the prime targets in 'earth subjugating' rituals, and ritual *kīlas* generally are to be found with *nāgas* engraved upon them (see J. Huntingdon, *The Phur-pa, passim*). That the preferred material for their manufacture is acacia wood can be confirmed by the many references cited throughout this work including the passage from the GST quoted below (where I take the slightly ambiguous phrase *khadirāgrajam* to mean *khadirajam agram*, "the best is that made of acacia"). Cf. note 135, above.

194. MMK, 570-1.

to gain her wealth and sexual favours. This charming nymph¹⁹⁵ bestows the elixir (*rasāyana*) granting long life to the *sādhaka* who may chose to live in a palace of the gods so long as he meditates upon the *kīla* stuck into the ground.¹⁹⁶

The *kīla* as a stabilizing influence in the building of a temple has already been encountered above. Here, however, we have what is possibly the earliest reference to a single *kīla* as the stabilizing force underpinning meditation upon a divine *maṇḍala* of residence. A later, but far more explicit source is the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha-tantra* (STTS). In the section concerning the delineation of the *maṇḍala* in Chapter XI, it is written: “Having pierced the acacia wood spike in the centre of the *maṇḍala*, make a double-threaded string (and) with that, one should delineate (the circle). On that occasion, this is the ‘essence’ of the *kīla*; OM VAJRAKĪLA KĪLAYA SARVAVIGHNĀN BANDHAYA HŪM PHAṬ.” (Om Vajrakīla, spike! Transfix all obstructors! Hūm phaṭ!)¹⁹⁷

The form of the *kīla* as we find it today may be partly derived from its erstwhile use as a wooden stake to which sacrificial animals were tethered prior to their ritual slaughter.¹⁹⁸ The above quotation from the STTS shows how the stake and tether are now employed as equipment for drawing circles, much as the hapless goats must have done whilst moving restlessly around the centres of their captivity. Such a procedure not only stabilizes the centre but also links that centre directly to the circumference, thereby revealing the single *kīla* as the instrument through which the entire ground may be rendered firm.

Indra, however, did not confine his activities to the achievement of a firm and solid earth. Propping up the firmament he took the thunderbolt as his sceptre and ruled over the lesser gods of wind and rain. In the MMK are found two short rites through which the *yogin* may seek to gain control over such atmospheric phenomena. In the first of these a “cloud-shaped *kīla*” (*kabandākārakīlaka*) is mentioned in connection with such dire omens as fiery comets, thunderbolts, darkness and disease. All untimely deaths are said to be pacified in the second rite by the simple expedient of burning incense, reciting *mantras*, flinging mustard seeds into the sky and the implantation of a *kīla* of acacia wood over which *mantras* have been recited seven times. Thus the wind is held still and the clouds are fixed in their places.¹⁹⁹ The *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi-tantra* describes the rite for dispelling rainclouds by instructing the *yogin* to draw the image of such clouds

195. F. Edgerton, *BHS Dictionary*, 418, describes her as a *yakṣiṇī*. She also occurs in the retinue of Vajrāmṛta (*Niṣpannayogāvalī*, *maṇḍala* no. 7).

196. *manasā dhyātvā khadirakīlakam bhūmau nikhānayet. divyaṃ vimānam upapadyate. uddhrte 'ntardhīyate.* MMK, 571.

197. *maṇḍalasya tu madhye vai vidhvā khadirakīlakam, tatas tu sūtram dviguṇam kṛtvā tena prasūtrayet. tatredaṃ kīlakahṛdayam, om vajrakīla kīlaya sarvavighnān bandhaya hūm phaṭ.* STTS, 91. Note that, although the *kīla* is being used here in a very straightforward fashion (simply as a peg to hold down one end of a piece of string while a circle is being drawn around it), this citation evinces distinct features of a wrathful rite.

198. R. Mayer, *op. cit.*, 170ff. The knots (*kanda*) of rope tied to the shaft of this stake are an important element in the later iconography of the sacred *kīla* (dealt with in the following chapter). These *kandas* along the shaft of the nail also have an association with the subtle centres of psychic energy (*cakra*) employed in *yoga* and imagined to be situated along the central *nāḍī* of the *vajra* body.

199. MMK, 274. The *kīla* on this occasion is unaccountably given a feminine form (*kīlakā*) in the published text.

upon the ground and mentally transform himself into the deity Vajrapāṇi. Arranging his fingers in the form of the *mudrā*, he should stab the point of the *vajrakīla* into the image and the rain will disperse.²⁰⁰ No longer employed purely for purposes of defense, then, the *kīla* is now a weapon of attack. In his commentary on the SDPT, Vajravarmaṇ identifies the objects to be attacked as the various defilements (*kleśa*). Thus, in order to destroy sin, the *yogin* manufactures a ‘*kīla* of pacification’ from white sandalwood, eight inches long with a large knot at the top. He imagines the Buddhas and *bodhisattvas* to assemble upon that *kīla* and, as he nails down the defilements he mutters OM VAJRAKĪLA KĪLA SARVAPĀPAŚĀNTIṀ KURU SVĀHĀ. Striking it with a hammer of silver having a handle of sandalwood he pronounces the curse OM ŚĀPĀTHA.²⁰¹

In the *Samvarodaya-tantra*, instructions are given for an act of malevolent sorcery (*abhicāra*) involving a six-inch *kīla* made of monkey bone (*vānarāsthimayaṃ kīlam*). Having empowered this *kīla* by reciting an unspecified *mantra* over it seven times, if it is burned at the enemy’s door the enemy and his entire lineage will perish, or, if it is buried in a field where livestock is kept the animals will die.²⁰² A similar ritual is given in the GST where it is said that one should chant the *mantra* one hundred and eight times in order to empower an eight-inch *kīla* made of human bone (*mānuṣāsthimayaṃ kīlam*) which, if hidden near the enemy’s door, will cause death within a fortnight.²⁰³ The cycle of the *Vajrabhairava-tantra*, too, includes several short *vidhis* in similar vein. One such rite instructs the *sādhaka* to draw an effigy using charcoal from the funeral pyre upon a scrap of cloth taken from the shroud of a corpse. The effigy should be stabbed in five places with a *kīla* of human bone.²⁰⁴ The same cycle also includes a *kīlamantra*, OM VAJRA KRODHA YAMARĀJA VAJRAKĪLI KĪLI HANA HANA MĀRAYA PHAṬ, which is to be recited as the *yogin* transfixes the object of his meditation with a bone *kīla*,²⁰⁵ as well as instructions for stabbing an effigy in the groin as he presses down upon it with the sole of his left foot.²⁰⁶

Chronological summary

We are now in a position to assess the stages through which the *kīla* developed into a hand-held ritual weapon in the armoury of the tantric Buddhists and attempt to reconstruct the path of apotheosis of Vajrakīla as a wrathful deity in the Vajrayāna pantheon.

Among the most ancient *kīlas* in existence today are those discovered by Aurel Stein in the vicinity of the frontier forts to the north of Tun-huang. A set of four such *kīlas* (two of which are currently housed in the British Museum) have been dated as belonging to the first century BC.²⁰⁷ Approximately nine inches long, they have been crudely fashioned from an unspecified species of wood into a shape that remains instantly recognisable after

200. S. Hodge, *The Mahāvairocana-tantra*, III: “The Overcoming of Obstacles”.

201. SDPT, 85.

202. S. Tsuda, *The Samvarodaya-tantra*, XXVIII, 21, 22.

203. GST, XIV, 55.

204. P. 105. *Śrīvajramahābhairavanāma-tantra*, II, 136v.

205. P. 106. *Śrīvajrabhairavakalpa-tantrarāja*, II, 150r.

206. *ibidem*, 149r.

207. R. Whitfield & A. Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas*, 174–5.

two thousand years as characteristic of the magical *kīla*. The upper part of each has been fashioned into the wide-eyed grimacing countenance of a wrathful deity, below which extends a tapering three-sided shaft culminating in a sharp point. If the experts at the British Museum are correct in their dating of these pegs then it would seem reasonable to assume that Buddhist *dhāraṇīs* calculated to invoke and utilize the apotropaic power of the *kīla* may also have existed in the pre-Christian era. None of the currently available texts, however, can be dated prior to the third or fourth centuries AD although it is well-known that *dhāraṇīs*, in general, had by then been long integrated into the vast corpus of Buddhist literature.

We have seen that the *Māyūrī* spell, in particular, was credited with the power of establishing a protective boundary against a range of hostile forces, especially snakes. The term *mayūra* means ‘peacock’ and the power of the spell is linked to the Indian belief that peacocks devour snakes in order to transform their poison into the shining colours of their iridescent plumage. In the final iconography of Vajrakīla, this legend is recast into that of the mythical *garuḍa* which emanates from the belly of Vajrakīla and has a particular antipathy for *nāgas*. We should also note the existence of a *kīla* topped with peacock feathers that is brandished as a weapon in the hands of Śrīdevī.²⁰⁸ At this stage, however, we simply have the notion of a ring of wooden stakes as (magical) weapons against snakes.

Within these early *dhāraṇīs* it is also possible to discern primitive features²⁰⁹ of the *krodharājas* which are later to become the companions of Vajrakīla within his wrathful *maṇḍala*. Indeed, it even seems feasible to trace the emergence of Hayagrīva from such early sources as the *Amitābhavyūha-sūtra*²¹⁰ but such a task is beyond the scope of the present work.

Concentrating our attention on Vajrakīla, therefore, we may add to the citations above by noting the occurrence of NAMA VAJRAKILI KILĀYA in the *Mahāvajrameruśikhara-kūṭāgāra-dhāraṇī*²¹¹ before moving on to consider the next phase of Buddhist literature.

Studying the well-documented stream of translations that were made into Chinese from Sanskrit sources, Yukei Matsunaga has been able to show that a large number of tantric rituals were in vogue among Indian Buddhists from the early fourth century AD.²¹² Within the *Kriyātantra* that probably arose during the next two hundred years,²¹³ are to be found a large number of *kīla* rituals. The rite of *simābandha* is especially prevalent amongst these, but by no means exhaustive.²¹⁴

208. Lokesh Chandra, *Buddhist Iconography*, 116.

209. Specific epithets and *bījamantras*.

210. His *bījamantra* HULU HULU is abundant in that text. cf. R. H. van Gulik, *Hayagrīva (passim)*.

211. In which text, also, Vajrapāṇi is praised for his great strength (*mahābala*), several *mantras* appropriate to the *krodha* kings are found and the words KĀṆKAṬA JAYA VIJAYA (frequently encountered in Vajrakīla literature) occur.

212. J. W. de Jong, “A New History of Tantric Literature in India”, 96.

213. Texts cited above that belong to this category are the *Susiddhi-tantra* and the MMK. mKhas-grub-rje also includes the *Mahābala-dhāraṇī*, saying it pertains to the messengers (*pho nya*) and servants (*bka' nyan*) of the *vajrakula*. Lessing & Wayman, *op. cit.*, 132–3.

214. The rite from the *Susiddhi-tantra* has been given above. The *homa* rite called *Acalapūjāvidhi* includes *mudrā* for a *bhūmikīla* (no. 26), a *vajrakīla* (for erecting the *vajraprākāra* or

Other *kīla* rites in *Kriyā* literature include those for animating corpses (*vetālavidhi*), controlling the weather, and the subjugation of local spirits. Throughout this period of tantric literature, the numinous essence of the *kīla* invoked in the earlier *dhāraṇīs* has been supplemented by and absorbed into the hardware of ritual pegs. A marked change of emphasis has also taken place in that mundane objectives seem almost to have obliterated the quest for spiritual excellence. The *kīla* at this stage is employed in rites calculated to bring harm, satisfy erotic desires or procure slaves for necrophiles.²¹⁵ At one point the MMK uses the denominative form of the word *kīla* to indicate that which has been held down, broken or defiled. It then goes on to detail a method through which the situation can be revived and describes the outcome as “unpegged, set free” (*utkīlita*).²¹⁶

The notion of Vajrakīla as a god also continued to evolve throughout this period and in the text known as the spell of *Vajravidāraṇā* both a deified hammer (Vajramudgara) and a deified nail (Vajrakīla) assume central roles in the *maṇḍala* of Vajrapāṇi. Here, the individual *mantra* of Vajrakīla is given as CURU CURU CAṆḌAKĪLI KĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ (Destroy! Destroy, fierce nail! Homage to the nail!) and the praise VAJRAKĪLIKĪLĀYA SVĀHĀ occurs repeatedly. We note also that the inner circle which includes both the hammer and the nail is surrounded by an outer circle consisting of ten *krodharājas*.²¹⁷

In the period of the *Yogatantra* which followed (*circa* seventh century?),²¹⁸ the essential *mantra*²¹⁹ of Vajrakīla is noted in the STTS in a configuration which has remained unchanged to the present²²⁰ and it is applied to the Vajrakīla positioned in the very centre

indestructible fence, no. 27), repelling demons after the invitation of the deities (no. 38) and a wide *cakrakīla* for enclosing the world (*cakravāla*, no. 44). MMK, 693, instructs the *yogin* to prepare *kīlas* of acacia wood and recite eight hundred *mantras* over them. By implanting those *kīlas* in the four directions, the boundaries are made secure, etc.

215. The hagiography of Kāṇha (Templeman, 1989) is replete with examples of *vetāla* slaves.

216. MMK, 297.

217. Lessing & Wayman, *op. cit.*, 117.

218. The STTS and *Mahāvairocana-tantra* cited above belong to this group.

219. According to tantric theory the *mantra* is an aspect of the god. In discussing the procedures of *yoga* in the *Kriyātantra*, for example, mKhas-grub-rje lists six gods. Among these are the “sound-god” (*śabdadevatā*) and the “letter-god” (*akṣaradevatā*) which are, respectively, the sound and the letters of the *mantra* to be recited. F.D. Lessing & A. Wayman, *op. cit.*, 161. Thus we may postulate that the *hr̥daya* of Vajrakīla within the STTS attests at least a nominal existence of the deity at that time.

220. Adherents of the Sa-skyā school recite the *mantra* as found in the STTS while the rNying-ma-pa abbreviate the denominative imperative BANDHAYA (from the root *bandh*; fix, fasten, suppress or bind a victim) to BAṂ, a widespread technique in the formation of *mantras*. See A. Wayman, “Imperatives in the Buddhist Tantra Mantras”. In the *Mahāvairocana-tantra*, for example, JAṂ stands for JAYA (be victorious!), TRAM for TRĀHI or TRĀYA (save!) and RAM for RAKṢA (protect!), all imperatives. C. Yamamoto, *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*, x.

Further *mantras* of interest deriving from this period are listed in Hatta, *A Dictionary of Mantra*. These include: OM VAJRAKĪLA KĪLĀYA SARVAVIGHNĀN BANDHA HŪM PHAṬ (said to occur only in the STTS passage cited above); OM VAJRA KĪLI KILI SARVAVIGHNĀN BANDHA HŪM PHAṬ (derived from the above? Found in the *Bussetsu daijyokanso maṇḍala-shojyo akushu kyo*, T. 939); OM VAJRAKĪLA HŪM PHAṬ (from the **Vajrakrodha-samājavaipulyavidhi* section of an **Avalokiteśvaravidyārāja-tantra*); OM KĪLI KILI VAJRA HŪM PHAṬ (given as the *mantra* of Vajrakuṇḍalin in T. 912–T. 915); KĪLI KILI VAJRA MUḤ SVĀHĀ (related to Vajrakuṇḍalin and said to occur in the section dealing with *maṇḍala*

of the *maṇḍala*. STTS, VI, also introduces the myth of the overthrow of Rudra/Maheśvara through which a large number of Hindu deities become assimilated into the *maṇḍala* of the wrathful *heruka* Buddha. The overthrow of Rudra subsequently became central to the mythology of Vajrakīla.²²¹ The iconographic forms of the *krodha* kings (ten of whom later comprise the primary retinue of Vajrakīla) also began to crystallize during this period. Buddhas with many faces and hands first appeared in Chinese translations from the early sixth century, with rituals and observances dedicated to Hayagrīva as a form of Avalokiteśvara from the late seventh century.²²² Wu-hsing, a Chinese traveller to India, obtained a copy of the *Mahāvairocana-tantra* in 685 AD and stated that “recently many people in India have vouch-safed the teachings of esoteric Buddhism”.

This *tantra* was the first of those translated into Chinese to teach the unity of *mudrā*, *mantra* and *samādhi*, and explain them as yogic means to the attainment of the three mysteries of Buddha’s Body, Speech and Mind.²²³ Throughout this period of the *Yogatantra*, the soteriological aspect of the Buddhist path was reasserted and the nefarious pursuits of the earlier *Kriyā* period sublimated. Necro-philiac rites seem temporarily to have been abandoned whilst other activities are ‘purified’ and reinterpreted as skilful means (*upāya*) to the attainment of enlightenment.²²⁴ Thus it is that literary references to the *kīla* throughout this period emphasize its value as a wea-pon in the struggle against evil, interpreting ‘enemies’ as those who bring harm to the doctrines of the Buddha. We also witness the emergence of a single *kīla* in the heart of the *maṇḍala* whilst retaining the earlier pattern of a protective circle of spikes around the *maṇḍala* periphery.

construction for a *homavidhi* in T. 912); OM KĪLI KILI VAJRA VAJRI BHŪR BANDHA BANDHA HŪM PHAṬ (dealt with above. Hatta explains it as the *mantra* required when four *kīlas* are used to enclose a sacred area in order to strengthen the *sādhaka’s* *bodhicitta* and remove all impediments. He cites its occurrence in five texts, viz., T. 900, T. 930, T. 1085, T. 1225, T. 1226.)

The comprehensive index to the Taisho *Tripitaka* lists almost one hundred entries for the *kīla*, most of which are to be found in sources having their roots in Indian traditions predating the *Anuttarayogatantra* of Vajrakīla that were supposed to have been transmitted by Padmasambhava to Tibet during the second half of the eighth century. Among them, the most significant citations are to be found in the translations prepared by Vajrabodhi and his disciple Amoghavajra (especially the *Vajrakumāra-tantra*, see note 227, below) during the first half of the eighth century. Another important source from which much information can be gleaned is the huge collection of *dhāraṇīs* compiled by Bodhiruci before the end of the seventh century.

221. A detailed analysis of the earliest Buddhist versions of this myth has been made by Nobumi Iyanaga, “Recits de la soumission de Maheśvara par Trailokyavijaya”. One of his early citations (p. 681) links the hand symbol *vajrasūla* (= *vajrakīla*) to the *abhiṣeka* of *vajravidyottama*. The Hindus themselves incorporate this myth into the *vāstupuruṣa* concept in remarkably similar fashion (K. Vatsyayan, *Kalātattvakośa*, 36–7). Thus the correlation with architecture is maintained by the Brahmins whilst for the Buddhists this aspect of the myth has particular associations with the eight great charnel grounds located around the periphery of the *herukamaṇḍala*.

222. Y. Matsunaga, *op. cit.*, 173.

223. *ibidem*, 176–7.

224. J. W. de Jong, *op. cit.*, 93.

Early versions of the GST and the *Jñānasiddhi* of Indrabhūti (both of which feasibly arose around the close of the seventh century) list a circle of four *krodharājas*²²⁵ whereas the later versions of the GST list ten. The earliest *Māyājāla* (as translated into Chinese) on the other hand, lists two groups of four *krodha* kings and thus would seem, in all probability, to represent a transitional stage between the *Yogatantra* as represented by the STTS and the *Anuttarayogatantra* such as the later GST.²²⁶ Those *krodha* kings are assigned *bījamantras* in the *Māyājāla* that are found unchanged in the Vajrakīla cycle today.

The Chinese Buddhist canon contains two *Vajrakumāra* (= *Vajrakīla*?) *tantras*²²⁷ which are said to be derived from the *Susiddhi-tantra*²²⁸ and within which are to be found a collection of rites engaging both Kīla and Amṛta. Vajrakīla and Vajrāmṛta, later to emerge as quite distinct deities, are regarded as one in the Sino-Japanese traditions stemming from this period. The subsequent rise of the *Anuttarayogatantra*, which Matsunaga places in the eighth century,²²⁹ saw the highest flourishing of the Buddhist tantric doctrines in India and the rise of the *siddha* scholars. If, as we suppose, the *kīla* had by this time become an item of ritual equipment in the employ of Buddhist tantrics, such persons as the *siddhas* would have been the very ones to carry them.

225. Yamāntaka (E), Prajñāntaka (S), Padmāntaka (W) and Vighnāntaka (N). The later *Sekoddeśa-ṭīkā*, 36–7, also specifically equates Vighnāntaka with Amṛtakuṇḍalin.

226. J. W. de Jong, *op. cit.* 106. Vajravarmaṇ's commentary on the SDPT lists eight *krodharājas*. T. Skorupski, SDPT, 313.

227. Both catalogued together as T. 1222 and said to have been brought to China from South India by Amoghavajra in 742 AD. This translator was a disciple of Vajrabodhi (born 689 AD) who composed T. 1223, a shorter version "in accordance with the tradition of the west (India)". This *tantra*, manifestly of the utmost significance for a study of the *kīla*'s history, has been investigated by Stephen Hodge who concludes (in a private written communication) that the identification of Vajrakīla with Vajrakumāra is not clearly established here. In the later Tibetan tradition, however, the name Vajrakumāra uniquely and ubiquitously refers to the deity Vajrakīla.

With regard to the Vajrakumāra spoken of in the Chinese sources, he is often referred to as Kaṇikrodha, the exact meaning of which is unclear. Monier-Williams includes the glosses "an enemy" and "a purificatory ceremony" under *kaṇika* but Lokesh Chandra seems to read the word as *kanī* (girl) because he Sanskritizes the name into the feminine form Vajrakumārī (see Sanskrit bibliography).

T. 1222 describes this deity as blue in colour with six arms and three red eyes. He emerges from the ocean wearing a jewelled crown and garlanded with poisonous snakes. His eye teeth protrude and bite down upon his lower lip whilst his brow is wrinkled with anger. His left foot rests upon a lotus that flowers on the summit of a jewelled mountain while his right foot remains half submerged in the water from which he arises. (cf. R. Mayer, *op. cit.*, 167, where it is argued that the crocodile snout halfway along the length of the Tibetan ritual nail marks the waterline, with the realm of the *nāgas* below and the abode of the *devas* on Mount Meru above.) The *samaya* form of this deity is a single-pronged *vajra* (equated generally with the *kīla* in Sino-Japanese schools) which, however, he is nowhere stated to hold in his hand.

T. 1223 describes both yellow and red wrathful forms of this deity. T. 1224 then repeats much of this material and may simply be a Chinese or Japanese reworking (by an unknown hand) of the earlier texts.

228. In Hodge's opinion, this is a false attribution.

229. Y. Matsunaga, *op. cit.*, 179.

An incident in the life of Nāgārjuna is related by Marcotty²³⁰ who, unfortunately, does not quote his source for the tale. According to this legend, while Nāgārjuna was resident at the monastery of Nālandā he is reputed to have denied access to those holy precincts to a young woman who had been identified by him as the trouble-making demoness Caṇḍikā in disguise. Her path was effectively barred by the simple expedient of driving a wooden *kīla* into the ground within the monastery courtyard. This story is conceivably the earliest known anecdote relating to the magical prowess of the single ritual *kīla*.

The hagiographies of eighty-four prominent *mahāsiddhas* of ancient India were gathered together in the eleventh or twelfth century by Abhayadattaśrī of Campārṇa. Among the stories he collected is that of the *siddha* Virūpa who is said to have transfixed the sun in the sky by stabbing his ritual *kīla* right on the line separating sunlight from shadow.²³¹ Virūpa came from the monastic academy of Somapurī in Bengal, thought to have been established at the end of the eighth century,²³² but whether the Kīla doctrines were taught there or not is unknown. On the other hand, however, we have noted above that minor *kīla-siddhis* are taught in at least three prominent cycles of tantric doctrines (Guhyasamāja, Cakrasaṃvara and Yamāntaka).²³³ It would therefore seem reasonable to suppose that both Nāgārjuna and Virūpa learned magical techniques engaging the *kīla* from these sources, in the systems of which they were acknowledged experts. The most salient source from this period, however, is surely the GST within which we find half a chapter uttered by the apotheosized Vajrakīla himself.²³⁴ This section teaches the GHA GHA *mantra* quoted above (here called the *Sarvatraidhātukakāyavākcittakīlana-mantra*) within that fragment of the *tantra* devoted exclusively to an explanation of the *kīlas* which transfix the Buddha's body, speech and mind.

It begins with the *bhagavat* entering the *samādhi* called Binding *vajra* (*nibandhana-vajra*) of the body, speech and mind of all *Tathāgatas*. The lord then utters this *mantra* for transfixing the body, speech and mind of all the three realms: OM GHA GHA GHĀTAYA GHĀTAYA SARVADUṢṬĀN PHAṬ! KĪLAYA KĪLAYA SARVAPĀPĀN PHAṬ! HŪM HŪM HŪM VAJRAKĪLAYA VAJRADHARA ĀJÑĀPAYATI KĀYAVĀKCITTAVAJRAṀ KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ! and as soon as it was uttered, even those powerful beings possessed of great magic skill became fearful. Candrakīrti explains that "the ones possessed of great magic skill" (*maharddhikāḥ*) are Śakra and the rest.²³⁵ In the subsequent cycle of Vajrakīla literature these Vedic gods constitute the thrones of the *daśakrodha* kings but in this instance, terrified by Kīla's power they seek refuge in Mahāvajradhara.²³⁶

230. T. Marcotty, *Dagger Blessing*, 23–5.

231. K. Dowman, *Masters of Mahāmudrā*, 46. Note the way in which this legend modifies the paradigm of the *kīla* as an instrument for securing boundaries.

232. *ibidem*, 50.

233. It is possible, also, that *kīla* rites once formed part of the doctrines of Tārā, as evidenced by the incident of Jñānadeva cited above.

234. GST, XIV, 58 to chapter end.

235. C. Chakravarti, *Pradīpodyotana*, 158.

236. It is regularly observed that those Hindu gods who are 'converted' by such wrathful displays soon become the Buddha's footstools; e.g., Gaṇapati beneath the feet of Mahākāla, Śiva and Umā trampled by Śrīheruka, etc. It is the normal practice of tantric initiates to meditate upon the *guru* on the crown of the head and the initiated gods are no exception to this rule. The

The root text goes on to say that *kīlas* made of human bone, acacia wood or iron²³⁷ are capable of destroying the threefold *vajrakāya*, to which Candrakīrti's commentary adds that, by striking those nails on the top with a *vajra* hammer, one extirpates all the sins of body, speech and mind. The three *kīlas* themselves are said to have the nature of Vairocana, Yamāntaka and Amṛtakuṇḍalin.

With regard to the actual configuration (*viṣṛmbhita*) of the *kīla*, it is said that the upper part has the aspect of the *samaya* deity whereas the lower section from the heart to the feet is in the form of a sharp spike. The *Vajramālā-tantra*,²³⁸ an early Indian commentary on the GST, adds that the ritual *kīla* should be made of acacia wood, thirteen inches (*aṅgula*) in length and three-sided in shape. It is to be marked with 'the three words' (OM AH HŪM), blessed with one hundred syllables²³⁹ and purified by the rite of Amṛtakuṇḍalin. The *samayasattva* whose form comprises the upper half of the peg is, according to Candrakīrti, the triple-faced, six-armed Amṛtakuṇḍalin.²⁴⁰

A similar description is given by Nāgārjuna in his *Pañcakrama* within which he judiciously rearranges the entire GST in order to teach the procedures of *yoga* in five steps. According to this new arrangement, the rites of the *vajrakīla* are to be performed as a preliminary to meditation upon the *maṇḍala* of Guhyasamāja and thus the *kīlanavidhi* is described in verses 8–17 of the *piṇḍīkramasādhana* which precedes even the first *krama*:

Generating the ten *krodha* kings,
 blazing with light and terrible like demons
 Sprung forth from the syllable HŪM and
 standing resplendent in the *pratyālīḍa* attitude, (8)
 (The *yogin*) should think of them in proper sequence
 upon the tips of the circle of ten directions.
 In order to destroy all obstacles,
 visualizing Sumbha²⁴¹ he should nail them down. (9)

iconography of the fierce deities in all respects, however, is typically extreme. Describing Vajrapāṇi as he tramples the prostrate Maheśvara, STTS, 59, says that Mahādeva received *abhiṣeka* and experienced all the joys of liberation through his contact with the sole of Vajrapāṇi's foot.

237. Note the recurring correlation of the colours white (bone), red (wood) and black (iron).

238. P. 82.

239. The *mantra* of Vajrasattva.

240. Thus Amṛtakuṇḍalin's identification with Vajrakīla remains, notwithstanding the introduction of Vairocana and Yamāntaka.

241. A demon slain by Durgā (*Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*, LXXXV-XC), apotheosized by the Buddhists. The power of Sumbha (Śumbha) and his brother Nisumbha (Niśumbha) was invoked by Vajrapāṇi in the STTS prior to the defeat of Maheśvara. The *mantra* employed on that occasion, known as the *mantra* of four HŪMs, has since become ubiquitous in rites of purifying the ground as a preliminary to any major *sādhana* practice. "In the Vajra family of Sumbha the Royal Formula has great magical power; endowed with the four HŪM syllables, it is active in all the rites." SDPT, 76. Sumbha alone entered the ranks of the *daśakrodha* kings as Sumbharāja, guardian of the nadir. In the Vajrakīla cycle, however, his place is taken by Mahābala.

OM SUMBHA NISUMBHA HŪM GRHNA GRHNA HŪM GRHNĀPAYA GRHNĀPAYA
HŪM ĀNAYA HO BHAGAVAN VIDYĀRĀJA HŪM PHAṬ.

Having thus summoned the misleaders by means of
this wrathful form,
The wise one should nail them all down
in accordance with the rite. (10)

The great king Vajrāmṛta is to be manifest as Vajrakīla,
Dark like the petals of the blue lotus,
the glory of the *kula*, enveloped in flames. (11)

The portion below his waist should be generated
in the form of a spike (*śūla*),
Above which is the form of wrath
with three faces and six arms. (12)

Beneath him (the *yogin*) sees the multitude of hindrances.
Muttering the *mantra* he should stab the immovable
vajrakīla into the bodies of (those) obstructing demons. (13)

OM GHA GHA GHĀTAYA GHĀTAYA SARVADUṢṬĀN PHAṬ! KĪLAYA KĪLAYA
SARVAPĀPĀN PHAṬ! HŪM HŪM VAJRAKĪLA VAJRADHARA ĀJÑĀPAYATI
SARVAVIGHNĀNĀM KĀYAVĀKCITTAṀ KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ!

And he should contemplate Sumbharāja
with a hammer in his hand. (14)

Imagining the *vajra* fire that spreads everywhere,
(The *yogin*) should think that the wailing evils
are burned up (within it). (15)

Stabbing the *kīla* into the ten directions,
above, below and all around,
(The *yogin*) should meditate by means of the ultimate (truth)
upon the absence of self-nature in the triple world. (16)

Meditation concerning the non-truly-existent
is neither meditation nor non-meditation.
Thus, existence being not (truly) existent,
meditation may not be achieved. (17)²⁴²

These final verses denote the ‘higher activities’ (*stod las*) in which enlightenment is the chief aim, as opposed to the more widespread ‘lower acts’ (*smad las*) in which the *kīla* is employed predominantly for the destruction of demons. All of this, I think, clearly indicates the importance of the *kīla* doctrines in their own right. Their independent status is further evidenced by the discovery in Nepal of a number of Sanskrit manuscripts, such as those in the library of the IASWR which include the *Kīlanacaryā* and *Kīlanavidhi* (each 24 folios in length), as well as a long text on the construction of *maṇḍalas* and the

242. L. de La Vallée Poussin, *Pañcakrama*, 1–2.

bestowal of empowerment entitled *Kīlanadīkṣākrama* (65 folios).²⁴³ Although these texts still await detailed investigation, they stand as eloquent testimony to the emergence of a *kīla* cult prior to its flourishing in Tibet.

The GST goes on to say that, “By means of *vajra* meditation even a Buddha will certainly be stabbed (*kīlyate*). When Vajrasattva, the great king, strikes with the *kīla* he will quickly die.”²⁴⁴ And thus a paradigm of ritual *kīla* activity is ensconced.

This basic exemplar is amplified in the verses which follow where it is said that, in order to destroy the body, one recites the *mantra* OM CHINDA CHINDA HANA HANA DAHA DAHA DĪPTAVAJRACAKRA HŪM PHAṬ and strikes the *vajrakīla* into the head (“the dwelling of Vairocana”) of (an effigy of) the victim. Death will occur as soon as he is struck.²⁴⁵

It is pertinent to note that the *mantra* given here corresponds in several particulars to that of Vajrakīla’s consort Tṛptacakra or Dīptacakra, whose seed syllables in the rNyingma school under consideration in this work are HANA HANA HŪM PHAṬ.²⁴⁶

In order to destroy the speech, one recites OM HRĪḤ BHUR BHUVAḤ and “inserts the *vajra* finger into the open (*vikasita*) lotus of wisdom”. There one strikes with the *vajrakīla* and, once again, the victim is destroyed as soon as this is done.

The mind is destroyed with a *mudrā* of five prongs (*pañcaśūlāni*) and the *mantra* OM VAJRARĀJA HŪM. One imagines the *vajrakīla* to be filled with sparks of light as he plunges it into the heart of his enemy and thus his victim immediately dies. Fremantle’s translation reads:

“If the rite is correctly performed with the *yoga* of body, speech and mind, one can transfix the whole extent of the *vajra* realm of space, of this there is no doubt. Thus spoke the *Bhagavan*, the Mahāvajrakīla.”

According to Candrakīrti, the ‘correct performance’ of this rite involves the *sādhaka* entering the centre of a shining red maṇḍala where he arises in wrathful guise with his fangs slightly bared in a grimace (*iṣaddaṃṣṭrākarālavadana*). Surrounding him in their proper places are the ten *krodharājas* whose bodies have the nature of the triple *vajra* and who are described as exhibiting the form of Sumbha. The passage in the *mūlatantra* closes with a eulogy delivered by the Buddha’s retinue who thrill with joy at the boon just bestowed for the sake of living beings:

“Oh, best abode of secrets!
Oh gathering of essence!
Oh peaceful dwelling of *Dharma*!

243. IASWR catalogue numbers MBB-II-68, MBB-II-185, 186 & MBB-I-59. In *A Microfilm Catalogue of Buddhist Manuscripts from Nepal*, Nagoya University, 1981, are found *Kīlanamantra* (CH429), *Kīlanavidhi* (A139F, CA48–2, CH250–B), *Kīlanapūjā* (A151), and *Vighnakīlanavidhi* (DH171, DH195).

244. F. Fremantle’s translation.

245. Employing the *mudrā* noted above from the *Susiddhi-tantra*.

246. This *mantra* is to be found in the MMK (p. 395) where it ends DĪPTACAKRA HŪM and is called the *mantra* of the *dharmacakra*. It is said to destroy all *kleśas* and so on and, most significantly, to fulfil the desires of the *yogin* by allowing him to “un-nail” them (*utkīlayati*) as he wishes.

Oh *vajra* vanquishing!
 The transfixing of all the Buddhas
 and famous *bodhisattvas*,
 The transfixing of *vajra* body, speech
 and mind has been taught.
 This is the transfixing of all *mantras*,
 born of truth,
 Bestowing body, speech and mind,
 The gathering of the truth of *mantras*.”

This particular half-chapter of the GST is evidently of considerable historical value to our study. Throughout the passage it is Mahāvajrakīla himself who propounds the ritual teachings, within which the emergence of his consort Trīptacakra may also clearly be discerned. The *kīla* is placed within the *maṇḍala* and assigned quite a specific iconography: one half wrathful deity and one half nail. There is, furthermore, an elaborate advance in the ritual use of the *kīla* upon all previous citations, with instructions being given to stab the effigy in the head, throat and heart in order to subdue specifically the body, speech and mind. Despite its brevity, the text describes a highly sophisticated Vajrakīla rite in very clear terms. We must conclude, therefore, that the ritual technique of slaying with a *kīla* was already well established by the time of its redaction.

The lamentable paucity of relevant literature in support of this view I suppose to result from the subsequent loss of much material including, perhaps, contemporaneous Vajrakīla *sādhanas*, *tantras* and *āgamas*. Sanskrit Buddhist literature, in general, has largely disappeared from the land of its origin and Indian history affords no shortage of examples of religious cults whose traces have all but vanished. Such an apparently tendentious hypothesis is supported by the Vajrakumāra texts translated into Chinese by Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra in advance of the assumed date of the GST,²⁴⁷ not to mention the many volumes dedicated to Vajrakīla in the *rNyīng ma'i rgyud 'bum* (NGB)²⁴⁸ and other Tibetan collections. Nor is there anything odd in the fact of its intrusion here into the text of the GST. Kurukullā, for example, is an independent deity having no obvious connection with Hevajra and yet her *sādhana* is to be found at HT I, xi, 12–15.

On the other hand, of course, it is conceivable that this passage reflects a penultimate stage in the evolution of Vajrakīla as a deity, immediately prior to the formulation of *tantras* and other texts specifically dedicated to his name. On the testimony of both the Tibetan and Sino-Japanese traditions, however, I advocate the view proposed above. The rite of killing, demonstrated so succinctly in this extract, is raised almost to the level of an obsession in the Vajrakīla *tantra*. The entire genre of *Anuttarayogatantra*, in fact, displays an atavistic predisposition towards the antinomian features of the earliest *Kriyātantra* accompanied, however, by a marked change in philosophic outlook. Whereas we might suppose the earlier strata of tantric literature to reflect the mundane preoccupations of village sorcerers whose methodology it apparently incorporated without discrimination, it

247. Although the problem of dating all such material is as yet unresolved, the general consensus supports this view.

248. Regarding the NGB see below, note 252.

is clear that in the middle period (epitomized by the *Yogatantra*) such wholesale perfidy of Buddhist ideals was abandoned²⁴⁹ only to re-emerge as 'vajra wrath' and so on in the *Anuttarayoga tantra* of the final period.

An important feature noted in the *Guhyagarbha-tantra*²⁵⁰ is the placement of a *kīla* within each of the four Families (*kula*) for the performance of 'the four magical rites' (*catvāri karmāṇi*). The 'orthodox' nature of these rites (and thus the establishment of the *kīla* as a part of that orthodoxy) is hinted at by relating them to the four syllables which ubiquitously serve as introductions to canonical literature: "*Evam mayā ...*" ("Thus, by me ..."). *Guhyagarbha XX* (amplified by the commentary of Klong-chen-pa) specifies that an iron *Vajrakīla* of indestructible reality is to be used with an attitude of wrath within a triangular (E) *maṇḍala* to destroy the body; a copper *Padmakīla* of desire is to be used with an attitude of attachment within a semicircular (VAM) *maṇḍala* in order to subjugate all speech; a golden *Ratnakīla* of pride is to be used with an attitude of joy within a square (MA) *maṇḍala* to increase one's indestructible brilliance and enlightened attributes; and a silver *Buddhakīla* of lustrous radiance is to be used with an attitude of mental clarity within a circular (YĀ) *maṇḍala* to pacify all fury.²⁵¹

The paradigm of a *Vajrakīla maṇḍala* is now complete. *Vajrakīla* as the *maṇḍal-ādhipati* has been joined by his four 'supreme sons' (as they become known in the Byang-ter literature discussed below), through whom he becomes lord of the five families with his own *Karmakula* as the fifth. His retinue of *daśakrodha* kings has been established and to his original purely apotropaic role have been accrued all those activities appropriate to a *Samyaksambuddha*.

The collected tantric texts revered in Tibet as translations of works brought from India during the eighth century²⁵² include many volumes devoted to the worship of the *kīla* as just such a *Samyaksambuddha* together with his retinue although today, regrettably, no Indian redaction of any of these texts is known to western scholarship. Indian Buddhists, although aware of *Vajrakīla*, seem to have taken little interest in this 'central deity', preferring to focus their attention instead upon his retinue of ten wrathful kings who may be called upon to surround and protect the *maṇḍala* palace of any chosen deity.²⁵³

Thus, according to *Abhayākaragupta's vighnakīlanavidhi*, compiled in the twelfth century from such sources as outlined above: In order to establish all beings on the stage of *Vajradhara* the *yogin* should rise at dawn determined to destroy all obstacles. Following the contemplation of voidness he should visualize the syllable RAM and mentally transform it into the disc of the sun. Resting upon that sun disc is a syllable HŪM which, in turn, transforms into a *viśvavajra* upon which stands a HŪM. Blazing *vajras* born of the

249. J. W. de Jong, *op. cit.*, 93.

250. G. Dorje, *The Guhyagarbha-tantra*, 918.

251. cf. the Japanese tradition of single-pronged *vajras* bearing the various emblems of the *kulas* upon their heads.

252. eg. the NGB. Of the edition in 36 volumes published in Thimbu in 1973, vols. 27–9, are devoted to *Vajrakīla*.

253. cf. Lessing & Wayman, *Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems*, 283, where the nature of the central deity is explained.

light rays of that syllable HŪM spread out in all directions to form a seamless wall and tent with a canopy composed of a network of arrows, above, and a blazing foundation of unbearably bright *viśvavajra*, below. Transforming himself in an instant into the quintessential *vajra* being (Vajrasattva) who is utterly victorious over the three worlds (Trailokyavijaya) named Vajrahūmkāra, the *yogin* stands in the centre of that area upon a sun and multicoloured lotus in the *ālīḍha* posture with right knee advanced and left leg drawn back. Very angry and blazing like the fire at the end of an aeon in a mass of rays of light, his two feet trample upon Bhairava and Kālarātrī and he takes as his food the entire multitude of interrupting worldly demons.

He has three faces: yellow on the right, green on the left and his central face is dark blue. Each face has immense fangs and a lolling tongue, wrinkled eyebrows, a projecting forehead and three bulbous red eyes. Possessed of the six *mudrās*, across his brow is a row of five skulls and a garland of dripping heads oozing blood dangles from his neck. He wears a belt of human heads and is clothed in tiger skin. The flaming reddish brown hair of his head streams upwards encircled by the dark blue *nāga* king Ananta and he is adorned with Takṣaka and the rest of the *nāga* kings. With his two main hands holding *vajra* and bell he makes ‘*vajra* fists’ pressed back to back, linked together with the two little fingers while the ‘threatening’ forefingers remain outstretched. Standing thus with the gesture of conquering the triple world he is established in self-radiant wisdom. His two hands on the right hold an iron hook and noose and those on the left, a skull and *khaṭvāṅga*. With his fanged face roaring the sound of HŪM, from the HŪM in his heart spread out rays of light that gather up all the hindering demons from the ten directions. The *yogin* should then consign those demons to the ten wrathful ones who have poured forth from the syllable HŪM.

In length those wrathful deities should be either eighteen or twelve or eight inches, in that order, and to be effective they should be six, four or three inches thick. Made of acacia wood or bone or iron, they should be placed in new containers and worshipped, smeared with white mustard seed and red sandalwood and wound with threads of five colours. Holding them in one’s hands they should be empowered with the *mantra* of three syllables. Then, one at a time, those ten *kīlas* should be bound with a garland of red flowers. Below the navel each *kīla* has the form of a single spike, above which they are to be contemplated in one’s own (three-faced, six-armed) image, blazing like the fire at the end of an aeon.

Meditating thus and binding the *vajra* fist with his left hand, the *yogin* with his right hand takes the chief of all symbols, the averting hammer (*parāvṛtta-mudgara*) tied with a garland of flowers and, uttering a long drawn-out sound he strikes the ten HŪM-born *krodhas* as they pierce the obstructors. OM VAJRAKĪLA KĪLAYA SARVAVIGHNĀN HŪM or else OM GHA GHA GHĀṬAYA GHĀṬAYA SARVADUṢṬĀN PHAṬ PHAṬ. KĪLAYA KĪLAYA SARVAPĀPĀN PHAṬ PHAṬ HŪM HŪM HŪM. VAJRAKĪLA VAJRADHARO ĀJŅĀPAYATI SARVAVIGHNĀNĀM KĀYAVĀKCITTAM KĪLAYA HŪM HŪM PHAṬ PHAṬ. With the first recitation he should fix the *kīla* on the head (of the victim) and then, muttering OM VAJRAMUDGARA ĀKOTĀYA HŪM, he should beat it (with the hammer). In this way the *yogin* should begin in the northeast corner and, moving clockwise around the outside of

the *maṇḍala*, should fix and strike the *kīlas* of the eight directions within the ‘circle of light’ (*prabhāvalī*) that surrounds the *vajra* circle.

This should be done first of all by the *ācārya* and then, when the demons have been rendered powerless, by his assistants.²⁵⁴ The *kīla* for the zenith should be pegged to the east of the eastern spike and that for the nadir to the west of the western one. Otherwise, as stated in the STTS and other sources,²⁵⁵ “One should peg (the *kīla*) within the outer circle of light”.

Abhayākara Gupta then states that, in accordance with those (authoritative texts), *ācāryas* of his day, having fixed the spikes around the outside of the *maṇḍala* house, make mounds of earth upon those ten places and there gratify the wrathful ones whose form is the *kīla* with flowers and so on and with parasols and gifts of food and the rest. By doing that, they say, all that is wished for is attained in the most excellent manner without any hindrance, even that pertaining to the gods. The *yogin* should meditate upon the host of obstructors attaining the blissful “single taste of the natural condition” (*tathataikarasam*) due to being transfixed and hammered in that way, while the remaining hindering demons flee far away. Thus all beings above, below and across the world, everywhere out as far as the limit of the universe, are to be set free—firmly established in the absence of obstacles. This is the first method.

Alternatively, by reciting OM ĀḤ HŪM YAMĀNTAKṚT SARVADUṢṬENDROPENDRĀN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM PRAJÑĀNTAKṚT SARVADUṢṬAYAMĀN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM PADMĀNTAKṚT SARVADUṢṬANĀGĀN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM VIGHNĀNTAKṚT SARVADUṢṬAKUVERĀN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM ACALA SARVADUṢṬEŚĀNĀN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM ṬAKKIRĀJA SARVADUṢṬĀGNĪN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM NĪLADAṆḍA SARVADUṢṬANĀIRṚTĪN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM MAHĀBALA SARVADUṢṬAVĀYŪN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM CAKRAVARTIN SARVADUṢṬĀRKACANDRAPITĀMAHĀN SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, OM ĀḤ HŪM SUMBHA SARVADUṢṬAVEMACITRIPṚTHIVĪDEVATĀḤ SAPARIVĀRĀN KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ, all the obstructors in the guise of Indra and the rest who dwell in the east and other quarters are to be transfixed and beaten by means of those *mantras*, just as has been described above. This is the second method.

And if someone were to say that four *kīlas* should be embedded in the four corners, (we reply) “Just in the (four) doorways!” Furthermore, the colours and forms and so on of the wrathful deities and of Indra and the rest may be known from established tradition. When it is the case that one wishes to meditate upon the vast circle of protection and yet possesses no spikes made of acacia wood and so on; during the performance of the ritual meditations of transfixing and hammering just described, the *yogin* should turn his hand over onto its back and, saying OM VAJRA HŪM, should wave it in the air and strike it on the ground thinking that by so doing he ‘liberates’ them.²⁵⁶

254. These are the four *dvārācāryas* mentioned by Kuladatta, above.

255. I have been unable to trace this citation.

256. *Vajrāvalī*, 33–7. Abhayākara Gupta in his final injunction seems unaware of the *kīlamudrā* to be found in the *Susiddhi-tantra*.

Coda

The foregoing aetiology of the divine nail has perhaps raised more questions than it has answered. The evolution of the *daśakrodha* kings within the literature of the tantric Buddhists, for example, is a topic worthy of a thorough investigation that must be neglected here for want of space. The myth of the subjugation of Rudra, barely touched upon in this chapter, is another. Thirdly there remains the whole question of the interaction between the Buddhist and Hindu *tantras* and, in particular, the role of the *kīla* in the rites of non-Buddhists.²⁵⁷ That which I hope has been achieved here, however, is a fairly clear and comprehensive image of the magic nail as it evolved and became established within the Vajrayāna.

The next chapter explores the concept and iconography of the nail as expressed in the literature of Vajrakīla, an apotropaic god of supreme wrath. Although material for the present chapter has been consciously selected as far as possible from Indian sources, iconographic data and definitive evidence of a Vajrakīla cult are conspicuously absent from all such documents presently available. This situation, however, may be radically overthrown as Sanskrit material currently emerging from Nepal begins to be investigated. The literature of Tibet, on the other hand, is replete with such details. The magic peg evidently struck a sympathetic chord deep in the Tibetan psyche²⁵⁸ and I propose, therefore, to close this chapter by noting briefly the widespread prevalence of the *kīla* as an instrument of high religion and popular sorcery within the numerous traditions of that country.

Among the many legends that have accumulated around the earliest introductions of Buddhism to Tibet is a tale concerning two of the wives of emperor Srong-btsan sgam-po (early seventh century). A princess from Nepal and another from China, both of whom were Buddhists in possession of sacred images, apparently rivalled each other in determination to become the first in Tibet to have a temple erected in honour of her own particular Buddhist statue. No temple could successfully be built within that country, however, until the 'demoness of the soil' had been subdued. Through the geomantic expertise of the Chinese princess Kong-jo, the appropriate locations for the required subjugation were determined on the ground and then the spread-eagled form of the demoness was rendered immovable by transfixing her limbs. Thirteen shrines and *stūpas* were built in order to effect this. One of these pressed down upon her heart and then an inner circle of four transfixed her shoulders and hips, an intermediate group held firm her

257. For example, *kīlas* are linked with the exorcism of evil influences in a rite of healing described by Eberhard Fischer & Haku Shah, "Treatment Against Ghosts and Spirits: The *bhagtai* Ceremony of the Chodhri Tribe in Gujarat." *German Scholars on India*, II, Delhi, 1976, 51–60.

258. R. A. Stein notes that the sacred mountains with which the country of Tibet abounds are popularly regarded as either *yul lha* ("deities of the country") or *gzhi bdag* (*sa bdag*, "lords of the locality"). In particular they are thought of as the "pillars of the sky" (*gnam gyi ka ba*) and "*kīla* of the earth" (*sa yi phur bu*), exactly the functions originally performed by the *Indrakīla*. R. A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilisation*, 203.

elbows and knees, and a final set pinned down her wrists and ankles. As a result of that subjugation, it is said, the land of Tibet was tamed in readiness for the introduction of the Buddhist *Dharma*.²⁵⁹

With regard to the building of the temple in the centre that pressed down upon the heart of the demoness, Erik Haarh²⁶⁰ quotes the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (160.149r) as saying; “The pillars were fashioned in the form of *kīlas* and the *tantrics* rejoiced.” Once more, therefore, we note the intimate association of the *kīla* with architecture in general and with pillars in particular.

The scheme of subduing the land depicted in this tale has an obvious parallel in the system of fixing *kīlas* into the four corners of the site, discussed at length above. Indeed, Kuladatta's system actually included both inner and outer concentric rings of nails. Compare this with the religious procedure involved in the seemingly simple act of erecting the tent which is to serve as dwelling for the *yogin* during periods of isolated retreat. According to a popular Tibetan tradition, the *yogin* should imagine all the dangerous demons of the area to be spread-eagled on the ground beneath his tent and, as he hammers in the tent pegs, he visualizes *kīlas* of meteoric iron (*gnam lcags*)²⁶¹ being driven through their limbs.²⁶² Such meditations are cast in specifically Buddhist terminology in these rites by calling upon the *dākinīs* of the *pañcakula* to bring the *kīlas* of the four *brahmavihāras*²⁶³ from the four directions together with the *kīla* of *bodhicitta* which holds centre place.²⁶⁴

At a far social remove from the itinerant *yogins* who must beg their way from one charnel ground to the next for the performance of such rites, is the powerful hierarch, the Dalai Lama. A recently published esoteric manual by the Fifth Dalai Lama specifies the use of *kīlas* in more than a dozen rites in addition to those focussing on the deity Vajrakīla. These include not only rituals for the subjugation of demons but also rites for the promotion of long life and prosperity.²⁶⁵

Further examples can be found in Nebesky-Wojkowitz's *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, a perusal of which quickly reveals the popularity of the hand-held *kīla* as a weapon of magic among minor Tibetan deities. The power of the *kīla*, however, may be

259. M. Aris, *Bhutan*, ch. 1, offers an in-depth analysis (with variants, etc.) and historical appraisal of the fascinating legend so crudely outlined here.

260. Erik Haarh, *The Yar-lung Dynasty*, 385.

261. “Sky-iron”, a ubiquitous tantric image thought to embody the paradox of *sūnya* (the “sky”) with functional manifestation (“iron”).

262. cf. the poorly translated description given in the rite of *gcod* edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz in *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, 324.

It is also interesting to note that, within the barely disguised eroticism of the *kīla* transfixing the outstretched body of the demoness of the soil are discernable echoes of an ancient tale told (circa 900 BC) in the *Jaiminiya-brāhmaṇa* in which a demoness whose body possessed a vagina on each limb was only finally overcome when seduced by a god whose own body had been especially equipped with a similar number of penises. W. D. O'Flaherty, *Tales of Sex and Violence*, 101–2.

263. *maitrikīla*, *karuṇākīla*, *muditākīla*, *upekṣākīla*.

264. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *op. cit.*, 306–7.

265. S. Karmay, *Secret Visions*, plates 23, 42, 43, etc. and page 33, plate 4, etc.

iconographically incorporated in more ways than one. Amṛtakunḍalin, for example, became a 'kīla-deity' not by the iconographer's gift of a spike to his hand but by the incorporation of the deity into the substance of the spike itself. Such a process resulted inevitably in some artistic modification of the form of the spike, usually vague but occasionally quite specific. Thus it is that a large number of ritual *kīlas* show three faces at the top, for an overwhelming majority of the gods who are invoked to dwell within the *kīlas* are of the three-faced variety. Other *kīlas*, however, are clearly designed as the abode of a single, recognizable divinity. Hayagrīva with his horse's head, for example, is often to be found in the form of a spike and the list is surprisingly long.²⁶⁶

In the sixteenth century, the Tibetan polymath Tāranātha assembled a large collection of *sādhanas* from various sources among which, in a section devoted to Jñānamahākāla, is to be found a certain Garuḍapakṣavat Kīlapāda Pañjara Mahākāla (*sic.*) depicted in his published icon²⁶⁷ as a single-faced, two-handed deity holding a *karṭṛkā* and skull in front of his chest. Clothed and adorned with all the usual attributes of a *heruka* he has a pair of wings (an important element in the iconography of Vajrakīla) and his two (!) feet are implanted like nails into the heart of an enemy who lies supine within a fierce triangular prison (also an important element in the iconography of Vajrakīla). With the icon is his *karma-mantra*: OM MAHĀKĀLA HŪM PHAṬ! MAHĀKĪLA TRI YAṀ JAḤ JAḤ. MAHĀKĪLA TRI YAṀ *dgra bo* MĀRAYA. MAHĀKĪLA TRI YAṀ *thum ril rbad*. KĪLAYA *sha rbad*. *dgra bo* NR MĀRAYA HŪM PHAṬ! SAMAYA HŪM PHAṬ! SARVAVIGHNĀN BAṀ HŪM PHAṬ! (I have replaced the impossible syllable NĪ, written with reversed *gi gu* in the published text, by NR.) Note here especially the reduction of the word *bandhaya*, as found in the earlier *mantras*, to the seed syllable BAṀ, as found in all Vajrakīla *mantras* within the rNying-ma traditions.

These few examples of the *kīla* as an abiding concept in Tibetan thought are merely the tip of an iceberg. It is difficult, indeed, to find any general work on Tibetan religious art and culture that fails to mention the ubiquitous magic spike. The popularity of the *kīla* in Tibet, especially (but by no means exclusively) among the rNying-ma-pa, is an undoubted legacy of Padmasambhava, a charismatic figure who played a central role in the propagation of *kīla* rituals in Tibet. The history of the Vajrakīla doctrines, according to the view of its own sacred tradition, will be looked at as soon as the iconography of Vajrakīla has been dealt with in the following chapter.

266. J. Huntingdon, *The Phur-ba: Tibetan Ritual Daggers*, depicts a number of nails that are also gods.

267. L. Chandra, *Buddhist Iconography of Tibet*, I, 324.

Chapter Three

Iconography of the Kīla

High aspirations and low activities

Ultimately, the Vajrakīla is said to be the nail of essential meaning (*nītārtha*) and whoever takes hold of it is capable of destroying all dualistic grasping, thereby attaining the bliss of eternal *nirvāṇa*. Inwardly, this is achieved by meditating on the so-called *bhavakīla* in which the entire universe, with all of its confusing dualistic contradictions, is contemplatively united within the single image of a nail. This is symbolically expressed through the use of small ritual nails, some few inches long, made of metal or wood which are held in the hand of an 'exorcist' as he stabs at the 'demons' (dualistic thoughts) that are causing trouble to himself or his sponsor. In Chapter Nine of the Byang-gter *mūlatantra* known as *The Black Razor* (BRT)²⁶⁸ it is said:

"With regard to meditational equipoise (*samāhita-samādhi*); the special activity is the enlightened mind (*bodhicitta*) that arises from the unmistakable and uncontrived *dharmatā* with the speed of a dreadful flashing thunderbolt in order to subjugate the vicious beings of the three realms. This *bodhicittakīla* which is fully accomplished in controlling the *traidhātuka* is called 'The Killer of the Three Realms Without Exception'."

And in Chapter Ten of the same *tantra* we read:

"By means of the *bodhicittakīla*, penetrate perfect knowledge for your own benefit (and then) destroy the ignorance of all sentient beings in the *traidhātuka* without exception by means of Vajrakīla!"

The *tantra* then goes on to explain the mystical significance of the nail, offering various interpretations of the term *kīla*:

"*Kī*" implies that all and everything is the mind of enlightenment.

"*La*" means that (the enlightened mind) pervades all things.

"*Kī*" indicates the supreme lord of all phenomena.

"*La*" shows that all beings are within his retinue.

"*Kī*" indicates that all *dharmas* are unoriginated.

"*La*" shows the unceasing nature of playful creativity (*līlā*).

"*Kī*" indicates unity within the enlightened mind.

"*La*" shows the attainment of multiplicity within that.

268. For a critical edition of this text (A2, etc., analysed in Chapter Five) see below, Appendix II.

Thus the magic nail, which in the previous chapter was employed to pin down *nāgas*, *vetālas* and other demonic forces, is here called upon to serve its cultic initiates in the higher function of leading to enlightenment. The explanatory *Drag sngags zab pa'i lo rgyus*²⁶⁹ describes the *kīla* from several points of view, presenting it as a multi-layered symbol capable of simultaneously sustaining a variety of interpretation:

“As for the real essence of the Vajrakīla, it is just the *dharmakāya* wisdom of natural awareness within which are the two *rūpakāyas* having a similar meaning. Kīla’s nature is the great bliss of *bodhicitta* and, as a focal point for living beings, all trees and forests arise as *kīlas*. As for the words of truth of Vajrakīla, they are naturally abiding from the beginning in the *dharmakāya*. This is the *kīla* of secret skilful means (*guh्यopāya*).”²⁷⁰

Thus the ‘ultimate truth’ of Kīla (the apotheosized *kīla*) is nothing less than the *trikāya* of Buddhahood having wisdom and bliss as the nature of Mind (the *dharmakāya*), ‘naturally abiding words of truth’ as the nature of Speech (*sambhogakāya*) and trees and forests as the manifestation of the Body (*nirmāṇakāya*). The artificial wooden stake that we have seen ritually employed as an instrument for stabilizing the earth has its natural counterpart in the living tree which is everywhere known to protect the soil from erosion as well as to participate in the *kīla*’s function of weather control. Numerous citations from Buddhist scriptures could be called upon here to illustrate the popular motif of the tree²⁷¹ as a stable, long-suffering and ‘compassionate’ refuge from the fierce heat of the sun (the *kleśa*) or a heavy downpour of rain (less threatening than drought to the Indian mind). Trees also serve as sources of the ‘naturally abiding words of truth’ in many a ‘pure land’ (*buddhakṣetra*) image. In the *Amitābhavyūha-sūtra*, for example, it is said that the sounds of the trees as their leaves rustle in the wind bring all beings to a state of mindful awareness of the *Dharma*,²⁷² and in the previous chapter we noted a wooden *kīla* that, having grown into a living tree, proceeded to preach the *Dharma*. Throughout the world, furthermore, trees commonly serve as boundary markers and protectors of the border.

The tree, with its roots piercing deep into the earth and its branches stretching up to the heavens, is often linked in mythological imagery to the cosmic Mount Meru. Also the column or pillar known as the *indrakīla*, to which reference has been made above, is regularly associated with either Mount Meru, ‘the tree of life’ or the *bodhi* tree.²⁷³ It is no surprise, then, to find in Byang-gter literature several descriptions of the *kīla* cast in terms of the macrocosmic imagery of Mount Meru. The Byang-gter text A33, for example, describes the sharp point of the *kīla* as a ferocious striker issuing from the jaws of a *makara*, above which *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are incorporated within the ‘vast knots’

269. B30, etc.

270. B30, 140.

271. For a study of the popular motif of the tree in Indian thought see Odette Viennot, *Le culte de l'arbre dans l'inde ancienne*, Annales du Musée Guimet, Paris, 1954.

272. See Garma C. C. Chang, ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, 349. Or *Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts*, SBE, vol. 49, 97.

273. Lily de Silva, “The Symbolism of the Indrakīla”, 249. W. D. O’Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*, 26.

(*mahākanda*) at either end of the handle. The eight-sided handle itself is said to radiate with the splendour of all creation.²⁷⁴

In a more elaborate description, the arising of this ‘cosmic *kīla*’ (*bhavakīla*) follows the traditional *abhidharma* paradigm for the unfolding of the universe.²⁷⁵ Thus, on a foundation of the ferocious²⁷⁶ elements of space, wind, fire, water and earth, the receptacle universe (*bhājanaloka*) emerges. The enclosing *cakravāla* has the form of a dark pair of interlocking triangles (*dharmodaya*), one red, the other blue,²⁷⁷ within which swirls an ocean of blood. From the centre of the blood ocean arises the majestic Mount Sumeru in the form of a nail. The sharp tip of this nail presses down upon the hells and the *kāmadhātu* is enclosed within the great knot at the base of the shaft above. The lower half of the eight-sided shaft of this nail encompasses the *rūpadhātu* and its upper half comprises the realm of the *ārūpyadhātu*. The realm of the Buddhas is symbolized by the great knot on the very top of the shaft. Thus the nail itself encompasses both the lowest depths of *saṃsāra* and the ultimate peaks of *nirvāṇa* and this is the nail which is rolled between the palms of the almighty deity Vajrakīla whose icon is to be described in this chapter: “The great trichilocosm resides within just such a *kīla* as this and any *kīla* manufactured in accordance with this design has great power.”²⁷⁸

Thus the manifest *kīla* ranges in form from the inch-long thorn of the acacia tree, through the various man-made spikes of wood and metal, to the pillar, the tree, ‘the tree of life’, ‘the tree of enlightenment’ and, ultimately, to the *axis mundi* and the entire universe.

The *Drag sngags zab pa'i lo rgyus* continues with an explanation of how the three *kāyas* of the *kīla* are brought into existence and how they function for the benefit of beings. Beginning with the *dharmakāya*, the text explains:

“The substance of the *kīla* of all-pervading wisdom (omniscient understanding) is the wisdom of natural awareness (*vidyājñāna*). The place in which it is implanted is the *dharmadhātu*. The extent of this understanding is infallible knowledge of the inseparability of wisdom and the *dharmadhātu*. The defect of not knowing this is that infallible wisdom is impossible to gain.

The substance of the *kīla* of the secret mind of enlightenment is the *bodhicitta* of Mahāśrīheruka and the place of its implantation is the *bhaga* of his consort. When this has been fully understood, true sons and daughters

274. A33, 235.

275. A36, 258–9.

276. The five elements in the imagery of the wrathful *tantras* are terrifying space, a violent wind, the fire of doomsday, an ocean of blood and a foundation (earth) of flesh and bone.

277. Male and female are represented in peaceful tantric imagery by the white colour of semen and the red of menstruation, the very essences of life. In the wrathful *tantras*, however, the male colour is the blue or black of poison and that of the female is the red of blood spilled in slaughter, the very essences of death.

278. A33, 236.

can take birth from the Mother's *bhaga*. The defect of not understanding this is that birth is not possible.²⁷⁹

As for the substance of the *kīla* of limitless compassion, this is the arising of compassion within the *ālaya*. The place of its implantation is all living beings of the six realms. The measure of this realization is the ability to benefit beings by means of unhesitating, unbiased compassion and the defect of not understanding this is the inability to benefit beings."²⁸⁰

Those three verses relate the three *kāyas* to their corresponding moments: death, the intermediate state (*antarābhava*) and rebirth,²⁸¹ all spoken of in terms of driving a spike into the appropriate 'ground'. Such meditations focus upon the *kīla* in its ultimate aspect (as *paramārthakīla*) and form part of the 'superior activities' (*stod las*) leading to enlightenment. They constitute the highest level of Vajrakīla praxis as stated in the texts themselves and are said to result in the morally praiseworthy 'achievement of the universal nail (*bhavakīla*)'. Initiates in the cult of Vajrakīla, however, also perform a large number of violent rites of a type akin to witchcraft or black magic (called *smad las*, 'lower activities')²⁸² and frequent references to such rites are found in the documents analysed in section three of the present work. The manufactured or 'conventional' nails (*saṃvrtikīla*) pertaining to these lower activities of exorcism and destruction are described in the aforementioned text as follows:

"The substances of the material *kīlas* with their signs and characteristics are silver, gold, copper and iron, together with the various woods that have an (occult) affinity with these metals. The places in which they are planted are the enemies, obstructors, trouble-makers and vicious ones. The measure of this understanding is the ability to destroy ('liberate') the enemies and obstructors. The defect of not understanding this is that the enemies and obstructors are not disciplined or converted."²⁸³

The four kinds of metal mentioned here are considered characteristic of the *kīlas* of the four families (*kula*) and the four rites (*karma*).

At the end of the *rTsa ba dril sgrub*, a *sādhana* said to have been taught to Padma-sambhava by Śrīsiṃha, are mentioned three varieties of *kīlas*. Those which are manufactured from either five or seven types of iron are praised as the best; those which are carved from acacia or other hard wood (*drag po'i shing*, which could also be translated 'ferocious wood'), cut when the stars and planets are calculated to be in favourable

279. This verse is a typical example of the *sandhyābhāṣā* in which so many tantric teachings are expressed. Simultaneously it refers (a) to the union of wisdom and means with the resultant arising of Buddhahood and (b) to the process of empowerment that purifies the *sambhogakāya*. For a discussion of this 'twilight language' see A. Wayman, *The Buddhist Tantras*, 128–35.

280. B30, 140–1.

281. For a full discussion of these correspondences see Lati Rinbochay & Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*.

282. The 'lower' activities consist of the *catvāri karmāni*; the three "gentle" (*mañju*) rites of pacification, increase and control, and the "dreadful" (*raudra*) rite of slaying.

283. B30, 141.

positions,²⁸⁴ are said to be successful in any rite; and those which are not prepared in such ways are said to be ineffective.²⁸⁵ The theme is further elaborated in another text in which the attributes of various *kīlas* are outlined during the course of a conversation between Padmasambhava and King Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan. This text confirms that the *kīlas* of the four activities (*karma*) and so on are characterized in their own individual ways, whereas the violent *kīla* that quells disturbances (*bar chad 'dul*, subdues interruptions) must be made of either wood or iron. If made of wood, then either red acacia or black rosewood should be used (although for the 'messenger' *kīla* any kind of thorny wood is recommended) and if made of iron then, again, the *kīla* made of five or seven types is praised as preminent.²⁸⁶

The authors of these texts take it as axiomatic that the rite of slaying enemies by piercing their effigies with a material *kīla* of metal or wood is merely the visible outer expression of a subtle inner meditation on the *trikāyakīla* directed towards enlightenment.

“That which makes the implantation of the *kīla* necessary is the requirement to subdue the interruptions of Māra. In so doing one spontaneously accomplishes the four rites and, as a result of this, the *trikāya* (ie. Buddhahood). As for the manner in which these hindrances arise: in particular they become manifest for those vow-holders who are on the very verge of the attainment of *siddhi*. They do not arise for lesser beings. When obstacles really arise for a superior being, they may turn his mind away from his *guru* and his *vajra* brothers and sisters, away from the *Dharma* and his personal deity (*iṣṭadevatā*), away from the view (*darśana*) and his religious practice, away from the cultivation of *samādhi* and the performance of enlightened activity. Hindrances may also arise in the guise of enemies and thieves, the downfalls of broken vows, evil gossip, slander, disputes and all those things which destroy one's wealth and *Dharma* practice. All of these hindrances are obstructions due to Māra and, with regard to their subjugation, there is no method superior to that of Vajrakīla.”²⁸⁷

Māra and Rudra: Embodiments of evil

The above reference to Māra, the standard epitome of evil in Buddhism, is rather unusual in the context of the Kīla literature where his place is everywhere taken by Rudra. I suppose this to be a conscious attempt on the part of the author of the text (said to be Padmasambhava) to represent the Kīla doctrines, which contain a large number of elements undoubtedly incorporated from a non-Buddhist milieu, in thoroughly orthodox manner.²⁸⁸

284. Acacia wood should be cut beneath the constellation Śravaṇa. E. W. Marasinghe, *The Citra-karmaśāstra*, 9.

285. A32, 228–9.

286. A33, 233–5.

287. B30, 141–2.

288. Klong-chen-pa, commenting on *Guhyagarbha-tantra* XV, asserts that Rudra, Māra, and even the primordial Buddha Samantabhadra, are one. With regard to such commentaries it has been

Traditional Buddhist cosmological theory supposes mental defilements (*kleśa*)²⁸⁹ to be the fundamental cause of *saṃsāra*, the nature of which is distress (*duḥkha*). The ‘Desire World’ (*kāmaloka*), in which these *kleśas* are particularly prevalent, is considered to be populated by a vast range of gods and demons of all kinds (as well as men, animals, etc.) and yet, while Indian mythology in general tended to enlarge the list of demons and demonic types, Buddhism incorporated them all within the character of Māra. Later developments such as Māra’s daughters and his demonic army and so forth, all derive their identity from this single figure, the sole demon of early canonical Buddhism.

The Pāli *suttas* describe Māra as the Buddha’s arch enemy. He is said to be the ruler of the *kāmadhātu* and thus to hold the human realm entirely under his sway. His powerful degenerative influence subtly pervades even the *rūpa-* and *ārūpyadhātus* so that the sphere of Buddhahood alone stands outside his reach. In an attempt to retain control of his subjects, then, Māra consistently opposes any religious endeavour that tends toward enlightenment, the sole means of escape from *saṃsāra*. He is the supporter of Vedic sacrifice through which the gods are nourished and sustained and a keen proponent of all false views. Continuously he seeks to disrupt meditation and to destroy insight. As the supreme obstacle to Buddhahood he represents all that must be conquered before enlightenment is won and victory over Māra, the Evil One, is said to be the crucial event leading to *saṃbodhi*.²⁹⁰

Victory over Māra is traditionally attained through ‘passive resistance’ alone. The Pāli *suttas* teach unwavering commitment to right view (*samyagdr̥ṣṭi*), right application of mindfulness (*samyaksmṛti*) and, above all, single-pointed absorption of the mind in *samādhi* as appropriate means of defense against his onslaughts. In the Vajrayāna, however, is developed the notion of wrathful compassion as Buddhism adopted the stance exemplified by the doctrines of Vajrakīla, and in the next chapter we will see how Padmasambhava is said to have overcome the obstacles to his own enlightenment as a result of his practice of Vajrakīla, emulating the paradigm of Indra *versus* Vṛtra.

Conquest of evil and the birth of Vajrakīla

The received mythology of Vajrakīla, however, describes the archetypal conquest of evil in terms of neither Māra nor Vṛtra. The epic struggle here is that of the Buddhas *versus* Rudra. An early version of this myth is to be found in the fundamental text of the *Yogatantra* class,²⁹¹ with more developed portrayals in the later texts of Cakrasaṃvara and

suggested: “It is hard to avoid the conclusion that their primary intention is the ‘buddhicizing’ of the texts. The frequent warning given by lamas that tantric texts are meant to be read only with the accompaniment of their commentaries stems not from any intrinsic obscurity or ambiguity in the texts but from their essentially non-Buddhist or semi-Buddhist character.” B. Siklos, *The Vajrabhairava Tantra*, 90.

289. Chiefly ignorance (*moha*), lust (*rāga*) and hatred (*dveṣa*).

290. For further details see T. O. Ling, *Buddhism and the Mythology of Evil*, *passim*.

291. STTS, VI, quoted extensively in D. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 134ff., and G. Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica*, I, *The Stūpa*, 135ff.

other *heruka* manifestations.²⁹² The premier account, however, is the one to be found in the *mDo dgongs pa 'dus pa* XXII-XXXI.²⁹³

According to this myth, during a previous aeon of moral decline when Rudra, the arch demon of pride or egoism, held sway over the entire triple world, all the Buddhas of the cosmos, unable through peaceful means to convince Rudra of the error of his ways, empowered a manifestation of great wrath in order to destroy him. At the time of his downfall, all the males in the retinue of Rudra were killed and all the females were raped. This is given a wholesome interpretation in the symbolic philosophy of the *tantra* where the masculine element is equated with creative imagination which, when perverted in the form of false views, must be destroyed. The feminine element is said to be the 'empty' (*śūnya*) nature of all manifestation and this is to be penetrated by the *vajra* mind (*vajra* = penis) in search of wisdom. The rape of Rudra's wife by the Buddhas' wrathful manifestation resulted in the immediate birth of a son called Vajrakumāra (*Vajra* Youth), half *heruka* Buddha and half *rākṣasī*. This 'Son of Heruka', also known as Vajrarākṣasa in remembrance of his maternal line, was the first earthly embodiment of Vajrakīla.²⁹⁴ He was both ugly as a demon and beautiful as a Buddha. Outwardly violent and inwardly tranquil, he was noble, base, arrogant and loving, a divine mystery as full of contradictions as his Vedic namesake. The *Drag sngags zab pa 'i lo rgyus*²⁹⁵ states:

“As for his name *Vajra*, this signifies the unborn *dharmatā*. His name *Kumāra* signifies freedom from old-age and decrepitude. That itself is the uncontrived and unmistakable truth which is impartial and does not fall to any side.”

And the BRT says:

“This is the form of the wisdom manifestation of all the Buddhas, the unbearable configuration of blazing wrath that emanates from the very nature of the *vajradharmadhātu*.”

When the monstrous body of the demon Rudra was conquered and hurled from the peak of Mount Mālaya it was scattered into the eight directions. His head, heart, intestines and genitals (the four divisions of his trunk) landed in the cardinal quarters and his four limbs fell down in the intermediate directions. These areas are renowned in the myths as the eight great charnel grounds (*aṣṭamahāśmaśāna*) and in each one of these a special tree grew up. In the light of the above tradition in which all trees are viewed as living *kīlas*, it is interesting to note that the eight

292. The relevant chapters have, unfortunately, been omitted by S. Tsuda from his 1974 edition of the *Samvarodaya-tantra*.

293. NGB, 160. Accounts in English are to be found in Douglas & Bays, *The Life and Liberation of Padmasambhava*, V-VI, and G. Dorje, *The Guhyagarbha-tantra*, XV.

294. *bKa' thang gser phreng*, VI. The Tibetan text with an English translation is to be found in Lama and Low, *The Origin of Heruka and the Twenty-four Places*, published privately in Kalimpong (no date).

295. B30, 139.

types of *kīlas* listed in the *Kālacakra-tantra* exhibit a remarkable similarity to the eight types of tree said to stand in these burning grounds.²⁹⁶

The nature of the conqueror

Thus Vajrakīla, whose methodology is declared the foremost means of overcoming Māra in the present aeon, is considered the son of the *heruka(s)* who slew Rudra in an aeon long gone. This paramount conqueror of the present age is now a full grown *samyaksambuddha* in his own right having his own set of ‘supreme sons’ (see Part Three) and a lineage that includes the initiated *yogin* as the present ‘son of *heruka*’ on the throne of Buddhahood. The *Drag sngags zab pa’i lo rgyus* describes the nature of this deity in some detail, opening with an evocative picture of the successful practice of his rites as a preamble to the commentarial material. This preamble is calculated to inspire faith in the minds of cultic initiates and I include it here for the sake of the poetic glimpse that it affords us as observers of the Kīla cult. The motif of flying *kīlas* to which we are introduced here is one that recurs repeatedly in the chronicles of the cult.

In Seng-ge-rdzong in Bhutan, Padmasambhava of Oḍḍiyāna and his consort Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal are said to have been practising the rite of rolling the Razor of fierce root *mantra*, which is the very essence of Kīla. Signs of success having become manifest in vastness, the meditation *kīla* began to shake, tremble, fly up in the air and caper around. The painted images were laughing and the drums and cymbals played their own music. Natural awareness blazed forth as wisdom and vows of aspiration became attainments in reality. The eight classes of local gods and demons offered their own insignia and life essence and, making promises, they took oaths to act as protectors of the Kīla doctrines. The whole sky was filled with *vidyādhara*s and *ḍākinī*s and their hermitage was pervaded by sounds, bright lights and coloured rainbow rays. At that time, Padmasambhava of Oḍḍiyāna said to Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal:

“Varakīla is the manifestation of heroic power. The son of the non-dual union of the mother Samantabhadrī with the most mighty all-pervading excellent *heruka* whose form encompasses all the Buddhas. During times of peace he manifests as Vajrasattva and his mind abides in tranquility. As for his family lineage: his is the Activity Family of Karmaheruka. During times of activity he manifests as *Ativināśanavajra (*Vajra* of Total Destruction) and when manifesting as a *bodhisattva*, he is Vajrapāṇi. Thus he takes on whatever form is appropriate for the conversion of living beings. His manifestations are inconceivable and all Buddhas are embodiments of Vajrakumāra. Within the *dharmakāya* which is the essential nature of all the Buddhas are all the infinite possibilities that could be wished for. One should meditate unwaveringly upon that *dharmakāya*, viewing it as the assembly of Buddhas. All deities are complete within the form of Vajrakumāra and the purpose or meaning of Vajrakumāra is complete

296. *Kālacakra-tantra*, III, 12.

within the solitary *bindu*²⁹⁷ of the *dharmakāya*. Never at any time does he stray from the *dharmakāya*.”²⁹⁸

And in Chapter Two of the *mūlatantra* BRT it is written:

“In that place the *bhagavat* Mahāśrīvajrakumāra spoke these words: ‘Kyai! Pay attention to this, all you hosts here assembled! In the mighty charnel ground of the natural condition, reflected forms, like the images in a mirror or the moon in water, abide in the sphere of natural meaning without being covered by the stains of the afflictions. The teacher is like a miraculous display in the sky, teaching the *Dharma* of fierce *mantra* in the supreme charnel ground of the natural state.’ Thus he spoke.”

And in Chapter Three:

“(When it is said that) he is the supreme son of all *Tathāgatas*, the word ‘son’ means that he comes without birth from the *dharmatā* and ‘supreme’ means that he is the spontaneous fulfilment of enlightened activity. He is the son of all of them in order to destroy Rudra. The ‘son’ is the unborn *vajra* son.”

Thus our Byang-gter sources present Vajrakīla as a numinous aspect of vibrant enlightenment, a potent force in the struggle against evil, immanent in a variety of (essentially illusory) forms. As ‘the son of the Buddhas’, he is a contrivance of enlightened wisdom (*prajñā*) specifically brought forth as a method (*upāya*) in opposition to the forces of darkness. Moreover, just as the Māra of the Pāli canon remains invisible to all but the Buddha and *arhats*,²⁹⁹ and yet none can achieve that status without first recognizing and routing the demon, so Vajrakīla embodies both the path and the goal of *sambodhi*. Successful meditation upon the Kīla that “destroys the enemies and obstructors” grants spontaneous liberation from *samsāra*.

Manifestation in the form of symbols

These numinous and powerful qualities of enlightenment are stated in the tantric texts to have appropriated the form and adornments of the conquered enemy. Thus Vajrakīla is invariably dressed in the ‘spoils of war’, the grisly clothes and ornaments of the charnel ground that were originally stripped from the body of the defeated Rudra and have subsequently been worn by all *herukas*. His clothing includes a cloak of human skin, a cloak of elephant skin and a skirt of tiger skin (females wear leopard skin). Among his ornaments are the fivefold set made of bone (necklace, earrings, bracelets, apron and hairnet) associated with the five Buddha families, numerous snakes encircling his limbs and body, a crown of five dry skulls, a necklace of fifty freshly severed heads, a belt of splintered bones, and so on. He is also characterized by the ten attributes of glory (*dpal*

297. In the terminology of *Atiyoga*, with which the literature of Vajrakīla abounds, the fundamental nature of reality (*dharmakāya*) is likened to an all-encompassing non-dual (“single”, “unique”) seminal point of light (*bindu*). See below, note 308.

298. B30, 138–9.

299. T. O. Ling, *Buddhism and the Mythology of Evil*, 49–50.

gyi chas bcu) which demonstrate his magnificent power and authority³⁰⁰ and he paints his face with the three ointments (*byug pa 'i rdzas gsum*), the dust of human ashes (*thal chen tshom bu*) on his forehead, drops of blood (*rakta 'i thig le*) upon his cheeks and a smear of fat (*zhag gi zo ris*) across his chin. He is erotic and sensual. His captivating nine modes of dance (*navanātaka*)³⁰¹ are at once alluring and repulsive and his dwelling is a gruesome palace made of skulls.³⁰²

All the texts describe him as sporting in non-duality with his spouse, holding in his right hands a nine-pronged *vajra* indicating his mastery of the nine *yānas* and the ten *bhūmis*, and a five-pronged *vajra* showing his possession of the five *jñānas*. In his left hands he holds a blazing mass of (wisdom) fire and a *khaṭvāṅga* proclaiming his mastery of all techniques of *yoga*. With his final pair of hands he rolls a *kīla* and the sky is filled with his *vajra* wings. The body of the monster Rudra in his final birth had three faces, six arms and four legs and this, therefore, is the basic form of Vajrakīla. Dark blue in colour, representing the spacious nature of his primordially pure mind, the deity Vajrakīla has a ferocious white face on the right side of his head that destroys the afflictions of anger. His left red face annihilates all impurities of desire and his central blue face vanquishes ignorance. Each face has an unblinking third eye in the centre of its forehead so that none of these mental defilements may pass by unnoticed.

According to the tradition of the *Guhyagarbha-tantra*,³⁰³ his three faces indicate the destruction of the three poisons and the attainment of the three *kāyas*. His six arms show the ability to liberate beings in the six realms and his four legs symbolize his four modes of activity (*catvāri karmāni*) as well as the liberation of beings from the four kinds of birth (egg, womb, moisture and miraculous). To this should be added that Vajrakīla simultaneously tramples down the four Māras: Skandha, Kleśa, Mṛtyu and Devaputra. It is also interesting to note that the eight kinds of garb associated with the charnel ground are listed in the *Guhyagarbha* (p.1167) as: raw hides, snakes, skull garlands, sunlight, moonlight, dry blood, grease and ashes, thereby combining into one list the several given above. Within the term 'skull garlands' are included a crown of dry skulls, shoulder ornaments of rotting heads and a necklace of fifty-one freshly severed heads which

300. *Makara* heads worn as epaulets express his blazing glory, the sun and moon worn in his hair show the simultaneity of *prajñā* and *upāya*, his protruding fangs demonstrate the annihilation of birth and death, his *vajra* wings symbolize the fulfilment of all wishes, his upraised hair shows the reversal of *saṃsāric* tendencies, his *vajra* coat indicates absolute authority, his military jacket of rhinoceros hide symbolizes the invincibility of Buddhahood, his aura of flames burns up malevolent forces, his girdle of knives cuts through any opposing tendency and the *vajra* worn on the crown of his head shows his own immutability. Gega Lama, *Principles of Tibetan Art*, 390.

301. These nine modes, originating in ancient Indian treatises on dance and drama, are interpreted in A. Wayman, *Yoga of the GST*, 327–8.

302. Every element employed in the composition of the Buddhas' celestial palace, the divine *maṇḍala* of jewelled light, finds its macabre counterpart in the Herukas' charnel dwelling fabricated of mayhem, slaughter and pain. See, below, Chapter Seven and also my *Maṇḍala Meaning and Method*.

303. G. Dorje, *Guhyagarbha-tantra*, 118.

indicate his total control of the past, present and future.³⁰⁴ This six-armed manifestation is widely known throughout the *bKa' ma* and *gTer ma* texts of the several rNying-ma canons. In the literature of the Byang-gter school, however, he is also recognized in the form of Mahottaradeva, an eighteen-armed variant so far not attested elsewhere. This manifestation is also dark blue in colour and, according to B11 & C4, his three faces on the right are pale yellow, red and blue-green. His three central faces are white, yellow and dark blue while those on the left are yellow-black, red and green. Otherwise, according to A4, one may view all the faces on the right as white, on the left as red and the central ones as blue. Because I believe this form to be unique to the Byang-gter and therefore of intrinsic interest, I give here the full text of a hitherto unpublished hymn in his praise.³⁰⁵

*Hūṃ dpal ldan che ba'i che mchog lha yi lha.
dus gsum bde bar gshegs pa thams cad kyi.
'phrin las thams cad rdzogs pa'i dpal chen po.
he ru ka dpal khyod la phyag 'tshal bstod.*

HŪM The deity of the great and supreme
gods of great splendour,
The great glorious one who has perfected all
the activities of all the Sugatas of the
past, present and future.

Salutation and praise to you, Śrīheruka!

*'jig rten 'das pa'i dus na sngon byung ba.
sku gsum rdzogs pa'i khro rgyal phur pa'i lha.
srid rtsa bdag 'dzin ru dra sde gsum 'dul.
rtsal chen 'phrin las rdzogs la phyag 'tshal bstod.*

You who were primordially born,
in time which transcends the world,
Kiladeva, the ferocious king
with the perfect three *kāyas*,
Subduer of the three groups of Rudra³⁰⁶ that grasp
for an ego at the root of existence.

Salutation and praise be to you,
The perfection of expressive power and enlightened activity!

*gtum chen brjid pa 'gying zhing sgegs pa'i sku.
bdud tshogs sde bcas 'dul ba'i dpa' bo che.
mi srin srin po khros 'dra'i cha lugs kyis.
srid gsum gdug pa 'dul mdzad khyod la bstod.*

304. Note that within the iconography of a peaceful deity such as the saviouress Tārā, the three times are indicated by lotus flowers; one still in bud, one currently blooming and another already withered.

305. From a manuscript in the private collection of C. R. Lama. The symbols stated in this hymn to be held in the deity's eighteen hands are compared in Table 1, below, with those listed in two of the texts from our published collections.

306. These are the demons of pride related to body, speech and mind.

Praise be to you who is,
 With a graceful body, savage, splendid and proud,
 The mighty hero who tames the hosts of Māras
 and their ilk

In the guise of a ferocious, unruly *rākṣasa*,
 The subjugator of noxious harm in the *tribhava*!³⁰⁷

bshad sgra 'brug stong ldir 'dra'i gad rgyangs can.
drag shul chen pos ri rab thal bar brlag.
'jigs rungs tshul gyis khams gsum dus gcig sgrol.
dpal chen khro bo'i dbang phyug khyod la bstod.

Laughing a laugh with the sound of a thousand thunderclaps
 (your) frightfulness reduces Mount Meru to dust.

In a single moment, by your terrifying manner,
 the *traidhātuka* is liberated.

Praise be to you Mahāśrīkrodheśvara!

snying rjes bsgral ba'i dam tshig chen po yis.
'gro kun byang chub snying por 'dren mdzad cing.
thugs rje'i dbyings nas khros pa'i rngams stabs kyis.
'khor ba gtan nas brlag byed khyod la bstod.

Praise be to you who,
 Through your great vow of 'liberating' by compassion,
 leads all beings to enlightenment's core.

Through your fiercely violent method within
 compassion's sphere

You demolish *samsāra* completely.

gdug can drag po 'dul bar nyer dgongs nas.
'bar ba'i khro tshul du ma'i gar mdzad kyang.
chos dbyings zhi ba'i ngang las mi gYo ba.
dpal chen mngon rdzogs rgyal po khyod la bstod.

Intending to subjugate the violent harmful ones

You perform many dances in a blazing,
 wrathful manner and yet you never stray
 from the peaceful disposition of the *dharmadhātu*.

Praise be to you, glorious great king of manifest perfection!

nam mkha'i khams kun yongs su khyab pa'i sku.
gling bzhi ri rab nyi zla gza' skar yang.
sku yi rgyan du che ba'i dpal chen po.
che btsan 'gran zla 'bral ba khyod la bstod.

307. The *tribhava* (*tribhuvana*) are the three states of existence ruled by the *devas*, *nāgas* and men. Svarga (the abode of gods), Martta (the abode of men) and Rasātala (the abode of *nāgas* and demons) are situated above the earth, upon the earth and below the earth, respectively.

(You whose) form completely pervades
the whole sphere of space,
Mount Meru, the four continents, the sun, moon, planets
and even the stars
Are great in splendour as the ornaments of your body.
Praise be to you whose mighty prowess is without rival!

gnyen po ye shes gzhom gzhi mi mnga' bas.
nyon mongs rtog pa'i bdud tshogs tshar gcod phyir.
bco brgyad phyag gi gYas kyi dang po bzhis.
rdo rje rtse dgu 'khor lo rtsib bcu dang.

In order to annihilate Māra's hosts
of defiled thoughts,
(In the guise of) the unconquerable destroyer,
the wisdom ally,
You have eighteen hands:
With the first four on the right
You hold a nine-pronged *vajra*, a wheel with ten spokes,

ral gri dbal ldan be con 'bar ba yis.
ri rab chen po kun kyang thal bar rlog.
bdud dang 'byung po kun gyi glad pa 'gems.
srid pa'i 'gong po spun dgu rdul du rlog.

A sharp-pointed sword and a blazing club
With which even the whole great mountain Sumeru
is crushed to dust.
Confounding the brains of all *māras* and *bhūtas*,
You grind to atoms the nine 'Gong-po brothers
of phenomenal existence.

tha ma bzhi yi rdo rje rtse lnga dang.
gri gug tho ba chos 'byung 'bar ba yis.
'gro rnam theg pa dgu yi lam la 'dren.
nyon mongs dug lnga gtan nas brlag byed cing.
don dam spros med byang sems rnam pa lngas.
rgyud lnga'i sems can thar pa'i lam la sbyor.

With the five-pronged *vajra*, curved knife, hammer and
blazing *dharmodaya* of your lower four hands
You guide beings on the path of the nine *yānas*.
Utterly demolishing the five poisonous afflictions
with the five *bodhi* minds of highest truth,
free of mental fabrications,
You place the five families of sentient beings
on the path of liberation.

bco brgyad phyag gi gYon gyi dang po bzhi'i.
thod khrag me dpung kha tvang khyung khra yis.
bdud dang dam sri nag po'i phyogs rnams kun.
kun tu bsdigs shing thal bar brlag par mdzad.

Of your eighteen hands: With the upper four on the left
You hold a skull full of blood, a mass of fire,
a *khaṭvāṅga* staff and a falcon which,
Aiming at the evil *māra* and *dam sri* demons,
completely pulverizes them all!

tha ma bzhi yis rdo rje rgya gram dang.
lcags kyu dgra stva bum par ka'u yis.
srid gsum gdug pa mtha' dag tshar bcad nas.
dug gsum sku gsung thugs su sgrol byed cing.
'khor ba'i gYul ngo gtan nas brlag par mdzad.

In your four lower hands you hold
a *viśvavajra*, an iron hook,
a battle-axe and a pot with an amulet on top.
Having completely eradicated with these
the harmful extremes of the *tribhava*,
You liberate the three poisons as
enlightened body, speech and mind
And utterly destroy the very army of *samsāra*.

dpal chen che ba'i che mchog kī la ya.
khro rgyal ma lus 'dus pa'i rtsal 'ching zhing.
mi bzad stong khams bsregs pa'i me stag 'phro.
btab na ye shes lha yang thal bar rlog.

The greatest of the great, glorious Mahottarakīla,
Girding (yourself with) the energy of
the combined *herukas* without exception.
Irresistible as you radiate sparks of fire that burn up
a thousand worlds. If touched,
Even the wisdom gods would be reduced to ashes!

'bar ba'i phreng ba 'khrig pa'i 'od zer can.
'og ma gnyis kyis ri rab phur pa 'dril.
khams gsum yongs sgrol dpa' bo che la bstod.

Enveloped in intermingling blazing chains of light,
You roll a *kīla* the size of Mount Meru
in your two lowest hands.

Praise be to you, great hero by whom the three realms
are completely liberated!

gar gyi dbang phyug rnam par 'gyur pa'i sku.
dpal dang dur khrod chas rnams yongs rdzogs shing.

zhabs brgyad brkyang bskum gyad kyi 'dor stobs kyis.
dregs pa lha chen gnong mdzad khyod la bstod.

Lord of the dance with ever-changing form,
Fully adorned with the attributes of glory
and those of the charnel ground.

With the virile gesture of a champion your
eight legs are drawn in and flung out.

Praise be to you who thus
trample down the arrogant great gods!

mche ba zangs yag gtsigs pa'i za byed che.
rab 'bar nyi ma 'bum gyi 'od zer 'phro.
khro gnyer glog stong 'khyug 'dra'i rngams stabs can.
mi bzad sku yi dngos po shin tu 'gyur.

Great devourer, snarling with sharp-pointed fangs,
Blazing and radiating the light of a hundred thousand suns,
Your wrinkling brows rage in a terrifying manner
with the speed of a thousand bolts of lightning
As you assume the guise of irresistible form!

rngams pa'i nga ro 'brug stong ldir ba bzhin.
thug 'choms ri rab 'bum phrag bsnyil ba'i skad.
gad rgyangs drag pos 'jig rten gYo zhing 'debs.
sprug pa'i 'thor rlung kun tu gYeng la bstod.

With an awesome roar like the rumble of
a thousand thunderclaps
The sound of your voice destroys
one hundred thousand Mount Merus.
Your violent laughter sends the world into trembles –
A whirling, scattering wind that agitates everything.
To you be praise!

khro bo shes rab ye shes me bo che.
ye shes chen po'i 'od zer kun tu gsal.
'bar ba'i ye shes ma rig mun pa 'joms.
snying po ye shes thig le rnam la bstod.

Your fierce great fire of *prajñā-jñāna*
illuminates totally with rays of great wisdom light.
Your blazing wisdom destroys the darkness of ignorance.
Praise be to the *bindus*³⁰⁸ of essential wisdom!

308. The solitary “great *bindu*” (see next verse) which is an *Atiyoga* term for the *dharmadhātu* within which the mind is primordially enlightened, is defined as having six aspects: the *bindu* of space (*dhātu*), the *bindu* of the utter purity of space, the *bindu* of the natural condition (*tathatā*), the *bindu* of wisdom (*prajñā*), the *bindu* of the “all-good” (*samantabhadra*) and the

*ye shes dkyil 'khor khro bo 'i sprin chen po.
'phros pas dkyil 'khor kun gyi char chen 'bebs.
phyogs bcu 'i dkyil 'khor yid bzhin 'byung ba 'i gter.
ye shes rnams kyi thig le che la bstod.*

Your wisdom *maṇḍala* is a great *heruka* cloud
and, as it spreads out,

The great rain of all *maṇḍalas* falls.³⁰⁹

You are the wish-fulfilling treasure
of the *maṇḍala* in the ten directions.

Praise be to you, great *bindu* of all wisdoms!

*bdud rnams kun gyi bdud ste bdud chen po.
'jigs byed 'jigs pa 'i tshogs kyang 'jigs par byed.
srid zhi 'i 'ching ba thams cad 'joms mdzad pa.
dus mtha 'i me ltar 'bar la phyag 'tshal bstod.*

The demon of all demons,

you are the great demon and

You terrify even the terrible hosts
of those who cause terror.

You are the one who breaks all the bonds
of becoming and quiescence.

Salutation and praise be to you who
blazes like the fire at the end of time!

Remaining verses are dedicated to the consort Tṛptacakra: “Circle of Satisfaction”.

*Hūm 'jigs pa 'i btsun mo 'khor lo rgyas 'debs ma.
kun tu bzang mo dkyil 'khor kun gyi 'phrul.
gdug pa 'dul phyir srin mo khros pa 'i gzugs.
srid pa 'i 'khor lo ye shes rgya yis 'debs.*

HŪM Fearful queen, Tṛptacakra!

Samantabhadri, emanation of all *maṇḍalas*!

In order to subdue noxious beings you manifest
in the form of a fierce *rākṣasī*,

Impressing the wheel of existence with
the seal of your wisdom.

*gnyis med don ldan yab la dgyes par 'khril.
phyag gYas kha tvang bdud kyi mgo lus gzhoms.
g.yon pas thod khrag 'khor 'das dbang du sdud.
'jigs pa 'i sku la phyag rgya lnga yis spras.*

bindu of spontaneous accomplishment. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 118. See also T. Thondup, *Buddha Mind*, 68, and note 297, above.

309. cf. the *Sarvarahasya-tantra* (A. Wayman, *Buddhist Insight*, verse 13) where the residents of the *maṇḍala* are called “a cloud of *Dharma*” and “rain” refers to the emanation of these deities from the heart.

Rapturously embracing your consort,
 signifying non-duality,
 In your right hand is a *khaṭvāṅga* with which
 Māra's head and body are ripped apart.
 And in your left, in a skull full of blood,
 you hold *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* under your power.
 Your terrifying body is adorned with the five *mudrās*.³¹⁰

drag po'i nga ros 'jig rten gYo zhing 'khrugs.
rgyud lnga'i sems can thugs rjes dbyings su sgrol.
srid gsum gdug pa'i tshogs rnam thal bar rlog.
mkha' 'gro yongs kyi gtso mo khyod la bstod.

The world is convulsed and shaken by your violent roar
 As you liberate through compassion the five families of beings
 Into the (*dharma*)*dhātu* and grind to dust
 the hosts of noxious beings in the *tribhava*.
 Praise be to you, queen of all *dākinīs*!

And thus we have the basic iconography of Vajrakumāra and his consort, a terrifying form with violent speech and blazing mind. Three *kāyas* of horrendous power for the subjugation of all evils. In particular, the male is associated here with *upāya* (expressed in his epithet Karmakīla) while the female, as made clear in the first of her verses above, is the bliss ('satisfaction') inherent in *prajñā*. Less obvious is the manner in which Trīptacakra complements her spouse's function of pegging down demons. In the previous chapter we noted her developing association with the notion of unpegging, freeing that which has been obstructed, and this theme comes to maturity here as she liberates all beings within the *dharmadhātu*. He performs the skilful function of nailing down obstacles while she simultaneously offers blissful release through wisdom.

Embodiments of paradox

The Dionysian dance in the flames of wisdom that consume the appearances of the world is to be taken here as symbolic of the *bodhisattva*'s passionate commitment to the vow of universal salvation. *Nirvāṇa* was thought of by the early Buddhists in terms of the individual extinction of a flame but the image employed here is that of the doomsday fire which brings an end to the system of *samsāra* altogether. "So singing and dancing the *yogin* always acts."³¹¹ It is an incestuous image of the union of pleasure and pain which arise in mutual dependence. Vajrakīla and his erotic playmate are 'simultaneously born' (*sahaja*) brother and sister, a fact of some significance in the symbolic system of *tantra* where praxis aims to bring about the consolidation of complementary poles on the theoretical premise that "there is not the slightest difference between *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*".³¹² The passionate embrace of the couple, paradoxically, is to be read as a symbol of chastity.

310. The fivefold set of bone ornaments.

311. HT, I, vi, 13, explained at II, iv *passim*.

312. HT, I, x, 32.

It is an image of desire fulfilled, not one of lustful yearning. Hinting at the yogic technique of *coitus reservatus*, Vajrakīla's perpetual union with the "Circle of Satisfaction" marks the end of desire, just as their wild dance in the doomsday fire signifies the end of the tormenting heat of *kleśa*.³¹³ The most striking feature of the icon, however, is surely the fact that it purports to represent the life-enhancing qualities of wisdom, serenity, freedom of activity, long life and so on (yogic attainments to be met with in Part Three of the present work), in the ghastly guise of an utterly terrifying killer. The elemental interplay of sex and death is depicted here in an icon of extreme violence, the most powerfully destructive element of which is described in the BRT as the pounding thrust of their conjoined sexual organs.

This image of Vajrakīla incorporates traits of both god and demon. As an expression of the human psyche, then, it squarely addresses the problem of what Jung has called the 'shadow' side of the personality, consisting of those unpleasant aspects that elsewhere may receive only reluctant acknowledgement. The portrait is horrible in the extreme and yet is said to be alluring, magnetic, compulsively attractive. Vajrakīla is the embodiment of the absolute truth of the human condition, the unbiased, unflinching presenter of the best and the worst in a single icon accessible to the *yogin* through his meditative training. The demonic is here fully accepted as an aspect of the divine.

The divine retinue

Surrounding the central couple are the ten ferocious gods known as the *daśakrodharājas* (the ten *krodha*³¹⁴ kings): (Vajra)Hūmkāra in the zenith, Krodhavijaya to the east, Niladaṇḍa (SE), Yamāntaka (S), Ārya-Acala (SW), Hayagrīva (W), Aparājita (NW), Amṛtakunḍalin (N), Trailokyavijaya (NE) and Mahābala in the nadir.³¹⁵ Each of these wrathful kings is united with his queen and accompanied by a pair of particularly violent animal-headed, flesh-eating female spirits (*piśācī*), of whom the 'devourers' (*za byed*) stand to the right and the 'slayers' (*gsod byed*) to the left.³¹⁶ The names of neither the ten queens nor the twenty *piśācīs* have so far been traced to any Sanskrit source so I am obliged here to tabulate the forty deities of the primary Vajrakīla *pariṣanmaṇḍala* employing an admixture of Sanskrit and Tibetan nomenclature. Such Sanskrit names as have been added in parenthesis are provisional equivalents culled from the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.

313. W. D. O'Flaherty notes the use of ashes smeared on the bodies of a couple engaged in rites of tantric intercourse (as in the icon of Vajrakīla and his consort) as a remedy for the fever of love. *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*, 246.

314. The term *krodha* ("anger") is defined in the *Krodhabhairava-sūtra* as "that by virtue of which one becomes genuinely one-pointedly intent on removing whatever obstacles there may be to liberation". Mark Dyczkowski, *The Canon of the Śaivāgama and the Kubjikā Tantras of the Western Kaula Tradition*, 108.

315. Similar groups are to be found in several *tantras*, their names and specific iconographies varying slightly from one tradition to another. For further examples (taken from the GST, etc.) consult Abhayākara Gupta's *Niṣpannayogāvalī* or the *Sādhanamālā*, etc.

316. Known variously as "witches" or "shape shifters" (*phra men ma*), "speedy ones" (*mgyogs mo*), "emissaries" or "messengers" (*mgag mo*), such servants have been associated with the *krodha* kings since at least the period of the *Yogatantra* as evidenced by SDPT, 313.

In the zenith, on cushions of Brahmā and his consort is the dark blue³¹⁷ *krodharāja* Hūmkāra in the embrace of sGra-'byin (Śabdavajrā). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a pig and the killer with that of a lizard.

In the east, on cushions of Indra, lord of the *gandharvas*, and his consort is the white *krodharāja* Vijaya in the embrace of rNam-snyems (? Śauṇḍinī). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a tiger and the killer with that of a vulture.

In the southeast on cushions of Agni, the great *ṛṣi*, and his consort is the pale (*skya*, 'tawny') *krodharāja* Niladaṇḍa in the embrace of rDo-rje sder-mo. To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a yak and the killer with that of a crow.

In the south on cushions of Yama and his consort is the black *krodharāja* Yamāntaka in the embrace of Dur-khrod bdag-mo (Śmaśānikā). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a stag and the killer with that of an owl.

In the southwest on cushions of the king of the *rākṣasas* and his consort is the blue-green *krodharāja*, the noble Acala in the embrace of rDo-rje gtun-khung (Vajramūśikā). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a leopard and the killer with that of a raven.

In the west on cushions of Varuṇa, lord of the *nāgas*, and his consort is the red *krodharāja* Hayagrīva in the embrace of rDo-rje gtum-mo (Vajracandālī). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a cat and the killer with that of a hoopoe bird.

In the northwest on cushions of Vāyu and his consort is the tawny-red *krodharāja* Aparājita in the embrace of rDo-rje mda'-snyems. To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a wolf and the killer with that of a hawk.

In the north on cushions of the king of the *yakṣas* and his consort is the dark green *krodharāja* Amṛtakunḍalin in the embrace of rLung-'byin-ma (Vāyuvegā). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a lion and the killer with that of a bat.

In the northeast on cushions of the powerful Īśāna and his consort is the tawny-yellow *krodharāja* Trailokyavijaya in the embrace of gSod-byed-ma. To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a red bear and the killer with that of a weasel.

In the nadir on cushions of the *bhūmipati* and his consort is the smoke coloured *krodharāja* Mahābala in the embrace of rDo-rje bskul-byad (Vajrāveśī). To their right and left stand the devourer with the head of a tawny bear and the killer with that of a rat.

317. The colours given here are those found in our text A6, 50ff. Alternative schemes are depicted in A49 and B11. The *krodharājas* in all these Mahottarakīla sources are described as having three faces and six arms. The upper pair of hands carry a *vajra* in the right and a skull full of blood in the left while between the palms of the lower pair of hands each deity rolls a *kīla*. Thus the specific attributes of each *krodha* king are held in the central pair of hands. According to A49, the dark blue Hūmkāra carries a *vajra* and bell. The dark blue Vijaya carries an iron hook and fly whisk (*cāmara*). The (colour missing) Niladaṇḍa carries a staff (*daṇḍa*) and heap of fire. The dark green Yamāntaka carries a staff and battle axe. The dark blue Acala carries a sword and noose. The dark red Hayagrīva carries a lotus and snake. The white Aparājita carries a *vajra* and discus (*cakra*). The dark green Amṛtakunḍalin carries a *viśvavajra* and club. The yellow Trailokyavijaya carries a *vajra* and trident and the smoke coloured Mahābala carries a hammer and wooden pestle. A49, 518–29. See also below, Chapter Seven, Table 2.

Variations on a theme

The Byang-gter scholar 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, in his introduction to the Northern Treasures Kīla cult (B4), identifies three discrete systems of Vajrakīla as practised in this school: the Kīla as a multicoloured deity, the Kīla as a black deity and the combined deity Kīla system.

The system of the multicoloured deity was taken from the golden southern cache which contained the Mahottarakīla teachings within which the main deity has nine faces and eighteen hands and the *daśakrodha* deities each have three faces and six hands. Each of the deities in this scheme has a different colour.³¹⁸ The black deity system came from the northern cache of iron and this is the category of *Mantrabhīrukīla*. The lord of the *maṇḍala* in this system has three faces and six hands and the *daśakrodha* deities each have one face and two hands. All of the deities have the same blue-black colour. As it says in the *mūlatantra* BRT:

“The *daśakrodha* couples and all of the messengers have dark blue ferocious forms. They have single faces and roll *kīlas* in their two hands.³¹⁹ The lower halves of their bodies are sharp-pointed, three-edged nails. They have *vajra* wings and (are adorned with) the artifacts of charnel grounds. With cries of “Hūṃ!” and “Phaṭ!” they terrify the world and subjugate all vicious beings without exception.”

Vajrakīla himself may also be described in this system as having the shape of a nail below the waist. Whatever form he takes, however, beneath his unshakeable weight squirm the demons of ego, helplessly pinned to the primordial ground of being from which they erroneously arose. The combined deity system is made up of teachings taken from both the northern and the central caches and goes by the name of *Phur pa dril sgrub* (‘the *kīla* rolling *sādhana*’). In this system, all the gods of the *maṇḍala* are arranged within the body of the main deity.³²⁰

The *maṇḍala* as it is described in the Kīla manuals, however, is generally far more complex than this simple paradigm of the emperor Kīla and his court of ten wrathful kings. Vajrakīla and Tṛptacakra in the centre may be accompanied by the one-eyed queen of the *mātrs*, Ekajati, and the king of the oath-bound protectors, Vajrasādhu. They in turn are surrounded by three, four or five *kulakīlas* and then, around them, the *daśa-krodha-rājas* with their queens and animal-headed assistants. Outside that circle stand the twenty-one supreme sons (an epithet regularly applied to any important subordinate of the chief Kīla) consisting of the groups of body, speech and mind manifestations (seven in each). In the four directions there are then the four guardians of the gates.³²¹ Around the *maṇḍala*

318. B4, 202.

319. The twenty *piśācīs* are to be imagined brandishing iron hooks in their right hands and *kīlas* in their left.

320. B4, 203.

321. In the east is the goddess Vajrayakṣā with the head of a hoopoe bird holding in her hand an iron hook. In the south is Vajrabhairavī with the head of a magpie, holding a noose. In the west is Vajrāmṛtā with the head of an owl holding fetters in her hand and in the north is *Ghātakā (gSod-byed) with the head of a hawk holding in her hand a bell.

perimeter stand the various oath-bound protectors of the Kīla doctrines, chief among whom are the twelve sister goddesses led by the dog-faced Śvanmukhā,³²² their twelve brothers³²³ and the group of twenty-eight fierce *ḍākinīs* of the four classes. Countless minor protective deities may be added to the retinue and these are arranged in circles ever further from the *maṇḍala* epicentre. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms goes on to add that:

“Nowadays empowerments should be given from these three cycles in such a way that the *Mantrabhīru maṇḍala* is raised up to fill the sky by the addition of the Mahottarakīla. This is the manner in which the *vidyādhara*s received those empowerments and the manner in which they should bestow them.”³²⁴

A handful of nails

In order to assist the meditator in the daunting task of visualizing such a vast and complicated pattern of nails, it is proper for him to lay out a ritual *maṇḍala* as a focal point for his devotions. This may be drawn in coloured sand or any suitable medium with pegs of wood or metal arranged upon it in the proper positions of the deities.³²⁵ In a short text appended to the *Drag sngags zab pa'i lo rgyus* it is written:

“As for the measurements of *vajrakīlas*: The chief nail measures eighteen inches. The great nails measure twelve inches. The speedily moving nails are twelve inches. The struck nails are eight inches and the nails of the four rites are also eight inches. The messenger nails are eight inches long and the protecting nails are six inches. The averting nails are four inches and the outer nails are just three inches long. The body of the chief peg is in *yuganaddha* form and the *daśakrodha* great nails are also in *yuganaddha* like the lord. The speedily moving nails are the twenty messengers that devour and slay. The struck nails are the sons and these are like weapons. The four nails at the gates are the pegs of the four activities. Then there are the circles of the twenty-one struck pegs and the twelve nails around the border. The supreme laying out of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* involves the use of a thousand nails. The middling is prepared with one hundred nails and the lowest form is set out with either five or eleven nails.”³²⁶

Here; ‘chief’ refers to Vajrakīla and his consort, ‘great’ means the nails of the five families and the ten *krodha* kings and queens, the ‘speedily moving’ ones are their animal-headed assistants, the ‘struck nails’ are the twenty-one sons and the ‘nails of the four rites’ are the guardians of the four *maṇḍala* gates. The ‘messengers’ are the twelve major protectors while the ‘protecting’, ‘averting’ and ‘outer’ nails are the various (optional)

322. For descriptions of these twelve see below, Chapter Nine.

323. Comprising the three groups of Rosewood, Iron and Conch. (See below, Chapter Nine.)

324. B4, 203.

325. Illustrated in T. Marcotty, *Dagger Blessing*, 30–1.

326. B30, 143.

groups of minor protectors.³²⁷ In this way the *maṇḍala* of meditation is to be set out on the ground by means of coloured powder and a handful of wooden or metal spikes.

Five nails are the Kīlas of the five families and this is the most basic of all Vajrakīla *maṇḍalas*. Eleven nails are the lord Vajrakīla together with his primary retinue of ten *krodha* kings. The expressions ‘one hundred’ and ‘a thousand nails’ indicate that the size and complexity of the Kīla *maṇḍala* is potentially without limit. A number of *kīlas* that were supposed to have been used by Padmasambhava in just such *maṇḍala* rituals are said to have been discovered among the artifacts in the Byang-gter cache. The powerful nature of these *kīlas* as objects of religious awe places them firmly in the category of magical fetishes. We have seen above how success in the rite of invocation is thought to empower these ritual pegs with the actual presence of the deity, so that the pegs themselves become animated and extremely potent occult instruments. The motif of the living nail is repeatedly encountered in Tibetan literature dealing with the Kīla cult³²⁸ for every hand-held nail may be thought of as the embodiment, not only of a specific deity (primarily, of course, Vajrakīla himself) but also of the entire *maṇḍala* of violent spikes.³²⁹ As an occult weapon, then, the significance of the *kīla* is both more specific and more flexible than its rather abstract counterpart, the *vajra*.

Whenever a ritual *vajra* is taken up into the hand by man or god, it must be held in the right because the *vajra* symbolizes the male energy of appropriate activity (*upāya*) or compassion (*karuṇā*) which, in the symbolic system of the Vajrayāna, is located primarily on the right hand side of the body. It is never held in the left (female, *prajñā*) hand. The *kīla*, however, may represent either the wrathful male activity of compassionate killing (in which case it is held in the right hand, perhaps with a skull full of Māra’s blood as its feminine counterpart in the left), or it may be held in the left hand as a symbol of the perfection of wisdom (*prajñāpāramitā*) which it demonstrates by annihilating all the confused appearances of ignorance. In the latter case its partner in the right hand may perhaps be a hammer (with which to pound down the nail), a *vajra* (emblematic of power) or an iron hook (with which to drag forth the victim to be impaled). Most often it is seen to be held in the right hand by male deities and in the left by females so that each may use it in accordance with his or her own nature, but this is not an invariable rule. As we have seen above, the ultimately non-dual power of the *kīla* is most effectively employed by solemnly rolling it between the palms of both hands (or the foremost pair of hands in the case of a multi-armed deity).³³⁰

327. The *Phur pa drag sngags kyi 'phrin las*, for example, invokes three hundred and sixty male and female messengers in six groups of sixty: the Dung (conch) from the east, lCags (iron) from the south, Zangs (copper) from the west, gYu (turquoise) from the north, gSer (gold) from the nadir and bSe (rosewood) from the zenith. C24, 264–5.

328. A. David-Neel, in her *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*, 104ff, relates the way in which she came to possess “a fine piece of ancient Tibetan art” belonging to a deceased lama, a supposedly animated *kīla* that few Tibetans would willingly touch.

329. See A29, 199–200, as detailed above in the Introduction.

330. The solemn rolling of the *kīla* between the two palms accompanies the higher rites aimed at enlightenment. During the lower rites aimed at the subjugation of hostile forces, however, if a symbolic nail is employed it will most often be held in the left hand whilst being beaten into the ground with the aid of a *vajra* hammer held in the right (as is done in ‘earth subduing’

Table 1: The Eighteen Arms of Mahottarakīla

		Chapter Three		A 28, 184 & B11, 535		A 28, 188-9 & B11, 554-5	
		right	left	right	left	right	left
uppermost pair of arms	9-pronged <i>vajra</i>	9-pronged <i>vajra</i>	skull full of blood	9-pronged <i>vajra</i>	skull full of Māra's blood	“anger must be destroyed by means of <i>vajra</i> wrath”	<i>bindu</i> in the sky
second pair	10-spoked wheel	10-spoked wheel	mass of fire	blazing wheel	mass of fire	“arousing the mind of supreme <i>bodhicitta</i> ” ¹	“their hearts must be burnt on the pinnacle of <i>vajra</i> fire” ²
third pair	sword	sword	<i>khaṭvāṅga</i>	sword	<i>khaṭvāṅga</i>	“blazing great blue weapon”	<i>kaṭvāṅga</i> of body, speech and mind
fourth pair	club	club	falcon	club	falcon	“must be seized! must be beaten!”	ABHICĀRA <i>garuḍa</i>
fifth pair	5-pronged <i>vajra</i>	5-pronged <i>vajra</i>	<i>viśvavajra</i>	<i>viśvavajra</i>	<i>kīla</i>	<i>viśvavajra</i> of Buddha activity	<i>bhava</i> <i>kīla</i>
sixth pair	<i>kartrikā</i>	<i>kartrikā</i>	iron hook	amulet	vase	syllable HŪM, the abode of the life-span ³	vase of swirling nectar ⁴
seventh pair	hammer	hammer	battleaxe	iron hook	<i>kartrikā</i>	iron hook of love and compassion	the <i>kartrikā</i> that slays misleaders
eighth pair	<i>dharmodaya</i>	pot with amulet	pot with amulet	hammer	A: secret sky B: blazing mortar	wind-creating hammer	A: secret sky B: blazing mortar
lowermost pair of hands	roll Mt. Meru <i>kīla</i>	roll Mt. Meru <i>kīla</i>	battleaxe	battleaxe	blazing jewel	battleaxe that smashes to fragments	wishfulfilling jewel

Derived from the unpublished manuscript reproduced above in Chapter Three, the *Phur pa'i zur 'debs* (A28) and the *rDo rje phur pa che mchog gi 'phrin las* (B11).

¹ & ² Verse missing in A28.

³ Personified as Hūmkāra.

⁴ Personified as Amṛtakundalin.

rituals which prepare the ground for the construction of a *maṇḍala*, etc.) or it will be held in either hand and used as a ‘magic dagger’ to stab and destroy an effigy of evil (as is done in countless rites of exorcism, etc.). A common partner to the *kīla* in such rites is the iron hook (held in the right hand) by which the ‘demonic’ is summoned and dragged down into form (an effigy) which is then destroyed by means of the *kīla* (held in the left). Icons of Vajrayāna *gurus* are also to be found in which these masters are depicted as wielding a *kīla* in each hand.

Chapter Four

The Religious Chronicles: A History of the Vajrakīla Cycle from Cultic Sources

The texts

Within the three collections of Byang-gter Kīla treatises are to be found five texts of the *lo rgyus* ('history') genre. Two of these, A26 (B51) & B30 (B55, C18), deal with the *Mantrabhīru* (black deity) system and one, B13, deals with the origin of the *Mahottara* (multicoloured deity) system. Then there is the *Gong khug ma*³³¹ (found in all collections, A27, etc.) and the useful commentary B4, written by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms as an introduction to the history and doctrines of Vajrakīla for the benefit of his own disciples on the occasion of their ritual *abhiṣeka*. One further text is B40 which styles itself *nidāna* or introductory preamble outlining the circumstances in which the Vajrakīla cycle was initially revealed. Rather than historical records in the modern sense, these Kīla chronicles that inform the present chapter are accumulations of religious myth, products of an oral tradition of pious hagiography. Their view of the genesis and transmission of the Vajrakīla doctrines naturally diverges substantially from that outlined above in Chapter Two.

The revelations of Mahāyoga

The Byang-gter commentator 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, using as his sources the traditional *tantras* and *āgamas*, describes the origin of *Mahāyoga* doctrines in the symbolic language of Buddhist mysticism:

“In the *dharmadhātu* palace of Akaniṣṭha, Samantabhadra, the *dharmakāya* teacher, acting within the unceasing state of the inseparable nature of form and wisdom transcending all words and syllables, emanated the circle of his own radiant awareness in the form of the five *Jinas* of the *saṃbhogakāya* shining clearly within his heart, stainless and naturally arisen. Having the spontaneous energy of great compassion, the various playful forms of peaceful and wrathful activity were made manifest. With an ocean of melodies of words, beyond speech or expression, these set into motion the wheel of the *Dharma* vehicle of the original meaning for the vast numbers of

331. A term of reference for the pith instruction lineage of Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal. A44, 328; A46, 416. According to 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, the teachings thus transmitted concern the *Mantrabhīrukīla*. B4, 196. Cf. above, note 78.

vidyādharas and *dākinīs* and the male and female *bodhisattvas* established on the tenth *bhūmi*.³³²

Such, then, is the cultic (emic) view of the origin of these doctrines which are regarded as the bearers of absolute truth, inseparably participating in a play (*līlā*) of divine reality. As such they remain essentially inexpressible, abiding forever in the natural condition of the *dharmadhātu* so as to be accessible only to those most spiritually advanced beings whose minds have already attained a cognition of highest truth. Their origin remains, therefore, permanently unoriginated and the sound of the *tantra* being promulgated is said to be the natural sound of the *dharmadhātu*.

In order to display these truths in a more relative way, however, some movement had to occur that broke away from the relentless self-absorption of the primordially enlightened state. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms speaks of this outward movement in terms of a compassionate radiation from the heart of the supreme being:

“In particular the teacher Vajrasattva,³³³ arising in the form of Vajraheruka, emanated from his heart the supreme son of all the Buddhas by the name of Vajrarākṣasa or the heroic Vajrakumāra. This wrathful manifestation destroyed the great demon Matraṅgara Rudra and all the other *māras*, *rākṣasas* and unruly demons of pride. Having ground their bodies down to dust, he bound their consciousnesses under oath and established them as protectors of the doctrine.³³⁴

Upon the peak of Mount Meru which was the place of subjugation³³⁵ of Māra (Rudra), having produced the mind of great wrath, he turned the wheel of the doctrine of fierce *mantras* for all the worldly arrogant ones and for the *mātrs* and *dākinīs* who had achieved *siddhis* by virtue of their wisdom and conduct. In this way all of his disciples became matured into Buddhahood and this is known as the *rGyal ba'i dgongs rgyud*, the direct transmission of the Buddha's understanding.³³⁶

This myth is a close variant of the one outlined in the preceding chapter. Here, however, Vajrakīla is produced *in order to* subdue Rudra—not *as a result of* that subjugation. Thus is established the first lineage of Vajrakīla doctrines, ‘the lineage of the Buddha's understanding’. The place is the peak of Mount Meru, the time follows the overthrow of

332. B4, 178.

333. Vajrasattva is here to be understood as the *sambhogakāya* of Samantabhadra.

334. The *Phur pa gleng gzhi* says that Vajrarākṣasa arose as the wrathful embodiment of all the gods who had been unable to subdue Rudra by peaceful means. In this guise he overthrew Rudra and turned all the demons into his servants. B40, 272.

335. *bKa' thang shel brag ma*, VI, gives the place of subjugation as Mount Malaya.

336. B4, 178–9. According to the *Phur pa gleng gzhi*, the teachings were transmitted to the Buddhas of the *pañcakula*, to the *bodhisattvas* known as “the three lords” (Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi), to “the maroon *dākinī* with topknot” (which may refer to either Ekajati or Karmendrāṇi) and to the three-faced Brahmā. They were then transmitted to the *vidyādharas* of the gods (Indra), *nāgas* (Takṣaka) and men (King Indrabhūti who, having learned the eighteen *tantras* of the *Mahāyoga* from Vajrapāṇi, disseminated them widely in the human realm). B40, 272–3.

Rudra, the teacher is Vajrakīla himself and the retinue consists of male and female 'arrogant worldly gods'.³³⁷

"After that the *yakṣa* Vajrapāṇi, keeper of the secret treasures of all *Tathāgatas*, gathered together the instructions in the great vehicle of secret *mantra* and, upon the blazing iron peak of Mount Mālaya, he taught those doctrines again and again to the *vidyādhara*s who had assembled there.³³⁸ In particular he gave instructions to the five *vidyādhara*s who were the leaders from the realms of *devas*, *nāgas*, men, *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas*.³³⁹ The *vidyādhara* of the *rākṣasas*, Matyaupāyika by name, having gathered together the words and syllables of the teachings produced bound volumes of books in verse.

Later, as a result of his beatitude, the fortunate king Indrabodhi of Avartamu in the country of Zahor, a monarch of much merit, saw seven special omens in his dreams: 1) Symbols of perfected body, speech and mind melted into his body. 2) There was the gathering of a religious assembly. 3) Precious volumes of teachings fell down from the sky. 4) All people upheld vows of religious discipline. 5) There was the celebration of a great religious offering ceremony. 6) Jewels and precious objects fell down like rain. 7) He received the prediction of his enlightenment.

After that it really happened that some texts written in ink of beryl upon sheets of golden paper landed on the top of his house, perfectly in accordance with the oneiric indications. At that time the king was unable to understand even a single syllable of those volumes and so he offered up his prayers to Vajrapāṇi, the master of secret teachings. As a consequence of his devotion he met Vajrapāṇi face to face, receiving blessings and empowerments, and Vajrapāṇi taught to the king the general eighteen classes of *Mahāyogatantra*.³⁴⁰

This episode of the myth brings the teachings into the human realm. The name of Indrabodhi (or Indrabhūti) is deeply embedded in the early history of Buddhist *tantra* but, unfortunately, the man behind the name remains something of an enigma. So many legends are told about him that all scholars agree there must have been at least two (possibly three) persons so designated. Keith Dowman asserts that the king Indrabodhi who revealed the Vajrakīla doctrines and taught them to Dhanasamkrta (who transmitted them to Padmasambhava) is not the same as the one mentioned here upon whose palace

337. The place, teacher, time, doctrines and retinue are the "five invariables" (*pañcaniyata*) of all Buddhist teachings.

338. Other texts in the Byang-gter tradition, however, say that Vajragarbha was the one who gathered together all the teachings of the primordial Buddha. bsKal-bzang padma dbang-phyug, *Autobiography*, 373.

339. "The god's name was Grags-ldan phyogs-skyong, the *yakṣa* was sKar-mda'-gdong, the *rākṣasa* was Blo-gros thabs-ldan, the *nāga* was Klu-rgyal 'jog-po and the human was Dri-med grags-pa." Thinley Norbu, *The Small Golden Key*, 10. For Sanskrit reconstructions see NSTB, I, 454.

340. B4, 179-80.

roof the texts were originally said to have fallen.³⁴¹ Clearly, however, our present author thinks otherwise.

What we may conjecture from the myth in its present form is that a certain wealthy man (“king”, *kṣatriya*?) somehow or other came to possess manuscripts of an esoteric nature which he was unable to comprehend. The texts themselves could have come from anywhere, for magical teachings have enjoyed a wide circulation in India since prehistory. Perhaps his own interest in the mysterious contents of these manuscripts prompted him to copy the words (or have them copied) in gold and to ponder on their meaning. Eventually, no doubt, a wandering *yogin* would have been found who could assume the mantle of Vajrapāṇi³⁴² and instruct the king in their religious significance. ‘Indrabodhi’ is as much an epithet as a name and it is not difficult to imagine a wealthy patron of these doctrines, through whose help they were first propagated on any significant scale, being awarded such a title.

Whatever the historical veracity behind the legends, however, it is stated in all the religious chronicles that the eighteen categories of *Mahāyogatantra* were received simultaneously by the king Indrabodhi. These include the *mūlatantra Guhyagarbha-Māyājāla* and the seventeen explanatory *tantras* consisting of the five of Body, Speech, Mind, Good Qualities and Enlightened Activities, the five *tantras* of *sādhanas*, the five concerning aspects of conduct plus two additional *tantras*.³⁴³ Teachings of Vajrakīla are to be found within those eighteen categories under the headings ‘*tantra* of Enlightened Activities’³⁴⁴ and ‘the five *tantras* of *sādhanas*’, the fifth of which is the “*Kīla-tantra* in twelve sections”.³⁴⁵

In particular the Kīla chronicles, such as the *Concise History*³⁴⁶ written by gTsang mkhan-chen and the *gNam lcags spu gri lo rgyus chos 'byung* by bDud-'joms Rinpoche,³⁴⁷ say that these Vajrakīla doctrines were taught by Indrabodhi to Dhanasamskṛta who then passed them on to Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and the Nepali Śīlamañju (see below) who extensively revised and commented upon them whilst in retreat at Yang-lé-shod (present-day Pharping, Nepal).

341. See S. Karmay, “King Tsa/Dza and Vajrayāna”, and K. Dowman, *Masters of Mahāmudrā*, 232ff, for Indrabhūti’s historiography.

342. Some sources cite Vajrasattva as the king’s preceptor.

343. Tulku Thondup, *Buddha Mind*, 30–1, lists the *Sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor* as the *tantra* of the Body, *Zla gsang thig le* as the *tantra* of Speech, *gSang ba 'dus pa* as the *tantra* of Mind, *dPal mchog dang po* as the *tantra* of Good Qualities and *Karmamālā* as the *tantra* of Enlightened Activities. The *Heruka rol ba*, *rTa mchog rol ba*, *sNying rje rol ba*, *bDud rtsi rol ba* and the *Phur pa rol ba* (*Phur pa bcu gnyis*) are the five *tantras* of *sādhanas*. The *Glang chen rab 'bog*, *Ri bo brtsegs pa*, *Ye shes rngam glog*, *Dam tshig bkod pa* and the *Ting 'dzin rtse gcig* are the five *tantras* of *karma*. The two supplementary *tantras* are the *rNam snang sgyu 'phrul drva ba* and the *Thabs kyi zhags pa*. All of these cycles of texts are to be found in the NGB.

344. NGB, 325, the *Karmakīla-tantra*, attests in its colophon to an affinity with the *Karmamālā* of vol. 17.

345. *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, NGB, 220.

346. The *Phur pa 'i chos 'byung bsdus pa* is to be found in gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa 'i chos 'byung*, 161–96.

347. K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 350, n. 32.

Apportionment of the sādhanas

The *Mahāyoga* treatises in general are divided into two sections: the eighteen *tantras* (as above) and the eight classes of *sādhana*.³⁴⁸ Concerning this second division of the *Mahāyoga*, our author 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms comments:³⁴⁹

“As for the very special eight great *heruka-sādhanas*, the general *tantras* concerned with these as well as the very necessary oral instructions and so on, these were entrusted to the hand of the *ḍākinī* queen, Mahākarmendrāṇī. Having placed each one of these eight cycles of teachings into its own individual jewelled casket, she sealed them all up as treasure within the body of the Śaṃkarakūṭa *stūpa* in the fearful charnel ground Śitavana. Later they were taken out and distributed amongst the eight great *vidyādhara*s, themselves the emanations of supreme beings.

With regard to this, it is written in the Vajrakīla text known as the *Cittaguhyakāya-tantra* ...”

He then cites a ‘prophesy’ from the second chapter of our text A3, B10, C1—see below, Chapter Five—concerning the eight great *vidyādhara*s and goes on to say:

“As it was prophesied in that quotation, eight incarnate *vidyādhara*s came to be born in the world and each of them spent a considerable period of time engaged in strict ascetic discipline in the charnel grounds. After a while, when the time had come to bring forth those eight *tantras*, they gathered together at the great *stūpa* of Śaṃkarakūṭa and stood before the queen of the *ḍākinīs*. “What is it that you want?” she demanded. “We want the *tantras*” they replied. And at that the *ḍākinī* queen entrusted one of the eight great cycles to each of the *ācāryas* gathered before her and the sky was spontaneously filled with music.”³⁵⁰

Despite the fairytale trappings of this episode I believe that here, too, we may profitably search an historically valid core. All traditions of the rNying-ma school in Tibet³⁵¹ assert this cycle of eight meditative practices to have been among the volumes of teachings compiled and arranged by a celestial *bodhisattva*³⁵² and subsequently entrusted to the

348. The *tantra* section, however, includes many *sādhanas* while the *sādhana* section also contains *tantras*. According to bDud-'joms Rinpoche the *sādhana* section has the two traditions of (a) the transmitted precepts and (b) the revealed treasures. He rationalizes others' conflicting views by claiming Prabhasthi as the inheritor of the first tradition of Vajrakīla and Padmasambhava as the inheritor of the second (revealed from the Śaṃkarakūṭa *stūpa* by Karmendrāṇī). NSTB, I, 475–3.

349. B4, 180–1.

350. B4, 182.

351. See Tulku Thondup, *The Tantric Tradition*, and Gyurme Dorje, *The Guhyagarbha-tantra*. Also K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 274ff, “The Nyingma Lineages”.

352. T. Thondup, *op. cit.*, 17, identifies this *bodhisattva* as Vajradharma. Other sources say either Vajrasattva or Vajrapāṇi. It is interesting to note here that Vajradharma is the foremost *bodhisattva* in the retinue of Amitābha, the Buddha most adored by followers of the rNying-ma school because he is lord of the Lotus family (*Padmakula*), whereas Vajrasattva (Vajrapāṇi) is the foremost of those in the circle of Akṣobhya. See the *Sarvarahasya-tantra* (A. Wayman,

ḍākinī queen Mahākarmendrāṇī. She is said to have divided the teachings into three groups under the headings ‘General’ (*phyi rgyud*), ‘Special’ (*dgos rgyud*) and ‘Particular’ (*bye brag gi rgyud*).³⁵³ In this regard, Yukei Matsunaga points out that the eighth century Indian commentator Buddhaghūya categorized tantric texts into the two divisions: *Kriyā* and *Yoga*. *Kriyātantras* were further subdivided into the ‘General’ (*spyi’i cho ga*) and ‘Particular’ (*bye brag*) classes.³⁵⁴ Legend then says that the *ḍākinī* queen put the five General *tantras* together with the ten Special *tantras* of the *bDe gshegs ’dus pa* into a casket made of five precious jewels. The eight Particular *tantras* were placed into eight different caskets and all of these teachings were concealed in the Śamkarakūṭa *stūpa*.

Tarhang Tulku³⁵⁵ says that, with regard to the Buddha’s teachings, the *sūtras* were preserved by Ānanda and the outer *tantras* by Vajrapāṇi.³⁵⁶ The inner *tantras* which were taught by the *ādibuddha* Samantabhadra were received by Caṇḍavajrapāṇi³⁵⁷ who passed them on to Mahākarmendrāṇī who hid them away in the Śamkarakūṭa *stūpa* in Śītavana cemetery. In the base of the *stūpa* she hid all the texts belonging to the *sGyu ’phrul* cycle. In the middle she concealed the *bDe gshegs ’dus pa*, in which the *aṣṭamahāsādhanas* (*sgrub chen bka’ brgyad*) are taught within a single *maṇḍala*. The *bye brag sgos rgyud* texts were hidden in the entrance gates, the *gSang ba yongs rdzogs* in the flute, the *Rang byung rang shar* in the rim of the spire and the *Sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor* in the middle of the spire. All of these texts contain teachings pertaining to the practices of *Mahāyoga* (*utpattikrama*) and *Anuyoga* (*saṃpannakrama*). The *Atiyoga* teachings of *Yang gsang bla med yang ti nag po* were hidden at the very top of the *stūpa* spire and then guardians were appointed to protect those precious texts until their appropriate time of withdrawal.

Tāranātha,³⁵⁸ in a more general way, confirms the sealing up of the *tantras* “into eight great gold coffers which were put into silver vessels which, in turn, were put into vessels made of the seven precious gems” and concealed within a *stūpa* in the Śītavana charnel ground, a favourite meeting place of tantric *yogins*.

When, in later times, eight of the foremost *siddhācāryas* of India gathered together at this *stūpa*, the *ḍākinī* queen is supposed to have appeared before them and distributed the *aṣṭamahāsādhanas* teachings among them. The casket containing the *tantras* of Yamāntaka she entrusted to Mañjuśrīmitra and the casket of *tantras* pertaining to Hayagrīva she gave to Nāgārjunagarbha. The casket of Cakrasaṃvara she entrusted to Hūmkāra, Amṛtaguṇa to Vimalamitra, Vajrakīla to Prabhastī,³⁵⁹ Mātrī to Dhanasaṃskṛta (holder of the earlier

The *Sarvarahasya-tantra*), verses 83 & 91. The Byang-gter school also has a tradition of naming this *bodhisattva* Vajragarbha (see note 338, above, and also Chapter One).

353. Technical terms from T. Thondup, *op. cit.*, 189.

354. J. W. de Jong, “A New History of Tantric Literature in India”, 93. Cf. S. Tsuda, “Classification of Tantras”.

355. *Crystal Mirror*, V, 272–4.

356. For notes concerning the importance of Vajrapāṇi in the tantric tradition see “Vajrapāṇi (alias Vajradhara) becomes preeminent” in D. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 134ff.

357. This distinction between Vajrapāṇi and Caṇḍavajrapāṇi is not apparent in other schools.

358. D. Templeman, *Origin of the Tārā Tantra*, 32.

359. The master Prabhastī, from whom Padmasambhava received the Vajrakīla *tantras*, was a *bhikṣu* by the name of Śākyaprabhā before being initiated into the *tantra*. Several sources, however, (including our commentator ’Phrin-las bdud-’joms) cite Padmasambhava as the

lineage of Vajrakīla), Lokastotrāpūjā to Rambuguhya Devacandra, and the Mantrabhīru *tantras*³⁶⁰ she gave to Śāntigarbha. Each of these eight *ācāryas*, having successfully accomplished supreme *siddhi* by means of the particular doctrines that had been revealed to him, subsequently entrusted those doctrines to his own disciples and in this way the *aṣṭamahāsādhanas* became known in the world.

The Sino-Japanese tradition³⁶¹ tells of *tantras* being taught by Mahāvairocana (another name for the *ādibuddha*) to the *bodhisattva* Vajrasattva (whom David Snellgrove equates with Vajrapāṇi³⁶²) who kept them for several hundred years before sealing them in an iron *stūpa* in South India. There they remained for several further centuries before being taken out by Nāgārjuna. This account, because it so clearly parallels the Tibetan version of events, raises several interesting issues. According to the Tibetan version, all eight cycles of *Mahāyoga sādhanas* arose in India simultaneously although it is quite clear from historical sources that only three of the cycles³⁶³ were then widely spread in India by those who received them. The other five seem to have been largely lost in the Subcontinent although all eight were transmitted to Tibet where their lines of transmission have remained unbroken to the present day. Whether the *stūpa* within which the doctrines had been concealed (ie. the place of origin of the *tantras*) was in the north or the south of India is a question over which many scholars have been vexed. The esoteric school itself, of course, is not concerned with such problems and we find the equation *stūpa* = *caitya* = *citta*³⁶⁴ which indicates that the place of origin is the *stūpa* (repository of Buddhahood) in the mind. The Tibetan tradition of the *ḍākinī* queen can also be interpreted in this way if for 'ḍākinī queen' we read 'muse'. Is the Tibetan account a later elaboration of a former tradition? Or has the legend of Nāgārjuna been abstracted from a fuller account by those who have a vested interest in that one person? If these two tales are mere fiction, how do we account for their similarity and for the fact that Nāgārjuna plays a prominent role in both?

The Tibetan tradition claims that at the time when the eight great *sādhanas* were first revealed, the moment was not opportune to open the casket containing the ten Special *tantras* of the *bDe gshegs 'dus pa* in which the eight are taught within a single *maṇḍala* and therefore that casket was replaced within the *stūpa*. It was later taken out when the *stūpa* was reopened by Padmasambhava who is also said to have received the *sādhanas* in their individual forms directly from the eight *siddhas* to whom they had originally been entrusted.³⁶⁵

recipient of the Kīla doctrines on this particular occasion even though (see below) Prabhastī is generally acclaimed to have been Padmasambhava's Vajrakīla preceptor.

360. Not to be confused with the *kīlamantrabhīru*.

361. A. Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Maṇḍalas*, 111.

362. D. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 136.

363. Yamāntaka, Hayagrīva and Cakrasaṃvara, the *sādhanas* of Body, Speech and Mind.

364. A. Snodgrass, *op. cit.*, 112. The Japanese tradition emphasises this 'inner interpretation' of the legend of the *stūpa*, for an elaboration of which see Taiko Yamasaki, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, 88–9.

365. Some sources (see above, note 359) include Padmasambhava among the original eight.

In the light of this rather confusing mass of conflicting details, all that may be said with any confidence is that, according to Tibetan sources, the Vajrakīla doctrines were taught in India within the general context of the *Anuttarayogatantra* revealed in arcane fashion to a select group of prominent Buddhist *yogins* thought to have been active at some time during the eighth century AD. That particular *tantra*, *āgama* and *upadeśa* transmission is known in Tibet by the name ‘the *vidyādhara*’s lineage’ or ‘the lineage of symbols’ (*Rig ’dzin brda’ brgyud*).

Although the chronicles distinguish clearly between the separate transmissions of the earlier corpus of Vajrakīla doctrines, said to have arisen at the time of the enigmatic king Indrabodhi, and this later tradition derived from the *stūpa*, the transmitted precepts themselves are accorded no differentiating characteristics.

Another figure mentioned in several of the early chronicles is Mi-thod-pa-can, the *kāpālika* brahmin. gTsang mkhan-chen cites this mysterious personage as the originator of a line of Vajrakīla teachings and even goes so far as to say that it was he who gave the teachings to Karmendrāṇī which she then hid in the Śaṅkarakūṭa *stūpa*.³⁶⁶ Such statements appear tacitly to admit the non-Buddhist origin of many of the *kīla* doctrines. More will be said about the *kāpālikas* below when we come to deal with the provenance of the Mahottarakīla cycle, but let us look first at two further historical puzzles: the teacher Padmasambhava and the huge cycle of Vajrakīla doctrines referred to in Tibetan chronicles as the ‘*Vidyottama-tantra* in one hundred thousand sections’.

Ācārya Padmasambhava

An important variant in the many biographies of Padmasambhava has been highlighted by Anne-Marie Blondeau,³⁶⁷ on the basis of which they may be classified into two groups. The factor is mode of birth and the two categories of biography are those that propose a womb birth (*jarāyuja*) and those that speak of a miraculous birth (*upapāduka*) from the heart of a lotus. The miraculous birth stories, which are common in *gter ma* literature, are the most widely known³⁶⁸ but the *bka’ ma* texts which are supposed to have come directly from India unanimously agree on a womb birth.³⁶⁹ Of particular interest to us is the fact that the Vajrakīla chronicles support the notion of womb birth.³⁷⁰

366. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa’i chos ’byung*, 163. See also K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 350, n. 32.

367. A. M. Blondeau, “Analysis of the Biographies of Padmasambhava According to Tibetan Tradition”.

368. Many of these *gter ma* accounts have been translated into English. K. Douglas & G. Bays, *The Life and Liberation of Padmasambhava*; W.Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*; K. Dowman, *Legend of the Great Stūpa*; etc. Interestingly the womb birth story of Śāntarakṣita is found in the *Padma bka’ thang*, IX, as a previous incarnation.

369. With regard to the *siddha*’s life in India, Tāranātha is said to have compiled his *rNam thar rgya gar lugs* relying “on Indian oral traditions inherited from his (Indian) masters”. A.M. Blondeau, *op. cit.*, 47.

370. Although styled a *nidāna* for the Vajrakīla cycle, the *gter ma* text B40 (said to have been copied out three times and hidden in Mon-kha sprang-yag gi bag, sPa-gro stag-tshang and Zang-zang lha-brag) adopts the standard *gter ma* position of miraculous birth. *Viz*: Following the *nirvāṇa* of Śākyamuni, all the Buddhas of the ten directions consulted together in order to prevent the decline of the doctrines and from the paradise of Sukhāvātī in the west the Buddha

'Phrin-las bdud-'joms³⁷¹ outlines the biography of Padmasambhava as it is told in the Kīla tradition by saying that king Manusiddhi³⁷² of Oḍḍiyāna, the son of gTsong-phud rigs-bzang,³⁷³ had a son by the name of Śāntarakṣita.³⁷⁴ The boy had a red and white complexion and bore the marks of one who belonged to the *Padmakula*. He was fully accomplished in all arts and sciences. Knots were to be seen at the top and bottom of his spine and his torso had eight sides to it (like the handle of a ritual *kīla*). The lower portion of his body was triangular in shape and his face and eyes were like half moons. With his red hair, abundant signs of Vajrakīla were evident at his birth.

“When he grew up he went to India with his two best friends and became known by the name of Śākyasiṃha (one of the eight names of Padmasambhava) after being ordained as a monk by the teacher Śākyabodhi.”

This teacher is most likely to be Śākyaprabhā (= Prabhahasti), as will be confirmed below. Although our author is not specific on this point, it seems as if Padmasambhava's 'two best friends' (later identified as Vimalamitra and Śīlamañju) were also ordained at this time and given the religious names Śākyamitra and Śākyabshes-gnyen (really one name in two languages). Louis de La Vallée Poussin, in his introduction to the *Pañcakrama*, places Śākyamitra in the eighth century as a pupil of Śākyaprabhā, an expert in the *vinaya*. Śākyamitra is said to have come from Kośala, to have written a commentary on the STTS and then travelled north to the Himalayan regions during the later period of his life where he worked extensively for the propagation of the Buddhist *Dharma*.³⁷⁵ In *The Blue Annals* he is counted among the four most prominent recipients of the GST in the line of Saraha and Nāgārjuna, belonging to the fifth generation after King Indrabodhi.³⁷⁶ Śākyamitra's historicity and awareness of *kīla* rites is therefore beyond doubt.

Following that, 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms tells of the meeting in Zahor³⁷⁷ of Padmasambhava and the *ācārya* Prabhahasti, under whose guidance he is supposed to have received the secret *Anuttara* empowerments of the *Māyājāla* cycle and heard in full the

Amitābha directed his thoughts towards Śākyamuni's *kṣetra*, the southern continent of Jambudvīpa. There, for the sake of all beings, Padmasambhava was spontaneously produced with neither cause (*hetu*) nor condition (*pratyaya*) in “the playful Sindhu ocean” (the Indus valley). He was endowed with the blessings of all the Buddhas of the *dharmakāya*, the empowerments of all the Buddhas of the *sambhogakāya* and the active instructions of all the Buddhas of the *nirmāṇakāya*. B40, 273–4.

371. B4, 183–8.

372. The *bKa' thang shel brag ma* calls him prince Baddhaśikha, which is possibly the name of his father (cf. following note). K. Douglas & G. Bays, *op. cit.*, 64.

373. *Śikhā Kulabhadra. bKra-shis stobs-rgyal, *Gu ru'i rnam thar ngo mtshar phun tshogs rgya mtsho*, 174. (Blondeau, *op. cit.*, 46).

374. A.M. Blondeau cites several variants of this name including Rakṣantara, Rakṣanta and Śāntarakṣi.

375. Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Pañcakrama*, ix.

376. The lineage is given as: Indrabodhi to an unnamed *yoginī*, to Viśukalpa, to Saraha, to Nāgārjuna, to Śākyamitra. G. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 359.

377. Our text C36, in which the blessings of Vajrakīla are invoked from the various sites sanctified by their importance in the Kīla chronicles, invites Śākyaprabhā the *bhikṣu* (Prabhahasti the *vajrācārya*) from the land of Zahor.

doctrines of the one hundred thousand sections of the Kīla *Vidyottama-tantra*. It must be presumed here that these were the Vajrakīla teachings obtained by Prabhahasti from the *stūpa* in Śītavana charnel ground. When speaking of the opening of that *stūpa*, however, our author claims Padmasambhava himself to have been the original recipient of the Kīla doctrines. Whatever their origin, the teachings of Vajrakīla have by this time supposedly grown in bulk (or metaphysical importance?) to the famous ‘one hundred thousand sections of the *Vidyottama-tantra*’.

In another, better known version of this legend, Padmasambhava is supposed to have received the Vajrakīla doctrines from Prabhahasti (said to be a hierarch of Nālandā) in response to his plea for help in subduing the obstacles to his final enlightenment (referred to by the tantric term *mahāmudrā*) that had arisen during a period of meditative retreat in Nepal. In terms of religious mythology, this latter story is far more potent for it correlates the teacher Padmasambhava with the Buddha Śākyamuni who subdued the demon Māra on the eve of his own enlightenment. It also serves to highlight in dramatic fashion the chief value of the Vajrakīla doctrines in the eyes of its cult (to subdue all obstacles to omniscience) and to inspire faith in those doctrines as the supreme method for this task. Interestingly, also, the demonic force in this legend is embodied in the form of a gigantic serpent that “held back the waters of life” (rain) so that the process of creation (spring growth and reproduction) could not occur. Few of the cult initiates in Tibet, however, would be aware of the parallel between this legend and the earlier Vedic myth of Indra *versus* Vṛtra.

The earliest extant redaction of this episode from the life of Padmasambhava is in the document from Tun-huang classified as ‘Pelliot tibétain 44’. This small but historically significant text, scrutinized by F.A. Bischoff and Charles Hartman in 1971,³⁷⁸ is “possibly the oldest document in existence referring to Padmasambhava” and was considered by G.Tucci³⁷⁹ as “a major proof of the historicity of the *siddha*”. It is also a major piece of evidence concerning Padmasambhava’s transmission of the *kīla* doctrines from India.³⁸⁰

According to the later *gter ma* tradition,³⁸¹ Padmasambhava was accompanied on that occasion by the Nepalese maiden Śākyadevī whom he had met at the ancient *vihāra* of Śāṅkhu³⁸² in the northeast corner of the Kathmandu valley.³⁸³ She apparently suffered from a slight physical deformity (recognized by the saint as omens of wisdom and virtue)³⁸⁴ and had been abandoned by her father following the death of his wife in

378. F. A. Bischoff & C. Hartman, “Padmasambhava’s Invention of the Phur-bu”.

379. TPS, 88.

380. In the opinion of Samten Karmay, the Kīla doctrines are the only teachings among the many said to have been transmitted by Padmasambhava for which there exists reliable historical evidence. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 6.

381. K. Douglas & G. Bays, *The Life and Liberation*, 315. K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 268, etc.

382. Second or third century AD? M. Slusser, *Nepal Maṇḍala*, 271.

383. For a description of Śāṅkhu Vihāra see K. Dowman, “A Buddhist Guide”, 274–7, and M. Slusser, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

384. Her fingers and toes were webbed like the feet of a duck, a characteristic traditionally associated with a *mahāpuruṣa*.

childbirth.³⁸⁵ No mention is made of her in the early chronicles of the *bka' ma* tradition (such as the Pelliot 44 manuscript) but it is said by some today that she continues to emanate in the person of the Rāja Kumārī of Basantapur, one of the 'virgin goddesses' of Kathmandu.³⁸⁶

Our author 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms says that Padmasambhava made his journey to Nepal with the express intention of gaining the *siddhi* of a *mahāmudrā-vidyādhara*. This resolve on final enlightenment is clearly intended as a correlate to the Buddha's similar resolve as he made his seat beneath the *bodhi* tree. There, in a rock cave at Pharping (*yang le shod kyi brag phug*), Padmasambhava (and his tantric consort Śākyadevī?) engaged in the *sādhana* of the 'Nine Lamps of Heruka'.³⁸⁷ In response to that, says 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms (again a clear allusion to Māra's response to Śākyamuni's resolve), "the vicious *nāga* of that vicinity known as Gyong-po (*Nāgakhara, 'Cruel Serpent') caused the earth to quake and no rain to fall from the sky for three years". All sources speak of this prolonged period of severe drought during which the crops were dessicated and large numbers of people died. The vicissitudes of drought and famine proving an insurmountable obstacle to his realization of supreme *bodhi*, Padmasambhava dispatched two Nepalese messengers to India with a measure of powdered gold and a request for help to the *paṇḍits* and *siddhas* of Nālandā university, an institution renowned for the ritual expertise of its inmates. The Tun-huang manuscript names the two messengers as Shag-kyā (Śākya?) Yur and I-So, whilst the *Lha 'dre bka' thang* identifies them as Ji-la ji-sa and Kun-la kun-sa-zhi.³⁸⁸ The biography of Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal³⁸⁹ confirms the association of Jila Jisad (Jila Jipha) with Śākyadevī and the cave at Yang-le-shod but makes no reference at all to Kun-la kun-sa-zhi. While the *Lha 'dre bka' thang* refers to Jila Jisad as "a practitioner of medicine", the biographer of Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal thought of him as "a king of Nepal", hardly a likely candidate for the post of messenger boy. Although not mentioned here by our author 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, the Byang-gter tradition generally names one of the messengers as Jinamitra. This tradition believes, furthermore, that Jinamitra, having fulfilled his task in Nepal on behalf of Padmasambhava, promptly died and was reborn in Tibet as sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms in time to act as the messenger dispatched by king Khri srong-lde'u-btsan to India to fetch Padmasambhava from Bodh Gayā.³⁹⁰

The Kīla Vidyottama-tantra

The assistance said to have been offered to Padmasambhava by those most knowledgeable Buddhist experts of his day took the form of 'the Kīla *Vidyottama-tantra* in one hundred thousand sections', a set of teachings so massive that his two messengers "could barely

385. Her story forms the subject matter of the *Padma bka' thang*, LIII.

386. K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 269.

387. *Yang dag mar me dgu*. "Yang-dag-thugs" being the rNying-ma-pa appellation of the *heruka* Cakrasaṃvara.

388. A. M. Blondeau, "Le Lha-'dre bka'-thang", 31. K. Dowman's source ("A Buddhist Guide", 251) calls them Jila Jisad and Kun-la ku-bzhi.

389. Tarthang Tulku, *Mother of Knowledge*, 64. K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 54, 317.

390. Dalai Lama V, *Rig 'dzin ngag gi dbang po 'i rnam thar*, 431, and bsKal-bzang padma dbang-phyug, *Autobiography*, 374.

carry it".³⁹¹ A text by the name of *Vidyottama-tantra* (*Āryavidyottama-mahātantra*) is found in all editions of the *bKa' 'gyur* (P.402) but this is not the one referred to here. If there ever was in India such a text or collection of texts bearing this name and focussed on the doctrines of Vajrakīla, then it was lost long ago. More probably, however, the name is intended generally as *locus ascriptus* for the store of ideas pertaining to the deity without reference to a particular presentation of precepts. It may thus serve as a generic term for the vast conglomeration of individual treatises such as those currently found in Tibet (the title pages of many of which proclaim their descent from such a matrix) as well as to the oral tradition that accompanies them.³⁹² Also, it is not necessary to assume that this huge volume of teachings was ever written down on paper, for mystics the world over have always been capable of reading volumes into a few key words or sentences. The staggering weight of the doctrines conveyed at this time may simply be a metaphor for their great importance. The ambiguity of the various Kīla chronicles tends to confirm this hypothesis, for the title occurs as an article of faith in almost every Vajrakīla lineage, despite an acknowledgement of their discrete inceptions and the absence of any such named text.

Certainly it seems that Padmasambhava introduced a very large body of Vajrakīla teachings to Tibet, as practised to this day within both the rNying-ma and Sa-skyā schools.³⁹³ In the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* (NGB) alone are more than forty-one major treatises filling three entire volumes.³⁹⁴ The popularity of these doctrines was such that countless *gter ma* have subsequently been brought forth by 'revealers of hidden treasure' to supplement those originally taught.

The doctrines of Vajrakīla were at one time rejected as spurious by various teachers of the new schools (*gsar ma*) on the grounds that no original Sanskrit texts could be produced in evidence of their authenticity. All such opposition is said to have been crushed, however, when the Sa-skyā Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182–1252) discovered in Shangs sreg-zhing a Sanskrit text which was supposed to have belonged to Padmasambhava himself. The Sa-skyā Paṇḍita's translation of this *Vajrakīla-mūlatantrakhaṇḍa* (VKMK, *rDo rje phur pa rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi dum bu*) is included in the *tantra* section of the Tibetan canon (TTP 78) and in our analysis of Byang-gter Vajrakīla

391. K. Dowman, "A Buddhist Guide", 251. Most sources stipulate Prabhahasti as the actual donor of the teachings at that time, thus confirming him as the personal preceptor of Padmasambhava. NSTB, I, 481, says that Padmasambhava studied the Kīla doctrines eighteen times under Prabhahasti's tutelage.

392. Still to be analysed are the Sanskrit treatises of Buddhist *kīla* rituals noted above (Chapter Two) and the many minor texts of mixed Hindu/Buddhist ritual recently brought to light in Nepal by the NGMPP.

393. The large cycle of Vajrakīla doctrines adhered to by the Sa-skyā school is said to have been taught by Padmasambhava to 'Khon klu-dbang srung and subsequently transmitted from generation to generation within the 'Khon family. 'Khon dKon-mchog rgyal-po (1034-1102) eventually abandoned the rNying-ma tradition in disgust at its later degeneracy, founding his own school at Sa-skyā in 1073.

394. According to the catalogue of this collection prepared by E. Kaneko, Tokyo, 1982, vols. 27, 28 & 29 consist entirely of Kīla texts.

literature in Part Three of the present work the contents of this short text will be shown to have tremendous relevance for the cult as a whole.

In the light of the huge number of Vajrakīla texts held in great esteem by followers of the rNying-ma school in Tibet, it may be considered curious that no recension of the *bKa' gyur* includes any Kīla *tantra* other than the VKMK. This is despite the fact that Bu-ston (1290–1364) himself, one of the foremost compilers of the canon, informs us in his *Chos 'byung* (History of Religion) that his teacher, the *lo tsā ba* Nyi-ma rgyal-mtshan, had seen “parts of the *Vajrakīla-tantra*” in Nepal.³⁹⁵ The marked absence of such texts from the official collection of *Buddhavaçana*, then, cannot reasonably be attributed to hostility on the part of the compilers. The rNying-ma-pa explanation for their absence is that the initiated holders of these highly esoteric doctrines deliberately maintained their secrecy in accordance with tantric ordinance, never permitting them to become widely known.³⁹⁶ Thus they have never been included in the published lists of canonical works, even the earliest catalogue of translations carried out at bSam-yas monastery.³⁹⁷

The existence of a Kīla cult among the Buddhists in eighth century India, however, must now surely be accepted as established despite any uncertainty adhering to the title *Vidyottama-tantra*. Whatever texts were sent to Padmasambhava on that occasion and whether or not they actually came from the prestigious monastic university of Nālandā, all the chronicles proclaim that, as soon as the teachings arrived in Pharping, the hindrances and obstacles that had disturbed the *guru*'s meditations were successfully overcome. “Invoking Vajrakīla”, says our commentator 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms:

“Padmasambhava beheld a glorious vision of the *bhagavat* Vajrakumāra that filled the sky like the cosmic Mount Meru and he obtained from the deity unprecedented empowerments of wrathful activity. Then, rolling the ritual *kīla* between his palms, the *ācārya* sang this song:

'Oh Tr̥ptacakra (and) the Kīla-god,
Dark blue in colour, naked,
and with long dishevelled hair.

The upper part of your body
is a great wrathful form
With three faces and six arms.

Below the navel you are a
sharp-pointed nail
Of great strength, ferocious,
brightly blazing.

Like the blue petals of
an utpala flower,

395. *Bu ston gsung 'bum*, vol. Ya, fol. 179b. Quoted by Roerich in *The Blue Annals*, 102.

396. G. Dorje, *The Guhyagarbha-tantra*, 142.

397. The *bKa' gyur dkar chag ldan dkar ma* compiled in the ninth century by sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs and Nam-mkha'i snying-po. See Marcelle Lalou, “Les textes bouddhiques au temps du roi Khri srong-lde-btsan”.

With a radiant aura of
intense light.

When touched by you
even the gods are destroyed.

What need is there to speak
of those who cause trouble?'

While the *guru* sat in meditation singing this song, there came to him in the evening the four Śvanmukhā goddesses and then, at midnight, the four Mahātmādevīs (bDag-nyid chen-mo). In the morning he was approached by the four Bhūmipati (Sa-bdag) sisters (called here bSe-mo mched-bzhi) and all twelve of these local spirits offered him their vital life essence. In accepting their gifts, the *guru* established each one of them as a protectress of the doctrines of Vajrakīla.³⁹⁸

These dozen goddesses have become very well known in the Kīla cult, with a large number of texts being devoted to their worship (dealt with in more detail in Chapter Nine, below).

The first group consists of goddesses in the guise of wild dogs. Throughout India dogs are thought of as the most unclean of all animals, polluted scavengers and the very epitome of evil. They are also regarded as the companions of the outcaste *kāpālika* Śiva during his wanderings as the god beyond the pale of orthodox Vedism.³⁹⁹ The Hindu tantric text *Mahākāla-saṃhitā* instructs the *yogin* to worship such creatures as manifestations of Śiva's spouse by proceeding at midnight on the fourteenth (darkest) night of the waning moon, naked and with dishevelled hair, to a lonely, fearful spot such as a charnel ground. There, *bali* should be offered to the jackals who are then requested to slay the *yogin*'s foes.⁴⁰⁰ Since this ritual is exactly as we find it in the Buddhist Kīla cult, it may be that this episode in the chronicles simply reflects the historical incorporation of *kāpālika* imagery and myth. The second group corresponds to the Ṛtudevīs, 'goddesses of the four seasons', whose mythology I have so far been unable to trace. (See below, Chapter Nine, for details of their iconography.)

It is only to the final group of four sisters, the bSe'i lha-mo-bzhi (translated by Bischoff & Hartman as "the tetrademoness of Bse") that reference is made in the Tun-huang manuscript (folio 7a). Nebesky-Wojkowitz suggests that this group may derive from the Bon demons of that name (also spelled bSve) and he notes that "numerous bSe are to be found among the *sa bdag*".⁴⁰¹ Our text B33 (C24), on the other hand, invokes a group of sixty male and female bSe from the uppermost reaches of the sky!⁴⁰²

Interpreting this passage, then, as an allusion to the assimilation into the Kīla cult of minor deities from local traditions, an air of historical credibility is bestowed upon what

398. B4, 186. The song is translated from gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa 'i chos 'byung*, 168.

399. W. D. O'Flaherty, *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*, 173, 285.

400. T. Goudriaan & S. Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature*, 80–1.

401. René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, 15, 310.

402. See above, Chapter Three.

would otherwise seem to be a fantastic episode in the unfolding drama. Such an understanding is supported by gTsang mkhan-chen who says that the goddesses came seeking consecration on that occasion although they had long ago been bound under oath to serve the cause of living beings.⁴⁰³

All sources go on to say that the next task to be completed was the thorough revision of the texts of the collected doctrines. The translators of the Tun-huang manuscript describe this as the work of Padmasambhava alone but 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms and other sources make it clear that "Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Śīlamañju conferred together". In fact the Tun-huang manuscript (folio 6a) adds Prabhahasti (Pra-be-se) to the list and it is difficult to believe that his disciples would have "worked extensively on the *sādhanas*, commentaries and thirty-two root *tantras* of Vajrakīla, such as the *Vajrakīla-guhyatantra* and the rest"⁴⁰⁴ in his absence. Although it is not possible to identify these "thirty-two root *tantras* and the rest", the early chronicles at least make it clear that the accumulated wealth of Kīla doctrines incorporated inconsistencies and was therefore in need of revision and also that the first attempt at rationalization took place in Nepal on the basis of texts received from India during the first half of the eighth century AD.

Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Śīlamañju⁴⁰⁵ are then said to have performed the rite of Vajrakīla in "the rock cave of the *asuras*" (only a short walk from Yang-le-shod).⁴⁰⁶ 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, who actually places this event prior to the rationalization of the *Vidyottama* texts, tells us that "One of their *kīlas* exhibited the supreme sign of flying through space. One *kīla* showed the middling sign of leaping and dancing above the *maṇḍala* and a third *kīla* showed the inferior sign of laughing and smiling." He then continues:

"The *ācārya* Padmasambhava took hold of that *kīla* that had flown through space and he stuck it into the ground in an area where there was a teacher of heretical doctrines who was causing trouble for the *Buddhadharma*. In so doing he utterly annihilated that area, including the teacher, his house and the surrounding forest. As soon as he had done so, however, a new forest arose even grander than the one that had previously been there. The *ācārya* Vimalamitra took hold of that *kīla* that had danced upon the *maṇḍala* and he put it into the River Ganges. By this action he was able to destroy a certain *nāga* who had been supporting the lives of heretics. The Nepali master Śīlamañju took the *kīla* that had laughed and he thrust it into the mKhar-gong rock, reducing it to rubble and dust. In this way, as foretold in

403. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa'i chos 'byung*, 169.

404. B4, 186–7, and gTsang mkhan-chen, *op. cit.*, 170. A text frequently cited in this regard is the *Phur 'grel 'bum nag* said to have been written by Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Śīlamañju on the basis of the *Vidyottama-tantra* (A46, 462–3, etc.).

405. The Tun-huang manuscript names them Ser-po (the Nepalese) and In-tra (Indra) Shu-gu-tu (or Śrī 'Gugs-ta, folio 8a). It also says that they were not alone but fails to identify their assistants (with the exception of Prabhahasti, mentioned above).

406. For a description of these sites see K. Dowman, "A Buddhist Guide", 249–54 & 255–8.

prophesy, he destroyed all heretics that were staying in that area, up as far as their leader. So the doctrines of the Buddha were enabled to flourish."⁴⁰⁷

This threefold theme, although encountered in all the chronicles, is variously recorded by the different authors. 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje⁴⁰⁸ confirms the events but omits many details while the Tun-huang manuscript, dealing with the matter very briefly on folio 8, exchanges the protagonists who overcame water and rock.

gTsang mkhan-chen in his *Concise History*, however, relates a parallel narrative set in India. According to his version, Padmasambhava, together with his consort and one assistant, performed the rite of Vajrakīla in Vajrāsana (modern Bodh Gayā) until the signs of success became manifest as above. Padmasambhava is then said to have taken the *kīla* representing the wrathful Trailokyavijaya from the *maṇḍala* and to have caused the conflagration of a sandalwood forest near Trilinga (Trimala) in south India where heretics who worshipped a *svayambhūliṅga* were "practising the evil art of black magic, bringing about a virulent infectious disease". The fire was started as he stabbed his *kīla* into the trunk of a tree near the *liṅga*. His consort (said to be "just like Vajrayoginī") took from the *maṇḍala* the *kīla* of Amṛtakunḍalin and travelled east to Bengal where an evil *nāga* who was well disposed towards heretics dwelt in a lake. "When those *tīrthika* made just so much as a simple *bali* offering to the serpent they were rewarded with many precious jewels and much harm was done to the followers of the Buddha through the miracle powers of the snake." The *nāga* and his retinue were destroyed when she plunged her *kīla* into that lake. "Within a week the lake was dry and all those heretics were dead." A *yogin* by the name of Ratnaśīla, who had acted as assistant in the rite, took one of the minor *kīlas* from the *maṇḍala* and went to Rājagṛha in the country of Magadha. There, beside a huge boulder of crystal, a family of brahmin heretics had established their residence around a certain teacher who taught that the powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience were to be obtained without the necessity of undergoing ascetic privations. With a single thrust of his *kīla*, the boulder was reduced to fragments and their evil power destroyed.⁴⁰⁹

We may never know the personalities and local events that underlie such legends for, although the common themes are clearly discernable, the tales themselves present too many variants. Until the Sanskrit sources which have only recently come to light are analysed, however, these Tibetan texts remain the only testimonies we have of events surrounding the development and spread of a Kīla cult in India and Nepal prior to the transmission of the Vajrakīla doctrines to Tibet.

Having established a consistent body of knowledge relating to the worship and ritual praxis of Vajrakīla on the basis of the *Vidyottama* collection, Padmasambhava is said to have transferred to the rock cave at gYa'-ri-gong in the border area between India and Nepal in order to continue his meditations. All sources speak of this as a twelve year

407. B4, 184–5.

408. NSTB, I, 714.

409. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa'i chos 'byung*, 164–6.

period of retreat focussing on the hundred thousand sections of the *Vidyottama-tantra*⁴¹⁰ and a number of the Byang-gter *sādhana*s (see below, Part Three) claim to encapsulate the meditations in which Padmasambhava was engaged at that time.

Thus far we have looked at two lines of Vajrakīla doctrine, one stemming from Indrabodhi and the other said to have been received by Prabhahasti at the opening of the *stūpa* in Śītavana. Both teach procedures for meditation upon Vajrakīla in his three-faced, six-armed form, known in the Byang-gter school as ‘the black deity’ system.⁴¹¹ We have seen above, however, that the Byang-gter also recognizes the Kīla with nine faces and eighteen arms, a ‘multicoloured deity system’ having a separate genesis.

The Mahottarakīla cycle

In the biography of Padmasambhava known as the *bKa’ thang gser phreng*, the story is told of the ‘scorpion *guru*’ who imparts to Padmasambhava the doctrines of Vajrakīla in the charnel ground of Śītavana near Bodh Gayā.⁴¹² In the *bKa’ thang shel brag ma*, this episode receives a brief mention without, however, making any reference to Vajrakīla. The teachings that the scorpion gave on that occasion are simply said to be “the *Dharma*”.⁴¹³

The Vajrakīla *Concise History* by gTsang mkhan-chen places the episode, not in Śītavana in line with the other sources, but in Yang-le-shod following the successful performance of the Kīla rites by Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Śīlamañju. According to this text a gigantic iron scorpion fell down upon the roof of the cave in which the three were meditating and appeared before them, mocking and jeering. The *ācārya* (presumably Padmasambhava) transformed himself into a pig in order to eat that scorpion which promptly metamorphosed into the deity Vajrakumāra, from whom they all received the “unassailable empowerments for the ferocious rites”.⁴¹⁴

The Byang-gter cycle includes an entire text, the *Phur pa che mchog gi lo rgyus* (B13), devoted to the episode of the scorpion. As betokened by its title, the scorpion is herein said to be the source of the Mahottarakīla teachings which nowadays appear to be known only within this tradition. According to the text, Padmasambhava went to visit the *guru* Dhanasamskṛta in order to request *Dharma* teachings and, having received from him all the various *dharma*s on the path of secret *mantra*, became victorious over debaters and followers of heretical doctrines. He was henceforth renowned as Siṃhanāda, “He who roars with the voice of a lion”.⁴¹⁵

410. Our text C23, for example, begins with the oft quoted verse: *O rgyan padma 'byung gnas kyi, phur pa bi to ta ma la, 'bum sde'i rgyud la blo sbyang nas, gYa' ri gong gi brag phug tu, mi lo bcu gnyis bar du bsgrub.*

411. A similar “black deity system” is said to have been devised by Ya-'brog-pa gu-rub yang-dag on the basis of the *rDo rje phur bu chos thams cad mya ngan las 'das pa'i rgyud chen po* (NGB, 336, a text cited several times in the Byang-gter commentaries of Padma 'phrin-las, e.g., A46, 418). G. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 156.

412. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, 181ff.

413. K. Douglas & G. Bays, *The Life and Liberation of Padmasambhava*, 349–50.

414. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa'i chos 'byung*, 168. The author states that the deity chose to manifest in this way “in order to examine the attainments” (of the practitioners).

415. Another of the famous “eight names of the *guru*”.

After giving the teachings the *guru* Dhanasaṃskṛta announced to his disciples, “We all, master and retinue, should go to the lake island *Jalendradvīpa in order to perfect the rite of producing *amṛta* nectar”, and having said this, they all departed. They made their home on that island in a cave of blue rock and this angered the *bhūmipati*, *nāgas* and pestilential local spirits who then caused the great lake to overflow. The planets and constellations of stars above also became furious and threw down repeated storms of hail and lightning, violent winds and blizzards of snow. Because of all this, the *yogins* were achieving no results from their *sādhana* practice and so they went off in search of a doctrine that could put a stop to the interferences.⁴¹⁶

Arriving at the great charnel ground of Śītavana they found a black iron scorpion with nine heads living there in a cave, holding aloft a golden sword in his right hand and expounding the *Dharma* to himself. “I am the lord of all those in the world who have no lord. I am the defender and friend of all those who have no protector” he said. Because this iron scorpion was very angry, the teachings on that occasion consisted of instructions on bringing anger onto the path. His having nine heads was a sign of his having reached the highest peak of the nine *yānas* and his sword was a sign of his having cut through the *kleśas* with his perfect wisdom (*samyakprajñā*). A great light like the glow of the setting sun was always shining at the place where he stayed.

The *guru* said: “In this place there will arise either a jewel of Brahmā or a great demon of destruction.” After he had spoken they dug down and unearthed a casket of maroon leather within which was this fundamental commentary on the root *tantra*, inscribed in letters of gold upon dark blue paper. At that time neither the *ācārya* Dhanasaṃskṛta nor the teacher Padmasambhava was able to comprehend it and, even though it was shown to five hundred other scholars, it could not be understood. They therefore attached it to the tip of a victorious banner and, circumambulating it, they worshipped it with offerings.⁴¹⁷

Then Padmasambhava said: “If we ask the iron scorpion for the meaning, he will either refuse to explain or he will speak.” So they prepared for the scorpion a six-legged throne of jewels and, inviting him to sit upon it, they circumambulated him, presented him with offerings and prayed to him fervently with devoted minds. In an instant that scorpion of iron transformed himself into the *bhagavat*, the glorious Vajrakumāra with nine heads and eighteen hands pronouncing in his own language the sounds KĪLAYA HŪM PHAṬ from the *dGongs rgyud* (*Tantra* of the Ultimate Intention).⁴¹⁸ It was by means of this utterance that the miraculous transformation with nine heads and eighteen hands arose from the sphere

416. Note that once again the motif of harassment to meditation is cited as the reason for seeking the Kīla doctrines.

Both the *gSer phreng ba* and the *Shel brag ma* say that Padmasambhava was originally meditating alone in a cave at Phūllahari when Vajrapāṇi appeared to him and instructed him to visit the charnel ground “near Rājagṛha” where it was foretold that he would attain *siddhi*.

417. Both the *gSer phreng ba* and the *Shel brag ma* say that the scorpion withdrew the teachings from beneath a triangular stone and as soon as they were seen they were immediately understood. gTsang mkhan-chen also says that by showing these *sāstras* to the five hundred *paṇḍitas*, “the borderland between Nepal and India became like a wellspring of *bodhi*”. gTsang mkhan-chen, *op. cit.*, 169.

418. Possibly the *rDo rje phur pa gsang ba'i dgongs rgyud chen po*, said to be derived from the *Vidyottama-tantra*. NGB, 353.

of non-arising, so it is said. Then he taught the *tantra* known as **Svayambhū-svodaya* (Spontaneously Generated, Self-Arising) from the section “Anger is destroyed by means of *vajra* wrath” up as far as the words “KATHAM KATHAM”, together with instructions concerning its means of attainment. “This was the manner in which the *mūlatantra* of *vajra* wrath arose as authoritative, generally indestructible adamant speech.”

As far as can be judged from the few words cited here, this ‘*mūlatantra* of *vajra* wrath’ exhibits a remarkable similarity to the VKMK. Indeed, the entire text of the VKMK is probably to be found scattered among the various works that style themselves as ‘root *tantras* of Vajrakīla’. Many of its verses, for example, are to be found in the Byang-gter BRT analysed in the following chapter, thus lending weight to the idea that perhaps there never were large numbers of Vajrakīla texts in Sanskrit, despite persistent references to the fabulous ‘one hundred thousand sections’ of the *Vidyottama-tantra*. Our chronicle, in fact, goes on to state that the *Vidyottama-tantra* was taught in order to elucidate the meaning of the *mūlatantra*, which suggests that the bulk of Vajrakīla texts may have been redactions of an oral tradition centered on only a few root texts. In the words of the chronicle:

“In order to make that clear, the teacher (presumably the scorpion but possibly Dhanasamkrta or Padmasambhava) taught the continuation *tantra* called *Vidyottama* in one hundred thousand sections. At that place he propounded the introduction (*nidāna*) in which the five excellent ‘invariables’⁴¹⁹ are set forth and then he taught the hundred thousand verses. In order to clarify the meaning of the fundamental *Vajrakrodha-tantra* (‘the *mūlatantra* of *vajra* wrath’), five explanatory *tantras* were taught which are the *tantras* of the Body, Speech, Mind, Good Qualities and Perfect Activities. The mother *tantra* is the *Heruka-mūlatantra* (from which are derived?) the five *tantras* of the five supreme sons, ten *tantras* of the ten wrathful kings and twelve *tantras* of the twelve oath-bound guardians. The *nidāna* itself is a *tantra* called the Rasp Razor of Life (*Srog gi spu gri se brdar*) and for all of the *samaya* deities there is a **Samayasamāja-tantra*. In that way, twenty-seven *tantras* have been taught.⁴²⁰

In the cycle of treatises there are the eight treatises in the eight directions and there are six classes of *āgama* in the cycle of *āgamas*. The philosophical viewpoint of the *adhiṣṭhāna Vidyottama-tantra* in one hundred thousand sections is complete and perfect in every respect. The small heart text is a clear guide to the perfect activities of the deity Vajrakumāra and for higher activities there is the *Guhyakīla-tantra* (? our

419. See above, note 337.

420. If the *tantras* of Body, Speech, Mind and the rest are identified as “the five supreme sons”, I suppose the twenty-seven referred to here comprise the listed groups of five, ten and twelve. This leaves the *Vajrakrodha-mūlatantra*, the *nidāna* and the *Samayasamāja-tantra* excluded from the reckoning. NGB, 338–47, are Vajrakīla *tantras* concerning the ten wrathful kings but the firm identification of any text is problematic.

text A3) which is an accomplished *yātudhāna* or demonic means for the complete eradication of all trouble-makers.”⁴²¹

The chronicle concludes with the proclamation that, having successfully attained all of these teachings, Dhanasamkr̥ta and Padmasambhava contemplated the instructions and took them fully to heart. Then, when they thrust a *kīla* into the lake they were able to subdue all vicious trouble-makers from among the eight classes of gods and demons and they gained the two types of *siddhi* of Vajrakīla.

Thus, according to this source, doctrines relating to Mahottarakīla were initially divulged in India to both Padmasambhava and Dhanasamkr̥ta. Considered chronologically, they are among the final revelations of Vajrakīla and if these teachings then went straight to Tibet in the hands of Padmasambhava, *tantra* texts relating to the deity in this guise may never have circulated in the land of their origin. Sceptics, of course, would question their supposed Indian provenance and their doubts may be increased when it is noted that such doctrines did not appear in Tibet either until much later for I have been unable to locate any citation of the eighteen-armed Mahottarakīla in the *bka' ma* material translated in the eighth century. Paradoxically, however, the Byang-gter Mahottarakīla texts (dealt with below, Part Three) exhibit primitive features that would seem to indicate their greater antiquity.

None of the known Kīla chronicles deals further with the aetiology or dissemination of the Kīla cult in India, a knowledge of which may perhaps be derived in the future from sources in Sanskrit. All Tibetan authors dealing with subsequent events turn their attention towards Tibet.

The invitation of Padmasambhava to Tibet during the reign of Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan is too well known to be elaborated here. There are just two points in this episode of specific interest to the present study. The first of these is that the leader of the messengers dispatched by the king to escort the *guru* from India was the king's uncle and life-long companion, sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms, whom the chroniclers call “preeminent among the practitioners of Vajrakīla”.⁴²² Revered as the founder of the Byang-gter tradition, he is said to have mastered the teachings under the guidance of Padmasambhava in the eighth century and subsequently revealed them to the world as ‘treasure’ in 1366 when reincarnated as Rig-'dzin rgod-ltem. This has been dealt with above, in Chapter One.

The second point upon which the Kīla chroniclers insist is that the rites employed by Padmasambhava for the subjugation of the local ‘gods and demons’ and the conversion of Tibet were specifically the rites of Vajrakīla. Buddhist tantric praxis, moreover, posits the identity of the *sādhaka* with the presiding deity of his chosen *sādhana* and thus whenever

421. Normally the “higher activities” are the meditations that lead to Buddhahood (the supreme *siddhi*) while the “demonic means for the complete eradication of all trouble-makers” are considered to be lower activities. The meaning of this entire paragraph is obscure. In a ritual of the *Yajurveda* we read *yātudhānebhyaḥ kaṅṭhakākāraṃ*, “to the *yātudhāna* demons (should be sacrificed) trouble-makers”. R. Mitra, “On Human Sacrifice in Ancient India”, 76–118. See also H. G. Tüchtig, “The Indian Sorcery Called Abhicāra”, 78–81, on *yātudhāna* rites.

422. E. Schmidt, *The Great Gate*, 26.

Padmasambhava ritually invoked the presence of Vajrakīla he was himself transfigured as 'the lord of the nails'.

Iconic scorpions and kīlas

The wealth of legends accruing to the (largely mythological) figure of Padmasambhava has led to his renown in Tibet as the *aṣṭanāmaguru* (*gu ru mtshan brgyad*) 'the teacher with eight names'. These eight names are taken from the hagiography of the *guru* and relate to the various episodes in his life and the ways in which he was regarded by different people at different times, mainly in India.⁴²³

Raised as the adopted crown prince of king Indrabhūti he was known first of all as the royal Padmarāja (Padma rgyal-po). Committing murder, he was banished to the wilderness where he underwent the *mahāvratā* penance of a *kāpālika* and became known as the *yogin* Sūryaraśmi (Nyi-ma 'od-zer).⁴²⁴ As a lay Buddhist scholar of great learning he is said to have been acclaimed as Mativat Vararuci (bLo-ldan mchog-sred) and, being ordained as a *bhikṣu*, was revered as an actual Buddha and celebrated as Śākyasiṃha (Shākya seng-ge). As a tantric priest he was renowned as the *ācārya* Padmasambhava (Padma 'byung-gnas) and glorified as Simhanāda (Seng-ge sgra-sgrog), the ferocious debater who defeated all heresy. During the bestowal of *abhiṣeka* he was honoured as the lord of the *maṇḍala*, the divine Saroruha Vajradhara (mTsho-skyes rdo-rje-'chang) and being invited to Tibet he became the wrathful rDo-rje gro-bo-lod, subjugator of Himalayan *genii loci*.

His Indian names are included in the *mantras* through which he is invoked in religious ceremonial⁴²⁵ and the episodes from his life are recounted in detail in his many biographies. The sole exclusively Himalayan form of the *guru*, then, is the one known as rDo-rje gro-lod, and this is the form in which he wields the ritual *kīla*. According to the religious traditions of Tibet he is said to have appeared in this guise specifically in order to "bind under oath all the high and low non-human spirits of the land and thus convert the whole country to the *Dharma*". Mounted upon a pregnant tigress capable of flight, Padma-

423. The miraculous birth, royal upbringing, renunciation of the palace, years of asceticism and study, etc., are all motifs through which hagiographers of Padmasambhava sought to identify him as "the second Buddha".

424. Hindu law codes teach a penance known as *mahāvratā* (great vow) involving voluntary exile to the forests or cremation grounds, etc., for a period of twelve years to be observed by the slayer of a brahmin. There the penitent must dress in animal skins and carry a skull bowl for food and a skull staff (*khatvāṅga*) as the emblems of his crime, entering villages only during the day for the purpose of begging alms. The tantric *kāpālikas* of a later period took up these practices, smearing their bodies with ashes and adorning themselves with bones. They devoted themselves to ritual sacrifice of a more or less scatological type and the worship of Śiva in his wrathful guise as Bhairava through which they sought to attain mundane *siddhis* and ultimate union with the deity. They also practised *yoga* involving the *nāḍīs* and *cakras*. D. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas*, 73-95. Similar practices were performed by itinerant Buddhist *yogins* known as *vajrakāpālikas* and the *Samputa-tantra* refers to the vow as either *vīracaryāvratā* (vow of heroic conduct) or *yauvarājāvratā* (the vow of a crown prince). Abhayākara Gupta, *Vajrāvalī*, 219.

425. Such as those found in the *Yang gsang rig 'dzin yongs rdzogs kyi bla ma gu ru mtshan brgyad bye brag du sgrub pa ye shes bdud rtsi'i sbrang char zhe bya ba*, a manuscript of which was brought to India from east Tibet by C. R. Lama in 1985.

sambhava is supposed to have visited thirteen separate locations throughout the Himalaya as rDo-rje gro-lod, each of which subsequently became known by the appellation ‘Tiger’s Nest’ (sTag-tshang).⁴²⁶

Tibetan icons depicting this form of the *guru* show him in the conventional robes of a Buddhist *bhikṣu* but with the long hair and bone ornaments of a *kāpālika yogin*.⁴²⁷ This image may well provide another clue to the non-Buddhist origin of many *kīla* doctrines as it seems to suggest that the precepts of the Buddha as upheld by the *bhikṣu saṅgha* became somehow overlaid with the cult of the *kīla*. Indeed, the demon upon whom the *guru* in this guise is seen to trample has the form of a Buddhist monk! The icon exists in several well-known variants and of particular interest to us here is the fact that the *hastacihna* held in Padmasambhava’s left hand may be either an iron scorpion or a *kīla*, indicative of an iconic equivalence. The *guru* himself is often depicted from the waist down in the form of a *kīla*⁴²⁸ and in the biography of Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal he is said to have manifested as rDo-rje gro-lod at the end of a session of ritual practices focussed on Vajrakīla. The passage in question is remarkable for the graphic account it contains of a Vajrakīla *abhiṣeka* in which, coincidentally, sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-’joms is also said to have participated.⁴²⁹ Two initiation rituals published in 1961 by Muses & Chang⁴³⁰ through which the empowerments of ‘the fierce *guru*’ are to be bestowed, point specifically to the identical nature of the *guru* and ‘the Buddha Vajrakumāra’. Both texts list a nine-headed iron scorpion among the symbols of the deity while the second text alone describes the lower part of the *guru*’s body in the form of a *kīla*, “the weapon that kills the evils, agonising and tormenting them”. In the *maṇḍala* of the deified rDo-rje gro-lod, iron scorpions stand guard in the four gateways and innumerable scorpions encircle the *maṇḍala* periphery, forming the protective enclosure typically associated with *kīlas*. All of this makes it clear that, iconographically, the scorpion and the *kīla* are readily interchangeable. Did this situation arise as a result of legends concerning the scorpion as a teacher of the Vajrakīla *tantra*? Or were the legends derived in order to explain an iconic convention of uncertain origin?⁴³¹

426. T. Thondup, *The Tantric Tradition of the Nyingmapa*, 144, in which he also states that *gter ma* were later recovered from several of these sites.

427. Pema Thaye, *Concise Tibetan Art Book*, fig. 26.

428. Gega Lama, *Principles of Tibetan Art*, 241.

429. K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 90. It is also interesting to note that the purpose of the ceremony was to be the subjugation of the “gods and demons” of the “barbarian borderlands and beyond” which brings us back to the *sīmābandha* rites noted above in Chapter Two as the single most important element in the evolutionary history of the *kīla*.

430. C. A. Muses, ed., *Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra*, translated by Chen Chi Chang, 3-47. On pp. 19-20 the scorpion is said to have nine heads, nine mouths, nine eyes and nine stings. “The right sting (pincer?) touches the top of the universe, the left one touches the bottom of the earth. The body flames with the fire of hell.” It is then said that all demons, obstacles and enemies of the past are hungrily devoured by the scorpion while those of the future will all be subdued through its power.

431. Perhaps a clue to this may be found in the belief that the bites and stings of serpents and scorpions have their origin in Rudra, for in Chapter Three (above) we have shown that the iconography of Vajrakīla derives from the form of Rudra. J. L. Shastri, ed., *Garuḍa-purāna*, II, XXXII, 121.

In the *kāyamaṇḍala* of the combined *aṣṭamahāsādhana*s, the deity to be contemplated within the secret (genital) centre (*guhyaçakra*) is Vajrakīla. Here, however, within the *kāyamaṇḍala* of the canonized Padmasambhava in his *kīla*-wielding form, the *guhyaçakra* is said to be the abode of Yakṣa Me-dbal in the form of a demonic blacksmith. This *yakṣa* has a wrathful, snarling face with all the usual attributes of a terrifying deity and in his two hands he holds a *vajra* hammer and a lasso of fire (*me yi shags*). In Tibet, blacksmiths are thought of with fear and awe. Their work is seen to be akin to magic and, naturally, they are the ones whose task it is to fashion the iron *kīlas*. The hammering of white hot metal on an anvil in the groin is a powerful meditative image and the sharp, non-dual spike that is forged in this secret place when hammer and fire are brought together is the impetuous and powerful nail that can pin down all demonic urges in a moment. Is it mere coincidence that the *kīla* once used to slay the coiled serpent Vṛtra is now found in just that place where the coiled serpent Kuṇḍalinī⁴³² resides? Even more curious is the fact that, in esoteric astrology, the dominion of the constellation Scorpio in the human body is the groin.

Scorpio, a fixed water sign, is associated in western mythology with the river Styx that separates the living from the dead (echoes of the *vetāla* at the threshold?) which is guarded by the three-headed Cerberus (highly suggestive of images associated with Śvanmukhā as well as with the two-headed dogs of Yama), ruled by Pluto (lord of the underworld, the special domain of *nāgas*) and with all that pertains to death and its mysteries. An accepted alternative image for the scorpion in astrological symbolism is the eagle and we note that from the navel of Vajrakīla shoots forth a mighty *garuḍa* eagle.⁴³³ Garuḍa is the sworn enemy of all serpents and serpents are regularly depicted entwined along the lower parts of ritual *kīlas*. It is also pertinent to note here the mention of a protective circle of eight *khadirakīlas* in the *Garuḍa-purāṇa*.⁴³⁴ Further investigation is clearly required in order to determine the debt owed by the Buddhist system of Vajrakīla to ancient Indian myths of the scorpion and Garuḍa (Paṅṣirāja).⁴³⁵ The Kīla doctrines having been compiled, however, they were then transmitted to Tibet.

The transmission to Tibet

Our chronicler 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms sums up the well-known amalgam of religious myth and history concerning this period by telling us that, while Padmasambhava himself was active in India and Nepal.

432. Kuṇḍalinī is thought of by Hindu *tāntrikas* as a coiled serpent that lies sleeping at the base of the spine. A. Avalon, *The Serpent Power*, 347, verses 10, 11.

433. The emanation of Garuḍa from Vajrakīla's navel is described in the deity's *sādhana* (e.g., A32, 226) but in Vajrakīla icons this fabulous bird is usually depicted as flying over his head. With the beat of his wings, Garuḍa is said to be capable of forcing the entire triple world to a standstill. V. Fausboll, *Indian Mythology*, 79.

434. J. L. Shastri, ed., *Garuḍa-purāṇa*, I, XX, 8–10.

435. Unfortunately it seems as if all the original *Gāruḍa-tantras* (the primary concern of which was the magical production of counteragents to poison and snakebite) as well as the *Bhūta-tantras* to which they were closely affiliated (primarily dealing with the exorcism of malevolent ghosts and spirits) have long since been lost to posterity. M. Dyczkowski, *The Canon of the Śaivāgama and the Kubjikā Tantras of the Western Kaula Tradition*, 41.

“An incarnation of the *ārya* Mañjuśrī had taken birth in Tibet in the person of the *dharmarāja* Khri Srong-lde’u-btsan who held in his mind the wish to establish there the doctrines of the Buddha. He therefore invited the *bodhisattva* abbot (Śāntarakṣita) from the land of Zahor and, having determined the site and drawn up plans for a temple, in the year of the female fire ox (AD 797) the foundation stones were laid and the walls were built up of wood and stones. All that was built up by the workers during the day, however, was destroyed during the night by the wild unruly gods and demons of Tibet. When the king asked the abbot just why that should be so, the abbot instructed the king to invite the *ācārya* Padmasambhava.”⁴³⁶

The king therefore “dispatched sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-’joms and his three companions to India, each endowed with a measure of gold pieces and a golden bowl.” These messengers met Padmasambhava in Vajrāsana where he is said to have been acting as preceptor to king Sūryasiṃha and they presented him with their invitation.

’Phrin-las bdud-’joms makes no mention of the journey from India to Tibet but all other chroniclers stress the *guru*’s role in subjugating a large number of local gods and demons *en route*, converting all of them to Buddhism and binding them under oath to protect the Buddhist *Dharma*.⁴³⁷ gTsang mkhan-chen, having given the details of several major battles with local demonic forces, winds up by saying that “in general, all of the harmful *’dre* and *srin* were subdued by means of Vajrakīla”.⁴³⁸

Upon his arrival in Tibet, Padmasambhava is said to have performed the earth rituals (*bhūmividhi*) for the temple of bSam-yas in accordance with the *tantra* of Vajrakīla so that all obstacles to its construction were dispelled. Thereafter, the assembled scholars of India and Tibet began their programme of translating the various *sūtras* and *śāstras* into Tibetan and, in particular, “special teachings were given by Padmasambhava in the retreat house at mChims-phu.”⁴³⁹

When he taught the *maṇḍalas* of the *aṣṭamahāsādhana*s, Padmasambhava granted empowerments to ‘the king and the twenty-four subjects’⁴⁴⁰, and we also learn that:

“The lady Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal, having cast her flower onto the deity Vajrakīla, was given all the individual teachings of the Vajrakīla *tantras*, *āgamas* and *upadeśas* and, having put them into practice, she beheld the *deva*’s face. She then had the ability to raise a human corpse to life again, the powers of mystic union (*sbyor ba*) and liberation (*sgrol ba*), the capacity to nourish the dead and care for their welfare and so on. She attained powers that reached to the limits of the extreme.”⁴⁴¹

436. B4, 187.

437. A long list of these subjugations is to be found in K. Dowman, *The Legend of the Great Stūpa*, 82–6.

438. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa’i chos ’byung*, 175.

439. B4, 188.

440. See K. Douglas & G. Bays, *The Life and Liberation*, 544–93, for list.

441. For the events of mTsho-rgyal’s life see K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*.

“Furthermore”, continues 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, “from the ruling king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, from the lady Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal, from sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms, from Shud-pu dpal-gyi seng-ge, mChims Śākyaprabhā, lCog-ro gza', 'Khon klu-dbang srung, and from Rong-ban yon-tan arose the various lineages of teachings known as ‘the king’s tradition’, ‘the tradition of the lady’, ‘the sNa-nam tradition’, ‘the Shud-pu tradition’, ‘the mChims tradition’, ‘the lCam tradition’, ‘the 'Khon tradition’ and ‘the Rong-zom tradition’. All of these are lineages of Vajrakīla teachings and each one of them has demonstrated its miraculous powers.”⁴⁴²

Our earliest record of the propagation of the Vajrakīla lineages (the Tun-huang manuscript) exhibits almost no obvious relationship to this account by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. The first in Tibet to be instructed in the Kīla doctrines are there said to be Ba-bor be-ro-ca (Ba-gor Vairocana),⁴⁴³ the Kashmirian Nya-na si-ga, Dre Tathāgata (could this be Dre rgyal-ba blo-gros, a minister of the king and one of the first Tibetans to receive ordination as a Buddhist monk?⁴⁴⁴), 'Bu-na a-nas, mChims Śākyaprabhā (as above), rDo-rje gnyan (a place name?), sNa-nam (presumably our sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms), Byin ye-shes-brtsegs, gNyan rNyi-ma btsan-ba-dpal, lDe-sman rgyal-mtshan and the abbot (*upādhyāya*) 'Bum-tang-kyis.

Later commentators, however, agree more closely with 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms' list. 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, for example, repeats it almost verbatim with the curious exception that, in his view, the sNa-nam tradition and the Rong tradition are identical.⁴⁴⁵ gTsang mkhan-chen simply asserts that the chief lineages founded at that time were those of the King, Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal, sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms and his messenger companions. He also asserts that an entirely separate lineage of Vajrakīla doctrines was introduced to Tibet by Vimalamitra.⁴⁴⁶ All chroniclers make much of the miracle powers said to have been demonstrated thereafter by the recipients of these Kīla doctrines. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms continues:

“The *dākinī* Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal, for example, thrust her *kīla* into a raging forest fire that had gone out of control at mChims-phu and put a stop to it. Immediately after that a new forest grew up even bigger than the one before it. On another occasion she made the *tarjanīmudrā* with her *kīla* towards crows that were flying high overhead and they fell down upon the ground. As for sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms, he quelled a raging fire at Has-po-ri with his *kīla* and showed miraculous *kīlas* in the sky. Shud-pu dpal-gyi seng-ge thrust his *kīla* into the green faced mountain of 'On and buried it in the rock as if he had sunk it into mud and mChims Śākyaprabhā, with the

442. B4, 188.

443. Vairocana is also held to have learned the doctrines of Vajrakīla in India from Śrīsimha. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 25.

444. K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer*, 283.

445. NSTB, I, 710, 712.

446. gTsang mkhan-chen, *rDo rje phur pa'i chos 'byung*, 176, 189.

recitation of only a few *kīlamantras*, caused the heart of a ferocious blue wolf to become separated from its skin and ejected from its body.”⁴⁴⁷

Later lineages of practice

“From among those lineages of practice listed above, the Kīla tradition of the lady was given by the *ḍākinī* Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal to Ngam-'dre, otherwise known as *ācārya* gSal-le. He lived for a thousand years before going to the sky realm of Khecara. From him the tradition passed to the great *kīlavidyādhara* Lang-lab byang-chub rdo-rje. While Lang-lab was still a youth his uncle and other relatives rose up against him as enemies and he asked Ngam-'dre to present a petition on his behalf to the local ruler. Seeing this as an opportunity for great compassion, Ngam-'dre gave him the doctrines of Vajrakīla. As a result of having put them into practice Lang-lab saw the face of the *deva* and put a stop to all his enemies. Although he became widely renowned as a man of great power, he never abandoned poverty.

At one time while Lang-lab was working as a shepherd, Rva lo-tsā-ba rDo-rje grags-pa together with a large retinue of his followers came to the place where Lang-lab sat with his disciples. Now, Rva lo-tsā-ba was very famous on account of his great powers and wherever he went all the important people of Tibet felt that they had to offer him their salutations and respect for they feared that those who failed to show him reverence would be killed by his *samādhi* of Yamāntaka. If it is asked, What kind of things were said about him?, it was said that he had killed thirteen *bodhisattvas* who were established on the *bhūmis*, including the venerable Marpa's son Dar-ma mdo-sde, as well as translators who were related to him and others who were their equals. Even so, Lang-lab did not bow down in reverence before Rva lo-tsā-ba. Upon seeing this the people all thought, 'Is this a really stupid man, or what?' And then the people began to wonder whether he was also a man of (occult) power due to his knowledge of Vajrakīla. 'Perhaps he is the most powerful man of all! And yet, although he knows the doctrines of Vajrakīla, he has no wealth and is forced to act as the guardian of others' sheep.' So they discussed the matter among themselves.

As for Rva lo-tsā-ba, he thought to himself, 'Ah ha! Well if this fellow is so swollen up inside with pride that he fails to prostrate himself to me then just wait! He will not live beyond this evening!' And that evening Rva lo-tsā-ba sat absorbed in meditation on Vajrabhairava and, summoning Lang-lab in his imagination, he performed the rituals for the fourfold *yoga* of slaying while the venerable Lang-lab stayed taking care of sheep in the fields. In the place where Rva lo-tsā-ba sat performing his invocations, at first there fell down from the sky like rain all the *kīlas* of thorny wood from the outer edges of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* so that his disciples all fled in terror.

447. B4, 188–9.

Secondly, the forty *herukas* consisting of the devourers, slayers and the *daśakrodhakīlas* all rained down as iron spikes causing his disciples to huddle together in panic. Thirdly, the sky became filled with a mass of fire and the sound of roaring and above the head of Rva lo-tsā-ba appeared the ‘accomplishment of activity’ (*karmasiddhi*) manifestation of Vajrakumāra made of meteoric iron. The upper part of his body was in the form of a wrathful deity and the lower part terminated in a sharp spike which rested on the crown of Rva lo-tsā-ba’s head. Terrified out of his mind, Rva lo-tsā-ba prayed for forgiveness and prostrated himself on the ground with ever increasing faith. When he promised to behave himself, the miraculous apparition disappeared and the next day he sent an invitation to Lang-lab and offered him enormous veneration and praise.⁴⁴⁸ Due to that the people have a saying: ‘He who knows Yamāntaka must bow down before Vajrakīla.’ And this has become a well known expression.

Thus it was that the *ācārya* Lang-lab byang-chub rdo-rje gained his four most important disciples, chief among whom was the man from Mon-dgu known as sKyi-nag gyang-’gyel, ‘The One Who Caused the Wall of sKyi-nag to Tumble’.⁴⁴⁹ Because the people of his district had robbed him of his wealth, livestock, dwellings and lands, that man of Mon-dgu went to Lang-lab and requested the teachings of Vajrakīla. Having accepted him as a disciple, Lang-lab bestowed upon him the empowerments and taught him the *tantras* and *upadeśas*, and instructed him to invoke the deity for nine months. ‘After that you must practise the *sādhana* of the protectors of Rosewood, Iron and Conch (Crystal) for a further two months’ he told him and gave him the necessary instructions.⁴⁵⁰ Due to practising in that way, the disciple experienced a measure of success (‘gained the stage of heat’) and then he went away. While he was walking along a steep narrow path one day, he came across a number of people who were strolling nearby, warming themselves in the sunshine. Suddenly, without exception, they all turned upon him in hostility. Taking a *kīla* from his breast pocket, he threw it down upon the rock which exploded into fragments like house bricks, killing all those who had risen up against him. Because of this feat, that disciple subsequently become known as ‘The One Who Caused the Wall of sKyi-nag to Tumble’ and the succession of lineage holders through which his tradition of Kīla teachings have been transmitted remains famous to this day.

448. B4, 189–91. Despite this apparent conversion, however, gZhon-nu dpal says that Rwa lo-tsā-ba eventually murdered his hated enemy Lang-lab byang-chub rdo-rje. G. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 156.

449. The other three are identified by ’Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje as sNa-nam shes-rab tshul-khrims, sKrang phur-bu-mgo of Rong and Nyang-nag of ’U-yug rol-po. NSTB, I, 714.

450. Our text B28, etc. The protectors of Rosewood, Iron and Conch include three groups of four brothers that accompany the twelve “sisters” (Śvanmukhā and the rest) introduced above. See below, Chapter Nine.

Now, with regard to the 'Khon tradition: This passed from 'Khon klu-dbang srung-ba to his younger brother rDo-rje rin-chen and then it continued to be passed down within the family which produced an unbroken succession of fully accomplished practitioners for eight generations. This lineage continues up until today and it is now known as Sa-phur or Sa-lugs (the Sa-skyapa Kīla or the Sa-skyapa lineage).

The lCam tradition originated within the family of the lCogs-ro queen (one of the consorts of king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan). Within this family was born a princess of fierce *mantras* known as 'The One With the Dark Red Face' and from her the lineage was passed on to lHa-rje gñub-chung. This lCam tradition is also said to be the cycle of teachings that gave the venerable Mi-la ras-pa his magical power. It is impossible to relate the whole story because, apart from the ones already mentioned, there are records and accounts of an inconceivable number of *vidyādhara*s from the three countries of India, Nepal and Tibet who have gained *siddhis* through practising the *sādhana* of this god of gods."⁴⁵¹

With this remark 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms lightly dismisses a problematic area of Vajrakīla historiography. Tibetan chroniclers are unanimous in declaring the Vajrakīla doctrines to have been widespread in both India and Nepal but, unfortunately, the proclaimed 'records and accounts' of the early practitioners are meagre. Having thus outlined the various lineages of Vajrakīla teachings in the *bka' ma* tradition, 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms goes on to explain how these doctrines became integrated into the lines of gter *ma*. He illustrates his chronicle with numerous citations of 'prophecy' from Byang-gter canonical works in order to show the supreme importance of the Northern Treasures as an authentic source of Vajrakīla empowerment. In one of the texts that he quotes (our document A33), king Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan interrogates Padmasambhava concerning the *kīla* made of iron that he perpetually kept about his person. Padmasambhava replied:

"Listen to me well, your royal majesty. This is a very important matter and if I were to explain it to you at length it would be beyond all comprehension. I will therefore say that, in a nutshell, its purpose is simply to quell all disturbances. Although I myself have no fear of the four *māras*, in order to bring my disciples up to final liberation in the *Buddhakṣetra* it is necessary to display the skilful methods of overcoming all hindrances as they arise. If the teachings of these skilful methods are not made available to the *yogins* of the future who wish to engage in the practice of secret *mantras* and to the royal patrons such as yourself who protect the *Dharma*, they will be overpowered by the obstructions of Māra. Therefore you must

451. B4, 191–3. The transmission of the doctrines in the human realm is known as *Gang zag snyan khung brgyud tsul*, "the ear-whispered tradition of mundane individuals".

earnestly apply yourself to these doctrines for the sake of your children and future generations.”⁴⁵²

Again the king asked him:

“Oh, *mahācārya*! In accordance with what you have said about the great importance to all beings of practising the path of Vajrakīla, I pray that you will grant the blessings of the *Vajrakīla-tantra* and full cycle of teachings for the benefit of people of the future.”

Padmasambhava replied:

“Just as you have requested, oh king. I, Padmasambhava, having collected together many weapons in the form of *kīlas* have blessed them all through *sādhana* practice and hidden them as treasures for the future in a multitude of different places. In particular, in the country of Tibet I have had one hundred and eight iron *kīlas* prepared by Tibetan blacksmiths, another one hundred and eight iron *kīlas* crafted by the most excellent blacksmiths of Nepal, one hundred meditation *kīlas* of acacia wood made by outcaste artisans amidst the terrible screams in the charnel grounds and one hundred *kīlas* of black rosewood fashioned by Chinese craftsmen. Then, having absorbed myself in meditation at bSam-yas mchims-phu, the blue hermitage at Lho-brag, the tiger’s nest at sPa-gro, the lion’s fortress at ’Bum-thang, the crystal cave at Yar-lung, the great fortress of sGrags and at the white rock in gLo-bo, I blessed all of those places and hid important treasures within them. In particular I concealed three hundred consecrated *kīlas* in the most important places: bSam-yas mchims-phu, the white rock mountain at mKhar-chen and at Zam-bu-lung in Shangs. Each one of those *kīlas* is destined to be of benefit to future generations of your royal family and to all those people who are holders of the doctrines of secret *mantra*”. Thus he spoke.⁴⁵³

The *guru* then added:

“During the final five hundred year period of the Buddha’s doctrines, future members of your royal line will be born in upper Mang-yul in the district of Gung-thang for whom many demonic obstructions will arise and, as a direct result of your dynasty being cut, a time of great trouble will come upon the people of Tibet. Therefore, in order to save that situation and rescue people from those troubles, there is a special treasure for the protection of the kings of Gung-thang. This has been hidden inside a mountain of rock that looks like a heap of poisonous snakes which is situated in the land of the black stone cairn to the north. Contained within this treasure there is a *kīla* the

452. A33, 232–3. At this point the original text discusses in detail the “absolute” and “relative” natures of the *kīla* (233–6) along lines similar to those followed in our previous chapter. Omitted in B4.

453. B4, 194–5. At this point in A33, the king, disturbed to hear of his family’s future decline, requests knowledge of that period when the *kīla* would be required and wishes to know how the *kīla* will help. A33, 238.

length of my handspan, forged of iron by the most skilful of Nepalese blacksmiths. It has been consecrated as a *karmakīla* and so, merely by brandishing it in the air, all the mischief of enemies and obstructors will immediately be averted. The name of that *kīla* is *Tribhuvanamāravīnaya, ‘The Controller of Demons in the Three Worlds’, and its activity is such as to quell all demonic interferences. There is also a *kīla* which has the blessings of Krodhamañjuśrī (Yamāntaka) which was carved by Chinese experts from black rosewood. It is eight of my finger-widths in length and is for use in meditation. The name of this *kīla* is *Jvalanuttara, ‘Supreme Radiance’, and whoever continues to hold it will very quickly see the face of the deity Vajrakumāra. There is yet another *kīla* in that treasure which was made by an Indian expert from five different kinds of iron. The length of it is five of my finger-widths and it goes by the name of *Putragaṇasūrya, ‘The Sun(shine) of a Multitude of Sons’. Its activity is such that the family lineage of its owner will run for many generations.” So spoke the *guru*.⁴⁵⁴

According to the *Gong khug ma* (A27, etc.), three master craftsmen from the border regions, working together in ‘Bum-thang (Bhutan), fashioned three boxes of black leather and four of maroon within which were placed eight sets of twenty-one *kīlas* made from seven kinds of iron. Later, having spent three months practising the *sādhana* of Vajrakīla in Seng-ge-rdzong, Padmasambhava is said to have included those boxes of *kīlas* among the treasures secreted for the welfare of future generations in seven different places: the ‘places of virtue⁴⁵⁵ and auspiciousness’ in ‘Bum-thang, the lion’s fortress of Bhutan (Mon-kha Seng-ge-rdzong), the ‘place of the iron *kīla*’ in Lho-brag, the tiger’s nest of sPa-gro, the white rock of mKhar-chen and Zang-zang lha-brag. In all, seventy-eight Vajrakīla *tantras*, twenty-three *sādhanas* and three hundred and twenty-one *upadeśas* were hidden in those places together with eight *niṣevanakīlas*, ten *kīlas* for the attainments and one hundred *kīlas* for striking. Having been sorted out into various groups they were hidden away in their separate locations.⁴⁵⁶

As for the particular treasure hidden away in Zang-zang lha-brag, this was stored in one of the maroon leather boxes secreted deep within a rock cavern of triangular shape like a wrathful *homakūṇḍa* on the eastern face of the mountain. It contained everything that a future king would need in general and, in particular, it contained the instructions known as *Gong khug ma*.⁴⁵⁷ “Of equal importance”, said Padmasambhava, “are the *niṣevanakīlas*,

454. B4, 195–6. I suppose the three *kīlas* mentioned here to be those found wrapped in maroon silk in the central compartment of the Byang-gter treasure chest. B4 hereafter cites no more of A33 which continues stressing the immense value of the Byang-gter to the royal lineage of Tibet.

455. “The Precious Place of Virtue” (Rin-chen dge-gnas) in Bum-thang is a temple in the village of Zung-nge in the Chu-smad valley. Regarding this and the other Bhutanese locations see M. Aris, *Bhutan*, 7 and *passim*.

456. B4, 196–7.

457. See notes 78 & 331.

*sādhana*kīlas and the *karma*kīlas that I myself concealed within that treasure after having gained in full the signs of *siddhi* through my practice in the lion's fortress."⁴⁵⁸

The Byang-gter cache is also said to have contained "the *niṣevanakīla* made of acacia wood that was used by the lady Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal in the rock cavern of Chu-bo-ri when she killed the seven demons of the extremities as they flew overhead in their magical transformations as crows." Also, "the *niṣevanakīla* made from the thorny wood of king Ge-sar's land of Khrom that had been used by rDo-rje bdud-'joms in putting a stop to the raging fire on the mountain at Has-po-ri". Of particularly great importance, however, are said to be "the *upadeśas* for the protection of the king and subjects of Tibet during the future age of degeneration and strife".⁴⁵⁹

"As for the one who would be born in accordance with the predictions, having the empowerments and authorization to take out the heart of this treasure of Lha-brag, it was written in the prophetic treasure of Myang-ral: 'Nearby the black rocks to the north of this place, the blessed incarnation of the wonderful deeds of rDo-rje bdud-'joms will arise to protect the kings of mNga'-ris.' And also in the *Svayambhūsvodaya-tantra*: 'The noble being, the *tāntrika* rDo-rje bdud-'joms, having fully taken to heart the three *abhiṣekas*, the three *tantras* and the three *upadeśas* will conceal them as treasure in front of the mountain called bKra-bzang which is to the north of the direction in which the sun sets from here. There they will rest upon a rock in the shape of a tortoise for a period of seven hundred years from now. Then, six hundred and twenty years after my departure from Tibet, there will come a *yogin* of good *karma* by the name of Rig-'dzin rgod-kyi ldem-'phru-can who will be like my own heart's son. He has been fully entrusted with the profound empowerments of that treasure and he will engage it before he reaches twice twenty years of age.'"⁴⁶⁰

All of that, however, has been dealt with above in Chapter One. Having been born in fulfillment of these 'prophecies', then, the *gter ston* Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem unearthed the casket of Byang-gter treasures within which the texts concerning Vajrakīla were found principally in the compartments made of gold and iron, and, "having taken out the material *kīlas*, he blessed them as deities".⁴⁶¹

Our commentator then proceeds to narrate the way in which these sacred treasures came to be transmitted to the present day. In brief: the son of the *gter ston* was rNam-rgyal mgon-po and the writings on the scrolls of yellow paper that had been entrusted to him by his father were subsequently transmitted to the *mantradhara* rDo-rje mgon-po. From him they were passed on to Nga-dbang grags-pa and then to the incarnation of the *gter ston*'s son, Sangs-rgyas dpal-bzang, from whom they went to the great teacher of Se, Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan. Thence to the Grang-so *gter ston* Śākya bzang-po from whom they were transmitted to bDud-'joms' own incarnation Legs-ldan bdud-'joms rdo-rje. Next in

458. B4, 197. The entire text of A27 is included at B4, 196–7.

459. B4, 197–8.

460. B4, 198.

461. B4, 200.

line were 'the incarnation of the *Dharma* king Khri-sde', bKra-shis stobs-rgyal dbang-po'i sde, and Legs-ldan-rje's further incarnation, Rig-'dzin ngag gi dbang-po. Then came the incarnation of Gung-btsan called Rig-'dzin stobs-ldan dpa'-bo followed by Zur-chen chos-dbyings rang-grol who was himself recognized as the incarnation of gNyags Jñānakumāra. He then transmitted the lineage to 'the omniscient lord of all Tibet', the fifth Dalai Lama, rDo-rje thog-med-rtsal whose own disciple, Rig-'dzin padma 'phrin-las, was considered to be the reincarnation of the original vulture-feathered *gter ston*. From him the line was passed to 'the most excellent incarnation of Khams', Rig-'dzin padma gsang-sngags, the teacher from gNyags.⁴⁶²

The doctrines of Vajrakīla that were transmitted along this line, said originally to have come from India in the eighth century and to have been revealed as the Northern Treasures in 1366, are now to be looked at in Part Three.

462. B4, 200-1.

PART THREE

THE NORTHERN TREASURES KĪLA



Chapter Five

The Byang-gter Vajrakīla Tantras

When Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem opened the casket of Northern Treasures he found within it only two small *tantras* relating to Vajrakīla.⁴⁶³ From the golden southern chamber of the casket he took out the *Cittaguhyakāya-tantra* in ten chapters (A3, B10, C1), which opens with a description of Māra Kālarudra. This evil being is said to have arisen in the world during the period of darkness between the appearances of the Buddhas Dīpaṅkara and Śākyamuni and to have become lord and master over all creatures. Because his reign was causing havoc throughout the three realms of living beings, the compassionate minds of all the Buddhas were moved to act due to the force of their former vows. From the heart of the supreme Buddha Samantabhadra in non-dual union with his consort arose the Buddha Vajrasattva and his spouse. While the heart of this non-dual Vajrasattva couple remained at peace within the *dharmadhātu*, their form arose as Mahāśrīvajraheruka and his consort Krotheśvarī and from their union was born a son, Vajrarākṣasa, emanation of the heroic power of Vajrakumāra.

At that time, the Māra Kālarudra and his entire retinue of male and female *rākṣasas*, *māras* and arrogant ones were all destroyed. Their flesh was eaten, their blood was drunk and their bodies reduced to dust.⁴⁶⁴ Their consciousnesses were bound under oath and they were established as protectors of the *Dharma*.⁴⁶⁵

Then (Chapter Two), on the summit of Mount Meru which was the place of subjugation, the uncompromising intention (*drag po 'i dgongs pa*) of all those Buddhas brought forth a son from the heart of Vajraheruka called Caṇḍavajrapāṇi⁴⁶⁶ who was praised as the Buddhas' representative and entrusted with the secret doctrines. From the mouth of the mother Tṛptacakra was emanated Krodhakālī⁴⁶⁷ and she was consecrated as his consort.

463. He is also supposed to have discovered the twenty-first chapter of the *Kīla Garland of Flames Tantra* (A31, C13) which is discussed below, Chapter Eleven.

464. This is the basis of the fierce rites of slaying which seek to re-enact that primal deed. It is also remembered during the celebration of the community feasts which are dealt with below, Chapter Twelve.

465. A3, 20–1.

466. The rNying-ma-pa regard this deity as a previous incarnation of Padmasambhava. The Byang-gter school in particular devotes an entire cycle of teachings to the *guru* in this form (*Thugs sgrub drag po rtsal*).

467. Another name for the well-known Vajravārāhī.

From the mother's nose issued forth the consciousness of Māra Kālarudra and he was bound as a guardian of the teachings and blessed with the name Mahākāla.

Thus the scene is set and the lineage of the Vajrakīla doctrines established. The son Vajrapāṇi now begins to question his father the *mahāśrīheruka* Vajrakumāra with regard to those doctrines.

The first instruction he receives is to carry the knowledge of the destruction of Rudra into the world after the coming teacher Śākyamuni has passed into *parinirvāṇa*. He is told to set up a series of eight teachings and to manifest eight teachers⁴⁶⁸ who will master those doctrines and practise them in the eight sacred places.⁴⁶⁹ These eight supreme and eight secondary emanations are to be produced from Vajrapāṇi's Body, Speech, Mind, Good Qualities, Enlightened Activities, Ferocity (*raudra*), Manifestation (*nirmita*) and supreme Awareness (*vidyā*). The appearance of these manifestations in the world of Jambudvīpa is said to be Vajrapāṇi's method of converting all beings to the doctrine of the secret Mantrayāna. His form as the ferocious Caṇḍavajrapāṇi, totally free of all fear and apprehension, is the emanation of the heart of Vajrakumāra which subdues all that is to be subdued in the body. All that is to be subdued in the speech is to be controlled by the *samādhi* of fierce HŪM⁴⁷⁰ and by the repetition of HŪM, which is the miraculous power of the Speech of all *Tathāgatas* without exception. All that is to be subdued within the mind is tamed by the innermost essence of the Mind of Samantabhadra, which is shown to be naturally arising and spontaneously present (*svayambhūsvodaya*).

For those who delight in emanation, the root *maṇḍala* of *heruka* is shown. For those who possess mind and intelligence (*blo dang mig ldan*), the *mahottara* Vajrakumāra is shown. For those who delight in extreme brevity, the heart practice of the supreme son⁴⁷¹ is shown. For the holders of the awareness of fierce *mantras*, thirteen *upadeśas* of attainment are shown. For those who delight in the practice of *nāḍīs* and *prāṇa* within the body, the method of Krodhakālī is taught and in order to protect the teachings the invocation of Mahākāla is shown.⁴⁷²

These six topics then form the subject matter of the next five chapters of the *tantra*.⁴⁷³ First of all Vajrapāṇi asks for an explanation of the method through which one generates the *herukamaṇḍala* and Chapter Three is entirely devoted to answering this question.

468. The *aṣṭamahāsādhanas* and the eight *ācāryas* who are said to have been the original disseminators of those doctrines are discussed above, Chapter Four.

469. The charnel grounds that arose in the eight directions marking the sites where Rudra's scattered body fell.

470. According to STTS, VI, HŪM is the "vajra syllable" of Vajrapāṇi by means of which Rudra himself was first subjugated.

471. This is a vague honourific title which, in the present instance, refers to Caṇḍavajrapāṇi, the son of Vajrasattva. Elsewhere the term is generally used to denote either Vajrakīla himself (as the supreme son of *heruka*) or his own supreme sons who may be either the four known as Buddhakīla, Ratnakīla, Padmakīla and Karmakīla (Viśvakīla) or the twenty-one known as the seven supreme sons of the Body, seven of Speech and seven of Mind. We have also met with the term used to denote the three deities Amṛtakuṇḍalin, Hayagrīva and either Yamāntaka or Mahābala.

472. A3, 21–3.

473. Exactly what is meant by "the thirteen *upadeśas* of attainment" is unknown.

The *yogin* is instructed to retreat to an isolated forest grove in the mountains. There he should make offerings to the peaceful local spirits (*bhūmipati*) and generate the Great Kings (*caturmahārāja*) in the four directions around his chosen site. He should then draw the *maṇḍala*, square and with four doors, by carefully laying down the lines and colours.⁴⁷⁴ A sanctified *kīla* (*tshangs pa'i phur bu*) is placed in the centre as the abode of the *devatā*, with a retinue of twenty-one triangles around it, and then all the lesser gods are established in their proper places.

The *yogin* then sets out the essential offerings of nectar, blood and sacrificial cake (*sman rak gtor gsum*) and, with his face turned towards the north, he should gradually absorb his mind into the *samādhi* of the rite, performing the activities in a state of non-agitation.

Four times per day the *yogin* should make offerings and recite the deity's *mantra*.⁴⁷⁵ He should visualize himself in the form of the six-armed Vajrakīla, just as has been described above, and recite the *mantra* until this form is stable and clear. He should then recite it while meditating upon the sphere of the deity's mind, after which he should abide in the state beyond conception. In that way, during the cycle of day and night, he performs the recitations in proper succession until six thousand million recitations have been completed. When success in the practice has been achieved the *yogin* will directly perceive the face of the deity, the ritual *kīlas* in the *maṇḍala* will jump up and dance around, and the offerings of blood and semen will come to the boil.⁴⁷⁶

474. A general explanation of these techniques is to be found in my *Maṇḍala Meaning and Method*.

475. Our text C32 explains the intention of this Vajrakīla *mantra* in terms of the enlightened perception of *dharmatā*. Thus OM is said to be the supreme of all foundations or primary causes (*gzhi rtsa*), the instigator of all *Tathāgatas*. It is the syllable that manifests all *Jinas*. It stands for the underlying reality (*dharmatā*) of *nirvāṇa* beyond suffering and the mind of enlightenment itself. By VAJRA is indicated the *mudrā* that seals the body, speech and mind of the countless sentient beings that arise from within the sphere which is not limited by either depth or circumference. Those beings are recognized as not abiding anywhere and this is the truth of the *nirvāṇa* of the enlightened mind. As the *yogin* recites KĪLIKĪLA, all beings are "liberated" by means of the rays of light that emanate from his body, speech and mind and yet they are not cut off within the truth of the *nirvāṇa* of enlightenment. YA indicates the great passion of the enlightened mind of *dharmatā* and the compassion that remains until both heaven and hell are emptied. In this way all beings are established in the non-abiding *dharmatā* of the enlightened mind. SARVA indicates the vast number of forms of living beings that arise from the sphere of the Mother on account of *bodhicitta*. They are known as non-abiding by the wisdom of the utterly pure enlightened mind. By means of the *bodhicitta* arising from the mouth of the Father, the enlightened mind manifests limitless skilful means as a cause for all births and this is signified by the word VIGHNĀN. In that way, by BAṂ, the enlightened mind of *dharmatā* beyond all sorrow is the non-dual union of wisdom and means. HŪM is the enlightened mind of *dharmatā* beyond all suffering, the pure offspring of the five *kulas*, the spontaneously accomplished five *kāyas* that reach to the limit of the absolute. By PHAṬ, the spontaneously accomplished perfect activities that are achieved entirely without effort are the enlightened mind of the ultimate truth of *nirvāṇa*. The single-pointed *kīla* of such understanding is known as the *svabhāva* vehicle of the past and future. C32, 341, said to have been taken out as a treasure from the black iron cache in the north.

476. A3, 23–6.

In Chapter Four, Vajrapāṇi is taught the method of meditating upon Mahottarakīla, which is a practice to be engaged in by those who have gained the signs of success in the six-armed Vajrakīla outlined above.

Going to a terrifying spot where both sky and earth have ferocious forms, the *yogin* draws the complete *maṇḍala* adorned with courtyards, doors, gateways and so on, in the centre of which is the triangular abode of the deity with a half-moon at each of its three corners. He should close the boundaries to obstructing forces⁴⁷⁷ and implant the deity's *niṣevanakīla* in the centre, surrounded by the three *kīlas* of Body, Speech and Mind. The *kīla* of Body is to be implanted on the half-moon in the east, with those of the Speech and Mind on the moons to the south and north respectively. In the courtyards are placed twelve *kīlas* for the three red and black groups⁴⁷⁸ and the four *kīlas* of the activities are arranged in the four doorways. The threefold offerings of nectar, blood and cake are set out together with the other fierce offerings⁴⁷⁹ and in the inner courtyard of the *maṇḍala* are placed four kinds of milk, black blood and melted butter.

When all is ready, in an instant of thought the *yogin* transforms himself into the supreme form of the deity with nine heads, eighteen hands and eight legs that trample the arrogant worldly gods. At his head, throat and heart he should imagine *jñānasattvas* like himself in form but white, red and blue respectively in colour. All should be seen as a unified appearance of clarity and emptiness (*bhāsvaśūnyasambheda*). Around him are the three supreme sons: the white Mahābala in the east, red Hayagrīva in the south and dark green Amṛtakunḍalin in the north. The red and black *mātr̥s* in the courtyard are thought of as messengers that listen attentively to one's orders and immediately carry them out. Four

477. A36 (A48) describes three stages of *sīmābandha*. In the first ("outer") stage, with himself clearly visualized as the deity Vajrakīla, the *yogin* summons all the obstructors and misleaders and warns them to depart. He then recites the well-known *mantra* of four HŪMs which is said to have great magical power, effective in all rites (SDPT, 76, 91–2). The "inner" boundary is closed by the *daśakrodha* kings who emanate from the heart of the *yogin* and immediately proceed to annihilate the ten non-virtues, thus closing the border to all impurities. The "secret" boundary consists of an awning of *kīlas* above, from which rain down *kīla* missiles, descending like thunderbolts, and a foundation of *kīlas* below, from which *kīlas* dart out, rising and falling like flames in a blazing fire. All around stands a latticework of *kīlas* from which more *kīlas* spark out like shooting stars. In this way the entire site is protected by an impassable barrier of violently active nails. The area, furthermore, is patrolled by an army of ferocious deities who kill all enemies and obstructors with a variety of weapons. A36, 254–5.

478. The term *dmar nag sde gsum* occurs frequently in the Byang-gter Kīla literature as a referent for the male (black) and female (red) protectors. In the present case, however, it clearly refers to the twelve females, Śvanmukhā and the rest. Precedents are to be found in Indian literature where *kṛṣṇarakta* is taken to mean "delighting in darkness" and to refer to those who roam abroad at night (*rātrau caramāṇāḥ*). Such a term (which could also be taken to mean "delighting in evil") is entirely appropriate to this class of subjugated protectors but the play on word-meanings is not carried over in the literal Tibetan translation. Alexis Sanderson, "Evidence of the Textual Dependence of the Buddhist Yogānuttaratantras on the Tantric Śaiva Canon", 24.

479. All the regular "peaceful" tantric offerings have their "wrathful" equivalents. Thus: *arghya* and *pādya* are bowls of blood, *puspa* is a flower-like arrangement of sense-organs, *dhūpa* is the stench of smouldering flesh, *dīpa* is a lamp with wick of human hair fed by human fat, *gandha* is bile, *naivedya* is a plate of human meat and *śabda* is provided by thigh-bone trumpets and skull drums.

wrathful goddesses stand as guardians in the gates. With the divine pride of himself as the deity, the *yogin* recites the various *mantras* of accomplishment while he sees himself standing between the sun and moon, encircling Mount Meru with his arms and trampling the great trichiliocosm (*trisāhasra-mahāsāhasralokadhātu*) beneath his feet. In a single gulp he drains the great ocean of existence.

The signs of success are that the *yogin* truly sees the *maṇḍala* deities and that they carry out his orders, either in reality, in visions or in dream. After that, by the recitation of the activity *mantra*, he will have the ability to summon people⁴⁸⁰ and wild animals from afar to act as his servants and the sacramental articles become empowered. His *kīla* will then truly slay demons as it is stabbed into an effigy made of parched barley flour.

When practising the rite in order to gain the supreme *siddhi* of Buddhahood, the *yogin* performs these activities in the guise of the deity himself.⁴⁸¹ If, however, he simply desires to perform the fierce activities in an ordinary way, he should incite the three classes of red and black protectors to act.⁴⁸²

Chapter Five explains the practice of Caṇḍavajrapāṇi, ‘the supreme heart son’ (*thugs sras mchog*), for which the external supports of a *maṇḍala* and ritual articles are not required. The *yogin*, remaining established in the unwavering bliss of spontaneous *samādhi*, is instructed to transform himself into the deity in a single instant of mindful awareness. The form of the deity is described in some detail in the text and it is said that his mind abides in a fearless equanimity of naturally arising ferocity. When his awareness moves from that state, then, like a thunderbolt falling from the centre of the sky, the *yogin* should build up a wall of sound by reciting the ferocious syllable HŪM.

A single HŪM is explained as the intentionality of *dharmatā*, two are said to include skilful means, three are the heart sound of the *trikāya*,⁴⁸³ four are the four immeasurables for the benefit of living beings, five symbolize the five *jñānas*, six possess the six letters,⁴⁸⁴ seven are speech with the melodies of Brahmā,⁴⁸⁵ eight are the harmonious sounds of the wrathful ones,⁴⁸⁶ nine bring the *tribhava* under control⁴⁸⁷ and ten grind to dust those who mislead the world.⁴⁸⁸

These HŪMs are to be imagined springing forth from the *yogin*’s body of divine pride like sparks from a fire, pervading the entire *bhājanaloka* so that all appearance is purified. The *yogin* should contemplate with clarity all phenomena as HŪM,⁴⁸⁹ bright like the stars and planets in the sky. One thousand million world systems reverberate with the sound of

480. Specifically, women (*bud med*) are mentioned.

481. Curiously, the deity named in the text is Caṇḍavajrapāṇi.

482. A3, 26–9.

483. Text B. A says they are the sound of Body, Speech and Mind.

484. The six syllables (*śaḍakṣara*) are OM MANI PADME HŪM.

485. Seven kinds of harmonical pitch or musical tones (*glu dbyangs kyi nges pa bdun*) are listed in the *Mahāvīyutpatti*.

486. The eight great deities of *Mahāyogatantra*.

487. Presumably the three realms are controlled throughout the three times in order to bring the total to nine?

488. The *daśadikpālas*.

489. Text B says that all appearances arise as the luminous clarity of the mind.

HŪM like the thundering roar of a turquoise dragon and he should abide in the sphere of awareness which is the union of clarity and emptiness, as if watching the sun rise brightly in the sky.

Without wavering from that *samādhi*, the *yogin* should recite the ten HŪMs either three, seven or twenty-one times. The signs of success for the *yogin* are that he becomes free of desire and loses all mundane attachments, the world appears as if filled with the light of the sun and moon rising simultaneously in the sky, the *yogin*'s own inherent wisdom shines forth in all its nakedness and whatever accomplishments he thinks of ('the *siddhis* of the heart') will be attained.⁴⁹⁰

In Chapter Six, the *sādhana* of Vajravārāhī is explained for the benefit of one who desires to experience the reality of voidness. Such a *yogin* should go to an extremely isolated place and meditate upon his body as having neither flesh, blood, bones nor internal organs. Like an illusion, it is a body made only of light and he should meditate upon it as being red, shining and clear. Then, on a sun disc situated below his navel, the *yogin* should visualize the body of Vārāhī arising from the syllable MA, red in colour and as small as a grain of mustard. She is said to be the embodiment of the *yogin*'s own inherent wisdom and thus he is supposed to generate an awareness of emptiness and form.⁴⁹¹

The seventh chapter of the *tantra* is devoted to an exposition of the sanguinary 'wrathful' rites to be carried out in an isolated and terrifying charnel ground on the edge of a precipitous ravine. There the *yogin* should build up a triangular *maṇḍala*⁴⁹² in three tiers, which he smears with the blood of vultures or wild beasts containing an admixture of powdered iron, copper and bell-metal. The *maṇḍala* is then encircled by a series of twenty-one *rākṣasī*, small triangles made of poisonous wood.

An effigy is prepared, into which the consciousness of the enemy is to be summoned, and it is bound with green and red threads and placed in the centre of the *maṇḍala*. Then, maintaining the *samādhi* of himself as the *mahottaradeva*, the *yogin* recites the *mantra* which summons the three groups of oath-bound protectors and puts them to work: OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA DHADDHI MAMA KARMA ŚRĪKRAMA KĀRAYE SARVA VIGHNĀN BAM HŪM PHAṬ. After three thousand recitations, the oath-bound ones should really appear and then the *yogin* should perform the ritual of dragging forth the enemy.

This he does by imagining twenty-one ferocious beings⁴⁹³ to emanate from the depths of dark blue triangles,⁴⁹⁴ which themselves are thought of as having arisen from the syllable E. These violent gods are then imagined to truly drag forth the consciousness of the enemy to be subdued. Reciting NṚ and TRI as many times as necessary, the *yogin* adds VAJRĀNKUŚA JAḤ at the end and it is by means of this wild *mantra* of five heroic syllables that the enemy is truly held captive in the effigy. This will certainly be achieved if the

490. A3, 29-31.

491. This symbolic meditation thus aims to achieve a result identical in nature to that of the more prosaic *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra*. A3, 31-4.

492. B & C. A3 says it should be square.

493. Unnamed but most likely to be the twenty-one supreme sons of Vajrakīla.

494. Presumably the previously laid out circle of twenty-one triangles.

mantras are recited for three whole days. The *yogin* slays (the living effigy) by saying “So-and-so TRIG NAN” and piercing the *kīla* into the centre of the skull. “So-and-so NYAGS THUM RIL” at the base of the neck. “HUR THUM rBAD” on the life vein. “NĀŚAYA rBAD” on the navel and “MĀRAYA rBAD” on the four limbs.⁴⁹⁵

Signs of success in the rite are (the appearances in a dream) of living beings dying of disease or being slain in a hunt, or the destruction of a town from fire or the *yogin* hearing the sound of laughter. (Following the arising of these signs) the effigy should be divided into three pieces,⁴⁹⁶ one of which is burned in a fire of poisonous wood, one of which is entrusted to the black *nāgas* and one of which is to be cast out and trampled underfoot.⁴⁹⁷ Finally the *yogin* should present offerings of thanksgiving to the *dharma-pālas*.⁴⁹⁸

Chapter Eight is very short and merely confirms that the demon Rudra, following his defeat by the Buddhas, was instructed in the doctrines of secret *mantra* and initiated as a powerful protector of the Vajrakīla teachings. He is worshipped as Legs-Idan-bdud (*Sādhumāra, ‘the Good Demon’) by waving a black silk tassel and reciting his *mantra*, thus causing him to be present in the *samaya* article of shaggy yak’s blood.⁴⁹⁹ During the time of his invocation he should be generated in wrathful guise, wearing a long black gown and standing in the posture of a champion. During the time of the attainment of *siddhi* he is generated as one of great energy, like a king mounted upon a lion. When he is being summoned to carry out the magical deeds he is generated as a hero, mounted upon a tiger in the manner of a messenger. He is a deity through whom all activities may be realized. Due to the fact that in the ancient past this protector was once the direct adversary of Vajradhara himself, his *sādhana* is said to be very profound.⁵⁰⁰

The non-dual unity of the teacher and the doctrine is presented in Chapter Nine as the special characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*) of *tantra*. Mahāśrīvajrakumāra announces that he himself is the body of Vajrakīla and that this is the *tantra* of his mind (*citta-tantra*) which must be kept secret from those of no merit. Outwardly it is due to the existence of his body (called the *kāya-tantra*) that this secret *tantra* of his mind can exist. What it teaches as *sādhana* is the spontaneous self-arising of all the wrathful ones from the *vajra* HŪMs (reverberating in his own heart). Because it is a doctrine of ferocious self arising, this Vajrakīla *tantra* is known as *Svayambhūsvodaya*.⁵⁰¹

Chapter Ten is merely a brief colophon. It tells us that this secret *tantra* of the *kīlakāya* was taught by the *bhagavat* to Vajrapāṇi for the purpose of subduing all those who are to

495. The text instructs the *yogin* to “dissolve the *mantra*” into those specified parts of the effigy.

496. Text B, in common with all recensions of the BRT and the *sādhana* A44 etc., says that a single effigy should be divided into three pieces but A & C say that three effigies are required.

497. These three activities are discussed below, Chapter Ten.

498. A3, 34–5.

499. This means that a bowl of yak’s blood is to be placed upon the altar as the life support of the deity and he is imagined to be present within that.

500. A3, 35–6.

501. A3, 36–7. Curiously, this appellation is the one given in the chronicle looked at, above, in Chapter Four dealing with the mythical origin of the *tantra*. What is strange is that the words quoted therein come not from this *tantra* but from that belonging to the black deity cycle (scrutinized below).

be converted. It names the special protector of the doctrine as Mahākāla and tells us that he will subdue all enemies and obstructors who cause interference to this *tantra*, wherever a copy of the text is to be found. By entrusting the doctrine to Mahākāla in this way, its stability is ensured so that it may remain in the world for a long time to come.⁵⁰²

The second *tantra* to be found in the three collections is the BRT (*Śrīvajrakīlapotrihala-tantra*, sic).⁵⁰³ This is said to have been discovered by Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem in the black iron compartment in the northern section of the treasure chest. Its internal structure is much better organized than that of the previous *tantra* and I take it to be a later composition. The former text seems to me to be a very early Vajrakīla *tantra* indeed, or at least to include primitive elements.⁵⁰⁴ We have seen that it was delivered as a discourse by the main deity to his interlocutor Caṇḍavajrapāṇi and this is the normal pattern in the earliest texts for the pronouncement of both *sūtras* and *tantras*. The following *tantra*, however, claims to have been 'self proclaimed' in a manner that is typical of the eighth century texts followed by the rNying-ma-pa school. That is to say, it was taught by the lord of the *maṇḍala* to a retinue of his own emanations and, instead of being taught in a 'recognizable' place⁵⁰⁵ it was taught in the Akaniṣṭha heaven (here employed as a synonym for *dharmadhātu*) that has neither centre nor circumference. In other words, its locality is not to be located anywhere.

Furthermore, while the second *tantra* displays a clear and well established Vajrakīla *maṇḍala*, the first was abbreviated and vague. The retinue of twenty-one ferocious deities found in the above *tantra* is rarely encountered in the extant Kīla literature and the fierce rituals taught therein, as shown above in Chapter Two, can be historically established as forerunners of the deified nail.

Finally, the contents of the first *tantra* are not all of relevance to the cult of Vajrakīla. The *sādhanas* of Vajrapāṇi and Vārāhī, for example, although still popular as *Anuttarayoga* practices, no longer form a part of this cult. The teachings of the second *tantra*, on the other hand, are all of prime significance and this leads me to conclude that the text was written down at a time when the cult doctrines themselves had already become well-ordered and systematized.

The *nidāna* (Chapter One) of this second *tantra* describes a ferocious charnel ground within which abides the *maṇḍala* of deities having Mahāśrīvajrakumāra and his consort Tr̥ptacakra in the centre. Around them are arranged the *daśakrodha* kings with their consorts, the twenty *piśācīs* who are their emanated messengers, the supreme sons who

502. A3, 37.

503. A2, B31, C19. Page references will not be given among the notes for this text as the entire *tantra* is to be found below as Appendix II to the present work.

504. According to this *Mahottarakīla* cycle, Rudra was subdued by Vajrapāṇi which accords with the earlier teachings of the STTS etc. but is at variance with the later doctrines of *Mahāyoga* in which the credit is given to Hayagrīva. This cycle also maintains the early very close association of Vajrakīla with Amṛtakuṇḍalin, an identity that was gradually resolved in the later *tantras* such as the BRT where the two deities are separated entirely.

505. The summit of Mount Meru may be far away but in Buddhist cosmology it is still reckoned to be a physical abode.

fully accomplish all *karma*,⁵⁰⁶ and the further emanations and countless tertiary emanations of which their retinue is comprised. All of these deities are said to abide there “in their natural state” and this is explained by likening them to reflected forms, like images in a mirror or the moon in water, which rest in the sphere of natural meaning without ever being covered by the stains of emotional afflictions. The teacher is said to be like a miraculous display in the sky, teaching the *Dharma* of fierce *mantras* without ever straying from this natural condition.

The second chapter emphasizes the importance of practising the *sādhana* of unsurpassed enlightenment and the lord of the *maṇḍala* urges his retinue to arise from the profundity of their rapture in order to demonstrate it for the sake of those to be converted.

“The chief of families is the *Vajrakula*. The light of wisdom is the destroyer of darkness which overcomes the afflictions of *saṃsāra*. The Conqueror (Buddha) is the sole complete friend of sentient beings. For the sake of all beings the throne of the teacher must be magnificently displayed!” Thus he spoke.

In Chapter Three it is specified that the Akaniṣṭha palace within which these deities abide is really the *dharmadhātu*, an association already made evident by the way in which it had been described but not one endorsed by earlier Buddhist teachings on cosmology.⁵⁰⁷ The lord of the *maṇḍala* then arose there in bodily form. He is described as having three faces, six arms and four legs spread wide apart. His right face is white, the left red and his central face is blue. In his right hands he holds a nine-pronged *vajra* and a five-pronged *vajra*. In his left, a blazing mass of fire and a *khatvāṅga*. With his final pair of hands he rolls a *kīla* and the sky is filled with his *vajra* wings. His body is adorned with the articles of the charnel ground and he remains sporting in non-duality with his spouse.

“HŪṀ Anger must be destroyed by means of *vajra* wrath! Within a blue blazing circle of sharp weapons, the essential point arises from the centre of the sky. It enters the door of the life force and one should meditate upon it in the centre of the heart.”⁵⁰⁸ Thus he spoke.

506. I suppose the four *Kīlas* of the activities to be meant here.

507. Akaniṣṭha heaven is described in early *Abhidharma* works as the most subtle (“highest”) of abodes within the *rūpadhātu*. The *dharmadhātu*, on the other hand, is an all-encompassing concept that is beyond the defining limitations of any of the three “worldly” *dhātus*. *Yogatantra* texts cite Akaniṣṭha-ghanavyūha, here associated with the *dharmadhātu*, as the site of Śākyamuni’s enlightenment.

508. This establishment of the *mahābindu* within the *yogin*’s heart is highly reminiscent of Hindu teachings concerning the *puruṣa* or “inner man”. The *Śāradātīlaka*, XXV, 58, says that the *puruṣa* residing in the heart is pure consciousness (*caitanyamātra*) and that it abides upon a sun disc (*raviṃḍalastha*) as “the primordial seed” (*ādibīja* = *mahābindu* in Buddhist terminology). Other texts indicate the *puruṣa* as all-pervading like the sky and composed of radiant light. B. Baumer, “Puruṣa” in K. Vatsyayan, ed., *Kalātattvakośa*, 23-40.

The *Vāstusūtra-Upaniṣad*, IV, 1, describes this inner man as standing “like the post of a *yūpa*” (*yūpasya daṇḍa iva*) which, as noted above, may be identified with our *kīla*. The *Brahma-saṃhitā*, V, 3, places a *vajrakīla* in the heart as the *mahāyantra* (“great device”) which is the only non-Buddhist reference to a *vajrakīla* that I have encountered. That great device, situated in the pericarp of a lotus in the heart, is surrounded by a protective circle of ten spikes (*śūla*) situated in the ten directions and thus corresponds to the teachings given here

This same verse opens the VKMK. It also occurs in Chapter Seven of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*⁵⁰⁹ and elsewhere, thus confirming my thesis that this *tantra* was compiled at a time when the doctrines of Vajrakīla had already become fully formulated. Furthermore, these words are said to have been spoken by the nine-headed scorpion when he taught the Vajrakīla *tantra* in the Śitavana charnel ground, as recounted in our text B13.

The etymology of the epithet ‘supreme son’ (this time applied to Vajrakīla as the supreme son of all *Tathāgatas*) is then explained: the word ‘son’ being said to mean that he comes without birth from the *dharmatā* and ‘supreme’ that he is the spontaneous fulfilment of enlightened activity. He is the son of all the Buddhas in order to destroy Rudra, where ‘son’ means the unborn *vajra* son.

The *daśakrodha* couples and all of the messengers are then described as having dark blue ferocious forms. They have single faces and roll *kīlas* in their two hands. The lower halves of their bodies are sharp-pointed, three-edged nails. They have *vajra* wings and (are adorned with) the artifacts of charnel grounds. With cries of “Hūṃ!” and “Phaṭ!” they terrify the world and subjugate all vicious beings without exception.

Now follows the second verse of the VKMK:

“HŪM The sacred oaths of killing by compassion and never to harm or oppress are gathered together in the form of a *vajra*⁵¹⁰ and one should meditate upon it as the *vajra* of the mind.”

The next three verses (with minor variations in wording) are also to be found in the VKMK, but the order of the first and second verses is reversed in the Peking edition:

“HŪM. Meditating upon oneself as the wisdom embodiment of all the Buddhas, one should arise in the unbearable form of blazing wrath that emanates from the essential nature of the *vajradharmadhātu*.

HŪM. All those who hold the awareness of Vajrakumāra must bring into effect the universal⁵¹¹ *vajra*. The deities of the *bhavakīla* must fulfil wisdom’s wrath!

HŪM. Empowerments and blessings must be bestowed in this place so that the activities of Buddhahood may be fulfilled and, through the practice of skilful means⁵¹² for the sake of sentient beings, they may be disciplined by means of love and compassion.”

The VKMK then calls forth all the deities of the *maṇḍala* by means of their individual *mantras* before continuing with the following six-line verse of general invocation which, in our *tantra*, follows immediately:

of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* in the heart. That this is the intended meaning here is made explicit in the *abhiṣeka* text outlined in the following chapter of the present work. See also below, note 518.

509. NGB, vol. 19.

510. This line in the VKMK reads: *phung po rdo rje'i bdag nyid de*.

511. The VKMK reads ' *khor ba rdo rje* instead of *srid pa'i rdo rje* throughout.

512. This verse occurs many times in the various Vajrakīla texts at our disposal, usually with the phrase given here (*thabs kyi spyad pas*) but sometimes reading *thugs spyod pas* (“through the heart practice”).

“HŪM. In order that the empowerments, realizations (*siddhi*) and successful accomplishment of the universal *kīla* may be attained, you deities of wisdom wrath must please come here! When the gods of great wrath have arrived, the signs and symbols of success must be shown and the *siddhi* of the Kīla be bestowed!”

As this is said, the exceedingly ferocious ones are imagined to come forth from the depths of the charnel ground and to pulverize all the enemies and obstructors in the ten directions.

Then, in Chapter Four, all the arrogant worldly demons who have become terrified at the wrathful might of the *heruka* Buddhas, together with the *mātr̥s* who have developed power through wisdom, speak to the *maṇḍala* deities and offer their essential life force, pledging themselves to act as servants. Having taken the pledge, they are then given a stern warning by the lord of the *maṇḍala* never to transgress their oaths. These words of warning are found in the VKMK immediately after they are summoned⁵¹³ to take their places around the periphery of the *maṇḍala*. Our *tantra*, however, explains the reason for their invitation by telling of the occasion on which they originally took their oaths.

“Whichever evil being shall transgress these secret *vajra* oaths shall have his skull drawn out in one hundred splinters by the *mahāherukas* of great power. Listen here, you hosts of trouble-makers and misleaders, do not deviate from my instructions!”

The conversation then continues with the frightened worldly gods submitting fully to the authority of the *maṇḍala* deities and affirming the sincerity of their pledge. They seek refuge in the compassionate deities of the *maṇḍala* and offer their help in the fulfilment of all desired activities.

In Chapter Five these oath-bound ones are taken at their word and put to work. The pattern of calling their names in order to invoke their presence is almost identical to the pattern found in the VKMK:

“HŪM. The time has come for the *mahāsamaya*! The time has come for the great emanation! The time of the mighty messengers has come! The time has come for the Śvanmukhā⁵¹⁴ (sisters)! The time of the Mahātmādevīs has come! The time has come for the great Bhūmipatis! The time to fulfil your sacred oaths has come!⁵¹⁵ The time has come to bring forth your powerful skill!”⁵¹⁶

They are then ordered to catch, beat and securely bind all those hindering demons who interrupt the attainment of *siddhi*. They are told to identify the interrupters by their

513. They are summoned by means of the *mantras* that they originally offered as their “essential life forces”. The holder of these “life forces”, the one who knows their *mantras*, can then summon these oath bound ones at will.

514. This name is translated into Tibetan in the VKMK.

515. Line omitted here in the VKMK but inserted much further on, at the end of the section, in slightly different wording.

516. The VKMK reads: “The time to liberate has come!”

vicious, angry minds and not to confuse them with friends.⁵¹⁷ Finally they are instructed to pull them in forthwith, cast them down and drive them mad (or make them silent) so that they become utterly subdued. The deity Vajrakīla then turns his attention to the captives brought in by his speedy messengers and warns them to pay careful heed to his admonitions.

All of this has its parallel in the VKMK where the same sentiments are found but expressed in different words. With the closing verses of this chapter, however, we return to a more exact correspondence:

“HŪM All you vicious ones with angry minds, whether you be gods or demons, any that obstruct me must be deprived of their magic power and witchcraft. You must be thrashed! Such is the diligence of the blazing *vajra*.

All evil ones who transgress my orders will have their hearts burnt up on the pinnacle of *vajra* fire. Your body and speech will be reduced to ashes for, in the blazing mortars of the wrathful mothers, when pounded by the *vajra* hammers even the gods are destroyed!”

And that brings us to the close of Chapter Five. In Chapter Six the method of becoming one with the deity (*āsevita*) is shown. Arranging the ritual *bali* in an isolated place, the *yogin* should clearly visualize himself in the form of the great glorious deity. In his heart he should imagine the *jñānasattva*, unadorned and similar in appearance to the main deity, and he should meditate upon him as being the size of his thumb tip.⁵¹⁸ In his heart is his emblem, a nine-pronged *vajra*, the size of a grain of barley. In the centre of that is a blue syllable HŪM, the symbol of speech, as fine as if drawn by a single hair. Around the outside of that revolves the Kīla *mantra*, golden in colour and extremely fine.

When the *yogin* has perfected that visualization within his heart, he should imagine rays of light spreading out from the *mantra*, pervading the whole trichiliocosm and filling it with radiance. By that light the vicious beings of the three realms are subdued. The *mantra* itself should be recited thirty million times in the state of clarity and emptiness, until the signs of success have arisen.

Now, in Chapters Seven and Eight, the method of propitiating the deity is shown in a manner that is almost identical to the fierce rite described in Chapter Seven of the *Cittaguhyakāya-tantra* above. Whereas, however, the former *tantra* described those whose task it is to drag forth the enemies and obstructors as a series of twenty-one ferocious beings radiating from dark blue triangles, the present text says that these ferocious helpers are innumerable. Also, while the above *tantra* instructs the *yogin* to place various syllables of the ‘destructive activity *mantra*’⁵¹⁹ upon the four main *cakras*

517. The *yogin*’s task is to recognize his own emotional defilements as the true enemy and not follow them as if they were his friends.

518. This description of the *jñānasattva* corresponds to the description in the *Upaniṣads* of the *puruṣa* or inner spirit of man. The *Kāthopaniṣad*, IV, 13, says *aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo jyotir ivā-dhūmakah*; “(Shining) like a light without smoke, the *puruṣa* is the size of one’s thumb tip.” See also note 508, above.

519. The DHADDHI *mantra*.

and the four limbs of the effigy to be destroyed, the present *tantra* gives no such instructions and the *mantra* itself is much longer. Finally, the present *tantra* naturally enough does not instruct the *yogin* to visualize himself in the eighteen-armed *mahottara* form of the deity whilst engaged in the rite.

Following that, Chapter Nine teaches meditational equipoise (*samāhitasamādhi*), clearly emphasizing the essentially compassionate nature of the wrathful rites. In order to subjugate the vicious beings of the three realms, it explains the special activity of *samādhi* to be the arising of the enlightened mind from the unmistaken and uncontrived *dharmatā* with the speed of a dreadful flashing thunderbolt. This is the *bodhicittakīla* which is fully accomplished in controlling the *traidhātuka* and it is called 'The Killer of the Three Realms Without Exception'. Having ground the bodies of the demons down to mincemeat, the *yogin* should imagine the triple world filled with flesh and blood. This is the secret requisite, the vital juice of the oral commentaries that slays the lustful ones by means of compassion. In a single moment of enlightenment exists *nirvāṇa* beyond comprehension, *nirvāṇa* that transcends the world. This enlightened mind that cuts through doubt is the unchanging *bodhicitta*. Free of sin it is perfectly liberated, free of exertion it is spontaneously fulfilled.

The exegesis of the wrathful rites in terms of an inner meditative experience which does not contradict the essential tenets of *Buddhadharma* is continued in Chapter Ten where the *samādhi* of secret *mantras* is explained under four headings. The first thing to be shown is the non-dual mind of enlightenment. Secondly, the various awarenesses (*vidyā*) are taught. Third is the intentionality of violent *mantra* recitation, and fourthly, body, speech and mind are explained.

(1) Upon the production of a thought one should meditate upon it as the utter purity within the very nature of perfect purity and, in this way, if a pure thought arises great happiness is attained. If the *mantra* is recited many times, anything can be attained and if the *samaya* vows are protected, the *siddhi* will quickly result.

(2) Employing the *bodhicittakīla* the *yogin* should penetrate perfect knowledge for his own benefit. Then, for the benefit of others, he should destroy the ignorance of all sentient beings in the *traidhātuka* without exception by means of Vajrakīla.

(3) For the sake of beings who are lacking in awareness, the skilful *yogin* should bring about the results of pacification (*śāntika*), increasing prosperity (*pauṣṭika*), overpowering (*vaśya*) and destroying (*abhicāra*), as required, by means of the appropriate rites.

(4) To the mind of enlightenment, oneself as well as all gods and demons are free of both birth and death. Cutting the vital breath of the afflictions, death is cast aside and one's span of life is prolonged. (We shall have occasion to return to these four overarching themes during the course of our continuing study of Northern Treasures Vajrakīla literature.)

This chapter then continues with a religious etymology of the word 'kīla', as outlined above in our Chapter Three:

"Kī" means that all and everything is the mind of enlightenment.

"La" means that the enlightened mind pervades all things.

And so on ... These are indications of the nature of the deity and therefore, it is said, it is exceedingly important for the *yogin* to engage himself in the praxis of Vajrakīla.

Chapter Eleven is really just a colophon. Within it we learn that this “supremely secret blazing *Black Razor Tantra*” is taught by all *Sugatas* of the three times and ten directions within the unborn sphere of the *dharmatā* in order to slay those sentient beings with perverse views. It is to be entrusted in its entirety to one whose thoughts have been purified, who has sharp (penetrating) wisdom, is diligent in perseverance, who has attained a realization of the Mahāyāna, who possesses an excellent mind and is of good *karma*. Finally, we are told, this *tantra* is protected by the (unspecified) oath-bound *dharmapālas*.

Thus we see that this particular *tantra* exhibits a very clear and well ordered structure. The *maṇḍala* of deities is clearly defined at the beginning and then the rites associated with those deities are set out in a logical manner. We are reminded, however, that such appearances and activities are no more than the illusory play of compassionate wisdom that arise merely in order to counteract delusion. The ultimate nature of the entire ‘wrathful’ manifestation, then, is actually not other than the blissful peace of *nirvāṇa*. In subsequent chapters we shall see how the fundamental teachings of these two *tantras* form the basis for the entire cycle of Vajrakīla texts at our disposal.

Chapter Six

Rites of Empowerment

In his general introduction to the Byang-gter Kīla cycle (B4), 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms mentions five topics to be discussed with regard to empowerment: 1) The characteristics of the *ācārya* who is to bestow the empowerment, 2) The nature of the disciple who is to receive it, 3) The benefits to be derived from the bestowal of empowerment, 4) The disadvantages of not being initiated and 5) The reason why it is necessary.

He then deals with each of these topics in turn by citing pertinent passages from various *Mahāyoga tantras* to be found in the NGB and elsewhere. Thus, with regard to the characteristics of the *ācārya* who is to bestow the empowerment, he quotes a verse from the *Māyājāla-tantra* (NGB 222) thus:

“The teacher (is like) a copious river
abundant with treasure.
Having heard all the oral commentaries
And being skilled in the performance of ritual
he keeps warm the vital secrets.
Upon a *yogin* of such ability
(The disciple) should wholeheartedly rely.”

As for the nature of the disciples who are to be initiated, they are described in the same *tantra* as being:

“Fully purified through the trainings
of listening, contemplation and absorption.
Those who have acquired the wisdom eye
are said to be acceptable recipients,
Having dedicated completely
themselves and all they possess.”

The benefits to be derived from the empowerment itself are described in the *dBang rin po che'i rgyud* (unidentified) as follows:

“If the complete ritual of empowerment is bestowed
in proper stages in accordance with tradition,
In this very life one will become the equal
of the mighty Vajradhara.”

The disadvantages of not being initiated are described in the *Guhyagarbha-tantra* X.8 (NGB 190):

“Failing to satisfy the teacher and
so failing to receive the empowerments,
Even though one studies hard with diligence
no result will arise and destruction will come.”

And also, in the *rDzogs pa rang 'byung* (unidentified) it is said:

“Lacking the support of empowerment in secret *mantras*
no *siddhi* will ever arise.
Just as one cannot prevent wild unmarked sheep
from escaping across the river.”

And why is empowerment necessary? As it says in the *Nyi ma 'khor lo'i rgyud* (unidentified):

“Just as on a good field of fertile land
that has not been carefully cultivated
No harvest will grow to mature. Just so,
on (the fertile ground of) *dharmatā*
without the ripening empowerments,
How will the *siddhi* of *yoga* arise?”⁵²⁰

We have already noted above that the Northern Treasures Vajrakīla teachings include rites pertaining both to a black deity (*mantrabhīru* and *kṣura* cycles) and a multicoloured deity (the *mahottara* cycle). According to 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms,⁵²¹ these various systems were united into one by Rig-'dzin padma 'phrin-las whose method of empowerment within a single *maṇḍala* subsequently became the standard for this school. Padma 'phrin-las' own seventy-folio text is to be found in collection B immediately following 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms' introduction to it but is included in neither A nor C. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms' slightly shorter reworking of that text, dated 1766, is found as C40. With regard to the original *gter ma* material that is of primary concern to us here, however, there are two important texts included alike in all three collections and these deal with the black and multicoloured deities separately.

From the golden southern section of the treasure cache, Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem is said to have taken out the *Che mchog gi dbang chu* (A8, B12, C5) pertaining to the 'water consecrations' (*udakābhīṣeka*) of the eighteen-armed *mahottara* form of the deity. These rites, said to have arisen spontaneously, “were written down for the benefit of *vidyādhara*s on the path of secret *mantra* in order that their inner strength (*ātman*) may become fully developed and to enable them to bestow the blessings of the empowerments on others”. Although this ritual is designed to bestow the consecrations of the *Mahottarakīla* cycle, the internal structure of its contents conforms to the paradigm of the BRT and VKMK and it includes in its liturgy many verses from those two texts. This is surprising because those texts belong to the *kṣura* cycle of the black deity and thus we have, once again, an

520. B4, 203–4.

521. B4, 203.

overlapping of the traditions for which it is difficult to account. It is possible that the different iconic forms of the deity were not originally associated with distinct bodies of religious doctrine or it may be that the separate traditions of Vajrakīla were conflated long ago, either in India or Tibet.

Other than the fact that it seems to quote from texts of the wrong tradition, however, the general scheme of the rite is perfectly logical in its methodology. It utilizes the root *tantra* as a basic framework for generating the outer and inner *maṇḍala* of the deity and, as the ritual proceeds, the *guru* explains to the neophyte the significance of the various meditations involved. In this way the neophyte is ‘initiated’ and, by the blessings of his teacher, ‘empowered’ to perform those meditations on his own. Subsequent to his empowerment the disciple is expected to devote his time and energy to mastering meditation on the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* in order to achieve the *bhavakīla* for the benefit of all living beings. He commits himself to maintain the tantric vows in general and to enter a covenant (*samaya*) with the major and minor deities associated with the Vajrakīla doctrines. In short, he becomes responsible for maintaining the purity of the Vajrakīla lineage and for its enrichment.

Of the three redactions at our disposal, B is most helpful thanks to the inclusion within it of interlinear notes at various points (A also includes a few notes towards the end of the text) and C is particularly corrupt with several lacunae and a wealth of misreadings.

As for the rite itself, the text begins by stating that one within whom great love and compassion have been born and who possesses a knowledge of the weapons that protect against harmful enemies and obstructors, should gather up ‘the three essential articles’⁵²² for the practice of the *bhavakīla* and go to an auspicious and isolated place of ritual power (*gnas chen*). Taking all the ingredients for the medicine that conquers disease and generous quantities of offering articles,⁵²³ the *vajra* master should carefully perform the rites of purifying the chosen site. Having received permission for the *maṇḍala* from the local *bhūmipati* and having presented a *bali* offering to unfriendly trouble-makers, the master should then take possession of the site and mark out its boundaries by placing piles of stones in the four corners (*tho bzhi brtsigs*). He then performs the ritual that protects the site in exactly the same way as it was performed above.⁵²⁴ The master now lays out the great blue-black *maṇḍala*, in the centre of which is placed a drawing of the demon Rudra. This effigy is to be transfixed with a spike that is meditated upon as being the actual deity Vajrakīla himself.⁵²⁵

While the *maṇḍala* is being drawn, with a ferocious voice the *vajrācārya* should recite words (partly culled from the *tantras* noted above) to the effect that: “Having given birth to the supreme mind of enlightenment, we *vidyādhara*s are the representatives of the Buddhas of the three times and now, for the sake of perfecting the *bhavakīla*, we contemplate that a shining *bindu* arises in the centre of the sky and enters the door of life

522. I suppose these to be the *smān rak gtor gsum*.

523. Text A says: “articles that support life”.

524. See above, Chapter Five, where the *sīmābandha* rite is given in note 477.

525. A8, 68.

in our hearts.” Thus the drawing of the *maṇḍala* is undertaken by the *ācārya* whose mind is absorbed in the ferocious *samādhi* of the blazing great blue weapon in his heart.

As the *ācārya* mutters OM LAM HŪM LAM STAMBHAYA NAN VAJRASTAMBHAYA NAN KATHAM, from the twenty-one fierce gods in union⁵²⁶ radiate rays of light of the five wisdoms⁵²⁷ that melt into the world and into the hearts of all sentient beings so that all phenomena, both animate and inanimate, are blessed as wisdom.⁵²⁸

Then, on a piece of cloth taken from a corpse in the cemetery, the *ācārya* should draw the arrogant figure of Rudra and, separating him from the gods who would assist him,⁵²⁹ he summons the consciousness of that demon and causes it to dwell within the drawing. That drawing is then placed in the very centre of the *maṇḍala* and around it are arranged four stones (or skulls) which are visualized as four Buddhas. The Buddhas are invited to abide in those stones and they are presented with offerings and so on. Then, in a powerful voice, the *ācārya* warns all who would attempt to obstruct the work of the *vidyādhara* within whom has been born the mind of supreme enlightenment that they are about to be rendered powerless even if they be gods, let alone demons. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA SARVA ANAYA HŪM.⁵³⁰

Then the body of that proud Rudra should be slain by means of the fierce ritual. On the place of consciousness (the heart), which should be marked on the drawing with a syllable HŪM, the *ācārya* stabs the nail at the very junction of good and evil (*dkar nag mtshams su*). During the performance of that action he should contemplate the truth of *dharmatā* and the power of Buddhahood for it is the very essence of the wrathful rite. Muttering, “Now is the time for the great act of sorcery (*abhicāra*),” the *ācārya* abides in the sphere of the *dharmakāya*, free of mental fictions.

As the external (symbolic) *maṇḍala* is being drawn upon the ground the *ācārya* is instructed to open his heart and guard the door of his life by placing upon it the seed-syllable of Hayagrīva. This is said to be the true meaning of the words found in the Vajrakīla *Svayambhū-mūlatantra*:⁵³¹ “One should meditate upon it arising in the portal of life (*srog gi sgo ru shar*) and being present in the door of the heart (*snying gi sgo ru*).” Thus the *ācārya* meditates upon the eight-petalled *cakra* of his heart, which is the naturally present *maṇḍala*, as he draws upon the ground the eight-petalled lotus of the symbolic *maṇḍala* for the empowerment. Contemplating this drawn *maṇḍala* as composed

526. It would seem logical to associate this figure with the twenty-one supreme sons of body, speech and mind but the text makes it clear below that the reference is to the central *yuganaddha* deity (counted as one) and his retinue of ten *yuganaddha* wrathful kings (counted as twenty).

527. Blue, white, yellow, red and green.

528. The *bhājanaloka* is transformed by this blessing into the wisdom “*maṇḍala* of residence” and the *sattvaloka* into the wisdom deities.

529. See below, Chapter Nine.

530. A8, 69-70.

531. Our text A3, within which, however, the quoted words (from a verse found in several Vajrakīla *tantras*, including the BRT) are not to be found. See above, Chapter Five, and below, Appendix II.

of the five nectars and so on,⁵³² the *ācārya* should bless the lines and colours as they are put down with melodious prayers. Having sprinkled (the earth) with blood from the heart (*citta khrag*, sic),⁵³³ the four shining lines (of the *maṇḍala* border) are marked in place.

Then the deity Hayagrīva is generated in the centre, surrounded in the primary directions by his retinue of four wives (*gsang yum*). HAYAGRĪVA HULU HULU GRHNA GRHNA HŪM PHAṬ. In the four intermediate directions, from the syllables KAṬANKAṬE, are generated the goddesses of the earth⁵³⁴ riding upon yellow sows. Inviting the deities to abide within the *maṇḍala*, the *ācārya* should present them with offerings. They are then reminded of the former occasion when the bodies of those who obstructed the *Dharma* were ground to dust and of the promises that they themselves made at that time. The protectors are instructed to listen carefully to the orders of the present *vajra* master and faithfully carry out their duties of rendering his enemies powerless. When these orders have been successfully accomplished, the *ācārya* should present the deities with a further series of offerings.

Following that, a skull and a vase are purified with the smoke of black frankincense (*gugguladhūpa*) and a sprinkling of nectar. They are both then filled with ‘ambrosial water’, the essential nature of which is blessed as wisdom by the recitation of the *mantra* of Amṛtakunḍalin, and the skull is placed on top of the vase. Muttering BHRŪM, the vase and skull are transformed into the *maṇḍala* palace of the gods and, by reciting the *mantras* of the deities over seeds of white mustard, each grain is transformed into a deity and these are poured into the vase. In this way the *ācārya* fills the palace with its divine residents, generating all the wrathful gods down to the four goddesses who guard the gates.⁵³⁵

A drawing of the *maṇḍala* with all of these gods is then to be placed over the top of the skull and sealed with a symbolic blazing *vajra*. The neck of the vase should be tied with rags from the charnel ground and, as the *ācārya* recites ŚIKRIN VIKRIN HŪM, a twig from a cemetery tree should be inserted into its mouth. The vase should then be entwined with intestines.

Following that, the *vajrācārya* holds the vase aloft in his hand and, loudly beating on the great drum, he calls the deities to be present in order to bestow the empowerments upon his disciples and to bless them. They are then offered the five kinds of spontaneously arising nectars, the sacrificial cake possessing six varieties of taste and the flesh, blood and bones of the liberated enemies and obstructors.⁵³⁶ The purificatory *mantra* of one

532. The nectars (semen, blood, excrement, urine and flesh) stand for the five “naturally arising” Buddhas within the physical body. Meditating in this way, the *ācārya* harmonizes the outer *maṇḍala* that he draws upon the earth with the inner *maṇḍala* spontaneously present in his heart.

533. Replacing the perfumed water employed for sprinkling the earth when the peaceful *maṇḍala* is to be drawn.

534. Called here *bse yi lha mo*. See above, Chapter Four.

535. A8, 70–2.

536. These offerings stand for the five *skandhas*, the six spheres of sensory experience and the three primary *kleśas* respectively, all of which are henceforth to be recognized by the initiate in their own true nature and dedicated for the sake of all sentient beings to the wrathful *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla deities. Further details regarding the nature of these offering articles are to be found below, Chapter Twelve.

hundred syllables (the *mantra* of Vajrasattva) is then recited, after which the deities are once again urged to be present in the vase. The words to be recited at this juncture have already been noted above as occurring in both the VKMK and the BRT: “HŪM. Empowerments and blessings must be bestowed in this place ...” etc. and as they are recited now, the deities melt into the centre of the vase. In that way the preliminary rites establishing the *maṇḍala* of deities within the vase are completed⁵³⁷ and this is immediately followed by the establishment of the deities within the body of the disciple.

This section begins with a verse in which the *krodharāja* Hūṃkāra together with his consort sGra-byin and their assistant emanations with the heads of a pig and a lizard are invited to be present in order to bestow blessings and empowerments upon the assembled disciples who are to be the Kīla *vidyādhara*s of the future. These four deities are all urged to perform the great deeds of skilful means for the sake of the world. The text then instructs the reader to repeat the verse ten times, changing just the names of the deities, so that all the gods of the *maṇḍala* may be summoned from the ten directions in their groups of four. The deities are then established within the body of the disciple as he is purified with nectar. As the *vajrācārya* pours water from the vase (on to the head of the disciple), the disciple salutes both his master and the deities of the *maṇḍala* and makes this plea:

“HŪM. Gods of the Universal *kīla*! Please turn your minds of supreme enlightenment towards us *vidyādhara*s who must act as representatives for the Buddhas of the three times.”

In that way the disciple takes refuge in the deities and binds himself under oath. The *ācārya* then enters the *samādhi* of Amṛtakuṇḍalin and recites his *mantra* whilst tying a protective cord as an amulet around the disciple’s left arm. (This ritually purifies all the defilements of the disciple’s body. The purification of his speech and mind then follow.) As the disciple takes refuge in the deities, he makes a vow to adhere firmly to the mind of enlightenment⁵³⁸ and then, meditating upon the fierce king Hayagrīva, he purifies all the defilements of his speech and promises never to commit them again. Finally, sipping a little of the sacred nectar water and meditating upon the deity Aparājita, he purifies all the past defilements of his mind. In that way the rites for the preparation of the disciple are completed⁵³⁹ and there now follows the ritual of the *maṇḍala* which is the main part of the empowerment ceremony, likened in the text to “a storehouse of precious jewels”.

At first the *sādhana* which calls forth the deities should be performed (see next chapter) until the signs of success have arisen and then the stages of empowerment should proceed, beginning with a nectar water ablution. The disciple should be blindfolded with red cloth and the *guru* should ask:⁵⁴⁰

537. A8, 72–3.

538. Line missing in both B & C.

539. A8, 73–4. There is often a break at this point, the *adhivāsana* ceremonies being performed on the evening of the first day and the main empowerment rituals throughout the following day, determined to some extent by the nature of the disciple’s dreams during the intervening night.

540. There are large gaps in the text of C during this conversation between *guru* and disciple.

“Oh, fortunate son of a noble family. You who wish to enter the door of the *maṇḍala* of profound empowerment, how much faith and dilligence do you possess? How much wealth and merit do you have as gifts to offer?”

To which the disciple replies:

“In order to stand close to the *vajra* master I offer this, my body, and even my very life. As a fee for the empowerment I offer all my wealth and merit.”

The next section concerns the oath-water.⁵⁴¹ As the master stirs the nectar (in the skull) with a *vajra* he says:

“May your life force and body remain firm! HŪM. Now is the time to take the great vow! From today onwards you are the son of myself, Vajrapāṇi, and you must do just exactly as I say in every detail. You must never act disrespectfully towards me for if you should ever abuse me then the elements of your life will decay and you will fall into the *vajra* hell. Oh, fortunate son of a noble family, if you guard well these vows and do not abandon your *guru* or the gods of the *maṇḍala* or your *vajra* brothers and sisters, if you do not sever the continuity of the *mantra* and *mudrā* and do not disclose the secrets to outsiders, then, if you are able to maintain your root vows of body, speech and mind⁵⁴² this water of sacred oaths will definitely cause you to become Vajrasattva himself!”

And as the *vajrācārya* recites the *mantra* of Amṛtakuṇḍalin he places some of the nectar upon the tongue of the disciple.⁵⁴³ Then the *maṇḍala* deities are caused to descend into the heart with the words: “HŪM. Anger must be destroyed by means of *vajra* wrath!”, and so on (noted above as occuring within both the BRT and the VKMK). The *guru* should explain the importance of this to his disciple by saying:

“Oh, son of good family. Due to this absorption of the *jñānasattva* within your heart, you will at all times remain in the state of unshakeable *samādhi*.”

The *guru* then opens the eastern door of the *maṇḍala* and, standing within it, he prays to all those who maintain the awareness of Vajrakumāra to reveal the universe as the ferocious wisdom *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla, thereby manifesting the Universal *kīla*. He summons the actual visible form of unbearable blazing wrath, the deity Vajrakīla who is the embodiment of the wisdom of all the Buddhas, to arise from the *dharmadhātu*. Then from the body, speech and mind of the *guru* and *devatā*,⁵⁴⁴ fierce rays of light shine out

541. Varuṇa, the god of water whose name is etymologically linked to the word *vrata* (vow, solemn oath), is represented in the *Rgveda* as the deity whose function is to preside over such oaths. He separates truth from falsehood and watches over all oaths and promises (traditionally solemnized with water), protecting and rewarding the faithful and punishing the perfidious (often by infecting them with the watery disease, dropsy). Paul Thieme, “King Varuṇa”, *German Scholars on India*, 1, Varanasi, 1973, 333–49.

542. To see all appearances as the *maṇḍala*, to hear all sounds as *mantra* and to recognize all thoughts as the play of divine wisdom.

543. A8, 74–5.

544. The *guru* meditates upon himself as the *devatā* at this point.

which burn up the residual karmic body of the disciple, causing the consciousness abiding within it to melt down and flow out like pure liquid gold. The disciple is instructed to imagine that the pure liquid of his consciousness is absorbed into the heart of the *guru* from where it descends to the *guru*'s *vajra*. It is then ejected into the womb of the *guru*'s consort so that he may be reborn from there as a true son of the Buddha. Completing the stages of entry in that way, the disciple is born into the *maṇḍala* and he should imagine himself in the form of an eight-year old youth.⁵⁴⁵

Now, inside the *maṇḍala*, he receives the consecrations. Taking up the vase, the *guru* repeats the verse cited above from the BRT and VKMK: “HŪM. Empowerments and blessings must be bestowed in this place ...” and he recites the heart *mantras* of all the deities, adding to the end of each the words: “The consecration that purifies the ten non-virtues is bestowed!”

Imagining himself to be Hayagrīva, the *guru* binds the *mudrā* of ‘the Assembly of Precious Ones’ (*rin chen ’dus pa*)⁵⁴⁶ on a level with his disciple’s ears and says: “TRAM. The supreme secret empowerment that transcends suffering ...” etc. With such words as these the *guru* explains the meaning of the secret teachings to his disciple and the disciple, having heard them, should not proclaim them abroad. As he recites the *mantra* at the end of this section, the *ācārya* pours out some water from the vase which his disciple should drink. Binding the *mudrā* of ‘the Assembly of Lotuses’ (*padma ’dus pa*) on the tongue of his disciple, the master says:

“HRĪḤ. By the eighty melodies of clear discrimination, all the wishes of living beings are satisfied. The object of wisdom (*shes rab don*) is beyond imagination and yet it abides in the signification (*don*) of all things great and small.”

Then, as both *guru* and disciple meditate upon themselves as the deity Amṛtakuṇḍalin, the master places into the hands of his disciple a *vajra* and bell held together in the form of a cross and says to him:

“HŪM. For the sake of all beings you must perform the skilful deeds of disciplining them by means of love and compassion. Fully perform the deeds of a Buddha!”⁵⁴⁷

Absorbing himself into the *jñānasattva* in his heart, the *guru* recites the deity’s *mantra* of invocation, twenty-one times, followed by the closing lines of the oft-quoted verse that opens the VKMK: “It enters the door of the life force and one should meditate upon it in the centre of the heart.” The *guru* then holds aloft the vase⁵⁴⁸ and, placing it upon the crown of his disciple’s head he proclaims:

545. A8, 75–6.

546. Notes describing these *mudrās* are given in B.

547. These lines are part of a verse already noted above in both the BRT and VKMK, beginning: “Empowerments and blessings must be bestowed in this place ...”

548. An interlinear note in text A adds the word *gtor ma* here.

“HŪṢ. The blessings and empowerments of all those who hold the awareness of Vajrakumāra, the representatives of the *Jinas* of the three times, are now bestowed upon you!”

The entire lineage of those who hold the awareness of Vajrakīla are then called forth from their natural abodes, beginning with the Buddhas of the three *kāyas* headed by the *dharmakāya* Samantabhadra:

“HŪṢ. Supreme *heruka* Samantabhadra! For the sake of all beings arise now from the *dharmadhātu* and, speaking with the naturally ferocious sound of the *dharmatā*, bestow the *vidyādhara* blessings!”

Then the five wisdom Buddhas of the *sambhogakāya* are exhorted to arise from their spontaneously perfected pure *kṣetras* and the *nirmāṇakāya* Vajrapāṇi is called from Alakāvati. His consort, the *ḍākinī* Karmedrāṇī⁵⁴⁹ is summoned from “the great abode of *bodhisattvas*” which is identified by a note in text A as “the spontaneously arising great charnel ground of the *dharmatā*”. Then the three-faced Brahmā, the first of the gods to have heard these teachings, is summoned from his abode above the peak of Mount Meru. He is followed by the *vidyādhara* teachers from the realms of gods, *nāgas* and men: Indra Śatakratu from his excellent palace of Vijaya, the *nāgarāja* Takṣaka from his refuge in the depths of the Sindhu Ocean and the meritorious king Indrabhūti from his abode on the summit of Mount Mālaya. Then the learned Śākyaprabhā is called forth from Zahor and Padmasambhava is invoked from his rocky cave at Pharping. Vimalamitra is summoned from the banks of the River Ganges and the Nepali Śīlamañju from his retreat hut in the forest of Maṇḍala. The princess Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal is summoned from the lion’s fortress of Bhutan, and sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-’joms is called forth from the red rock ‘treasury’ cave in Rong.⁵⁵⁰

In this way the lineage holders of the Vajrakīla doctrines up until the time of their concealment in the eighth century are called forth from the various locations with which they are especially associated. As their blessings and empowerments are received they are urged to “speak with the naturally ferocious sound of the *dharmatā*”. Our texts A & C say that this completes the series of five outer empowerments but text B continues to invoke the holders of the lineage by calling forth the *gter ston* Rig-’dzin rgod-ldem from the peak of Mount bKra-bzang, his son rDo-rje mtshan-can from the household of great blessings, Gang-chen sangs-rgyas bstan-pa from the sacred place of Mount dPal-’bar, the kind master Sangs-rgyas dpal-bzang from the abode of impartial activity for the benefit of others, the *tānika* Chos-rGyal sems-dpa’ from his hermitage in Nge-lung, the *vidyādhara* Sangs-rgyas bstan-pa from the pure display of the *dharmadhātu* and the holder of secret *mantra*, Śākya bzang-po, from the sun and moon throne on the crown of the (author’s own) head.⁵⁵¹ As for the inner empowerments which follow, the first essential is for the disciple to enter the three *samādhis*. Thus he first of all absorbs his mind in the state of *tathatā*, within which he generates great compassion for all beings. Projecting this com-

549. Equated by a note in text A with Vajravārāhī.

550. A8, 76–9.

551. Text B, then, is updated to the sixteenth century by a disciple of Śākya bzang-po who places the latter on the crown of his head. B12, 575.

passion in the form of ‘the causal seed-syllable’ (*rgyu'i yi ge*), the disciple proceeds through the stages of building up the divine *maṇḍala* palace. Having generated the palace complete with all adornments, he meditates upon himself in its centre upon a lotus throne with cushions of piled up Rudras, the sun and moon. Reciting: “HŪM. Anger must be destroyed by means of *vajra* wrath ...”, and so on, he imagines himself to be the deity Vajrakīla.

He is then consecrated with the deity’s crown of skulls as the *ācārya* recites:

“HŪM. This is the precious jewel of all the Buddhas, shining with immeasurable light. It bears upon it the symbols of the five supreme *kulas* and with it you are crowned master of the *traidhātuka*. HŪM OM SVA AM HĀ. HŪM In this realm where birth and decay are the natural conditions applying to sentient beings and all phenomena, you, oh son of noble family, are consecrated today with the spontaneously arising ineffable empowerment. A A A VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA. HŪM. You yourself are the *vidyādhara* king with the *jñānasattva* abiding in your heart. The portal of your life vein is guarded by the wrathful king Hayagrīva who enforces his commands with *vajra* sparks. Now you must arise as that very king, for you are invested with power as the Master of the *traidhātuka*. HAYAGRĪVA HŪM JAḤ NAN.”

Then the consecration of non-dual *bodhicitta* is bestowed by the *yuganaddha* deity in the secret *yonī* of the mother with the words: “HŪM. The sacred oaths of killing by compassion ...”, and so on, as noted above in the BRT and VKMK. And, by that recitation alone, the secret inner consecration is bestowed.⁵⁵²

Following that, the ten beneficial consecrations⁵⁵³ are bestowed. Due to the placing of the five-lobed crown upon the top of his head, the disciple receives the empowerment of five wisdoms. Due to the consecration at the place of the heart⁵⁵⁴ the empowerment of the seed syllable is obtained. Due to being entrusted with the *vajra* and bell, the fundamental empowerment of the hand symbols (*hastacihna*) is gained. Due to the generation of the *jñānasattva* within, the power of the body of Mahāśrīheruka is gained. Due to being consecrated with dangling earrings, the power of the speech of Hayagrīva is obtained. Due to being consecrated with a beautiful umbrella (*chattra*), the wrathful empowerment of the body is gained. Due to being consecrated with a garland of flowers, the wrathful empowerment of speech is gained. Due to the consecration of all the hairs on his body, the power of *vajra* armour is gained and, due to being consecrated with food and drink, the power of wealth and enjoyment is obtained.⁵⁵⁵

Now follows the empowerment of twenty-one *jñānakīlas*⁵⁵⁶ in the heart. Having annointed the disciple and purified the temple with incense and so on, the *guru* recites the

552. A8, 79-81.

553. All manuscripts list only nine consecrations.

554. The texts do not specify what is used to empower the disciple’s heart. Some *gurus* touch the spot with a *vajra* or a *kīla* while others choose to annoint it with either drops of nectar water or powdered vermilion, etc.

555. A8, 81.

556. Actually forty-two deities including the animal-headed emanations. See above, note 526.

eight-line prayer: “HŪM. All those who hold the awareness of Vajrakumāra ...”, and so on, thus bestowing the empowerment of the lord of the *maṇḍala*.⁵⁵⁷ Then he holds his *kīla* up in the air and invokes the lord of the zenith Hūmkāra and his consort sGra-’byin-ma together with their pig- and lizard-headed assistants.

“The activities of Buddhahood must be fulfilled and, through this skilful method for the sake of sentient beings, all must be disciplined by means of love and compassion. The consecration of mastery of the *Dharma* is bestowed! OM VAJRAKRODHA HŪMKĀRA HŪM! GARJA GARJA PHAṬ! OM AḤ HŪM SVĀHĀ. VAJRAHŪMKĀRA A Ā ĀVEŚAYA!”

The master then holds his *kīla* towards the eastern direction and invokes Krodhavijaya and his group, who are urged to bestow upon the disciple the empowerment of mental ability (*citta*).

In like manner he turns to face the southeast, the south, southwest and so on, invoking in turn all the *krodharājas* of the ten directions together with their consorts and animal-headed emanations and he establishes them all within the body of the disciple.⁵⁵⁸ Due to their blessings the disciple receives, in due order, the consecrations of supremacy (*vaśitā*) in knowledge (*jñāna*), life span (*āyus*), pure birth (*upapatti*), joyful aspiration (*adhimukti*),⁵⁵⁹ material possessions (*pariṣkāra*), deeds (*karma*), prayer (*praṇidhāna*) and miracle power (*rddhi*).⁵⁶⁰ Thus those secret consecrations are bestowed.⁵⁶¹

Now the empowerments for the fierce rites of slaying are bestowed. As the *ācārya* entrusts into the hands of his disciple all the various wrathful substances and weapons that cause death, the discus (*cakra*) and the fiery pit (*agnikuṇḍa*),⁵⁶² he recites the next verse from the BRT ending with the words: “... the signs and symbols of success must be shown and the *siddhi* of the *kīla* be bestowed!” He then adds: “JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ. NR TRI ŚATRŪN MĀRAYA ṚBAD!”, and summons the speedily-moving messengers with the words, “HŪM. The time has come for the *mahāsamaya*! ...”, etc., as in Chapter Five of the BRT.

557. B notes that the *ācārya* should roll a ritual *kīla* between the palms of his hands as he recites this prayer, after which he uses it to bless the crown of the disciple’s head.

558. Text B specifies the points of the body to be touched with the ritual *kīla* during the consecrations. The gods from the zenith enter via the crown of the head, those from the east enter the heart (centre of the chest), those from the southeast via the right breast, south through the upper right arm, southwest the right shoulder blade, west between the shoulder blades, northwest the left shoulder blade, north the upper left arm, northeast the left breast and those from the nadir enter the disciple’s body via the base of his spine.

559. All manuscripts repeat *dharma* here.

560. Definitions of these ten *vaśitās* are to be found in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, 70, 8–18, where they are said to be acquired by a *bodhisattva* on the eighth stage. They are listed again, below, within the present text and once more in the text that follows but, despite their evident status as a category of sacred *dharma*s, their presentation here is neither consistent nor complete. Apotheosized in feminine forms, the ten are joined by Tathatā and Buddhobodhiprabhā to form a retinue of twelve goddesses in the *Dharmadhātu-maṇḍala* as described by Abhayākaragupta, *Niṣpanmayogāvalī*, 19.

561. Only text C makes this point, the line is missing in the other two manuscripts. A8, 81–4.

562. In Tibetan ritual this pit does not necessarily contain a lighted fire but may simply be a triangular iron box regarded as an inescapable prison.

These speedy messengers are incited by means of the DHADDHI *mantra* to drag forth the enemies and obstructors so that they may be slaughtered. The *ācārya* holds aloft the ‘transfixing nail’ (*gdab phur*) and addresses the demons thus:

“HŪM. Because the supreme mind of enlightenment has arisen within us, we *vidyādharas* are the representatives of the *Jinas* of the three times. All you arrogant, trouble-making enemies and obstructors who interrupt us, steal our *siddhis*, persecute us and shorten our life-spans, are now dragged forth here in an instant due to the blessings of the *mahākrodha* Vajrakīla. Now you must really be killed and experience the pain of your bodies being ground down to dust! OM LAṂ HŪM LAṂ STAMBHAYA NAN. MOHA GHAYA BHAGAVAN. ŚIKRIN VIKRIN VAJRAHŪMKĀRA HŪM HŪM PHAṬ PHAṬ. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA JAḤ HŪM VAṂ HOḤ SARVAVIGHNĀN VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA HŪM HŪM PHAṬ PHAṬ. VAJRAHŪMKĀRA HŪM A.”

Thus the empowerment for the fierce rite of destruction is bestowed upon the disciple.⁵⁶³ As the *ācārya* flings a mixture of white, red and black mustard seeds, iron and copper filings and the ashes of a corpse towards that poisonous effigy (*dug gi ngar glud*) he recites the long *mantra* of incitement and instructs the ferocious deities thus:

“HŪM. Those obstructors who interrupt our *siddhis*, those vicious beings with vindictive minds, must be seized, beaten and securely bound! They must be recognized and separated from friends! Drag them forth immediately and make them silent! They must be thrown down and oppressed! Having come under my power, they must listen to my commands!”

Then, taking up the *kīla* of the oath-bound ones, the *ācārya* says:

“HŪM You host of servants and messengers who are obedient to your orders! You who took your oaths in former times should come here now in fulfilment of those vows and quickly demonstrate the accomplishment of your tasks!”⁵⁶⁴

Then the disciple is entrusted with the curved flaying knife (*karttari*) of the ‘killers’ (*ghātaka*).⁵⁶⁵

“HŪM. Whatever evil being there may be who violates the secret orders of Vajra(dhara), that one will have his skull smashed to a hundred splinters by the powerful might of the *mahākrodharāja*! Listen well, you hosts of obstructors and misleaders, and do not transgress my orders!”

Then the effigy is smeared with blood and poison and the enemy is warned that, whether he be god or demon, any arrogant being with vicious mind who causes trouble for the Dharma will immediately be deprived of his power and skill. “SARVA ANAYA HŪM PHAṬ

563. A8, 84–6.

564. A8, 86–7.

565. The *karttari* is not a weapon normally associated with these animal-headed emanations of the *daśakrodha* kings, generally described in the texts and depicted in art as wielding *aṅkuśa* and *kīla*.

...”, etc.⁵⁶⁶ There then follows the empowerment of the vajra hammer and ladles for the sacrificial fire (*homadarvī*). As those implements are placed into the hands of the disciple the *ācārya* recites:

“Beat! You blazing vajras, beat! Having had their hearts burnt up on the pinnacle of vajra fire, all those evil-minded ones who transgress my orders must have their bodies beaten down to pulp! HŪM HŪM HŪM PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ!”

Then the empowerment of union. The disciple should go through the stages of self-generation, as outlined in the *adhivāsana* section above, until he arises as the ferocious vajra couple (*rdo rje drag po 'i zung*).⁵⁶⁷ He should complete the essential part of the ritual activities, performing the *sādhana* until he comes to the section of offerings (*gaṇacakra*) and the presentation of *bali*.⁵⁶⁸ He should generate the *daśakrodha* kings clearly within his own body and their ten wrathful queens within the body of his consort *Ṭṛptacakra*. Outwardly he should meditate upon the visible forms of the deities whilst inwardly he concentrates either upon the subtle nervous system of the *nāḍīs* or upon the *mantras* in their hearts.⁵⁶⁹ In that way the disciple generates the *maṇḍala* of union (*sbyor ba 'i dkyil 'khor*) and he purifies the outer world and all living beings with the radiant rays of light that emanate from his body as he recites the *mantra*.⁵⁷⁰

Now, in order to receive the empowerments within that *maṇḍala*, the disciple should visualize himself very clearly in the form of the *yuganaddha* deity Vajrakīla. Then, as (the *ācārya*) murmurs BHAGAVAN, the disciple should imagine the syllable OM at the base of the father's five-pronged vajra, HŪM at its midsection and PHAṬ at the tip. In the centre of the mother's eight-petalled lotus the red syllable A should clearly be seen. Muttering ŚIKRIN causes the union of the father to expand and VIKRIN, the bliss of the mother to increase.⁵⁷¹ As (the *ācārya*) says ŚIKRIN ANAYA, the couple engage in the non-dual play of great enjoyment and from the sound of that union arise the syllables JAḤ HŪM VAḤ HOḤ. Saying KATHAM, the twenty-one deities all unite and thus the disciple experiences bliss.

“As the heart burns up on the pinnacle of vajra fire, from the centre of the sky arises the *bindu* which enters the door of life and one should meditate upon it in the centre of the heart. May the achievement of the Universal vajra be attained! By means of the blazing great blue weapon, great wisdom spontaneously arises.”

With these words (derived from three separate verses of the BRT), *bodhicitta* is brought forth and implanted.⁵⁷²

566. A8, 87.

567. All manuscripts read *rdo rje drag po 'i zungs ma*.

568. Text B says: “up as far as the section of praising the deity”.

569. Called here *citta 'i dbus*, “the centre of the (conscious) mind”.

570. A8, 88.

571. Could these be corruptions of *śīkarin* (spurting water) and *vikārin* (feeling emotion, falling in love)?

572. Thus as the disciple implants semen (relative *bodhicitta*) within the *yoni* of his consort, enlightenment (absolute *bodhicitta*) is implanted within his own heart.

“HŪM. In the blazing *yoni*s of the wrathful mothers, the pounding of *vajra* hammers destroys even those who are gods! KATHAM KATHAM KATHAM HŪM HŪM HŪM PHAT PHAT PHAT ...”, etc.

Reciting thus, *bodhicitta* is increased.⁵⁷³ Eventually the seminal fluid is reabsorbed from the secret *yoni* of the consort. Being drawn back into the father’s *vajra*, it ascends the central *nāḍī* to the skull. Finally the mother herself dissolves into light and is absorbed into the *mūlacakra* of her lord.⁵⁷⁴ The disciple is then instructed to meditate upon the whole assembly of gods in the *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla who are such that the reality of their forms can never be expressed (*anabhilāpya*), shining with brilliant light. Their speech is the spontaneous sound of the *dharmatā* beyond the limits of expression and their minds are settled in the natural sphere which cannot be described, free of all objectifying thoughts (*’dzin rtogs*). As he abides in this contemplation, he should recite this prayer of ultimate truth (*yang dag don kyi bden pa*):

“The truth of *dharmatā*! The blessings of secret *mantra*! The power of the Buddhas! Now is the time for a display of violent sorcery for those are the very actions which are necessary!”

The master then dispatches the offerings to their natural place and dissolves the created *maṇḍala* to its pure state.⁵⁷⁵ Finally the *guru* sprinkles the disciple with water from the vase and thus he is consecrated as a representative of the *Jinas* (*rgyal tshab*). This empowerment of self-arising spontaneous appearance which is an initiation into the uncreate, a treasury of precious consecrations taken from the wrathful *Svayambhūsvodaya-tantra*, is completed.⁵⁷⁶

Text C finished several pages ago and A finishes here. Text B, however, goes on to rejoice in the great virtues of this series of consecrations and to explain that, through the power thus bestowed upon the disciple, his body, speech and mind are purified so that he will arise as a Buddha in the pure land of Vajrasattva. A benedictory prayer (*praṇidhāna*) is appended which is said to have been spoken by the great *guru* Padmasambhava for the benefit of his disciple Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal at the time when she herself first received this very empowerment. Later, in the lion’s fortress of Bhutan, it was repeated for the king and twenty-four disciples on the occasion of their empowerment after which it was written down and hidden away in Ri-bo bKra-bzang in the white treasury of conch within the triangular rock cave that is shaped like a fire pit.

“Due to receiving the empowerments of Hūṃkāra, his consort, and their assistant *piśācīs*, the faults of sexual misconduct⁵⁷⁷ are abandoned and one gains mastery of the process of birth. May the pure understanding of the

573. By means of this verse from the root *tantra* and the pounding *mantra*, the disciple is urged to experience such bliss that he will no longer incline toward lower *yānas*.

574. A8, 88–9.

575. By which is meant *śūnyatā* in both cases. The *balis* are placed upon the temple rooftop for the birds to eat and the coloured powders of which the *maṇḍala* was composed are swept up and entrusted to the care of the *nāgas* inhabiting the nearest river or lake.

576. A8, 89–90.

577. The standard list of ten wrong deeds (*daśaduścaritāni*) begins here.

perfection of *jñāna*⁵⁷⁸ arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Krodhavijaya and his retinue, the faults of taking what was not given are abandoned and power over material possessions is gained. May the perfection of wisdom (*prajñā*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Nīladaṇḍa and his retinue, the faults of wrong view are abandoned and mastery of wisdom is gained. May the perfection of skill in means (*upāya*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Yamāntaka and his retinue, the faults of taking life are abandoned and the power to prolong one's lifespan is gained. May the perfection of meditation (*dhyāna*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Ārya Acala and his retinue, the faults of speaking lies are abandoned and the power of prayer is gained. May the perfection of patience (*kṣānti*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Hayagrīva and his retinue, the faults of slander are abandoned and mastery of *Dharma* is gained. May the perfection of enthusiastic perseverance (*vīrya*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Aparājita and his retinue, the faults of foolish prattle are abandoned and supremacy of mental ability is gained. May the perfection of generosity (*dāna*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Amṛtakuṇḍalin and his retinue, the faults of abusive speech are abandoned and mastery of ritual activity is achieved. May the perfection of prayer (*praṇidhāna*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Trailokyavijaya and his retinue, the faults of malice are abandoned and mastery of miracle power is gained. May the perfection of strength (*bala*) arise! Due to receiving the empowerments of Mahābala and his retinue, the faults of conceit⁵⁷⁹ are abandoned and the power of joyful aspiration is gained. May the perfection of morality (*śīla*) arise!⁵⁸⁰

Due to the empowerment of the body as a deity, all the sins of the body are purified. May the power of meditation upon the body as a *maṇḍala* of gods arise! Due to the empowerment of speech as *mantra*, all the sins of speech are purified. May the power of the full potential of speech arise! Due to the empowerment of mind with the symbolic *kīla*, all evils of thought are overcome. May the understanding of one's own mind as the *dharmakāya* arise!

Due to this empowerment within the *maṇḍala* of the profound Vajrayāna, may all virtues gain the power of the wish-fulfilling jewel! Due to these consecrations with the symbolic articles of the gods, may the power to slay all the haughty enemies and obstructors be gained! Due to the empowerments of the three supreme sons,⁵⁸¹ the three root *kleśas* are

578. The standard list of the ten perfections (*daśapāramitā*) begins here although the order in which they are presented is unusual.

579. The text reads *rlom sems* (conceit) but, according to the list in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, it should read *brnab sems* (covetousness).

580. All manuscripts repeat *praṇidhāna* and *kṣānti* here, the power and perfection already allocated to Ārya Acala.

581. In this text: Aparājita, Hayagrīva and Amṛtakuṇḍalin.

abandoned. May the *siddhis* of body, speech and mind arise! Due to the empowerments of the twelve oath-bound protectors (in three groups of four), may the power to annihilate the four *māras*, the *tīrthikas* and the groups of misleaders, enemies and obstructors arise! Due to the empowerments of the four goddesses who guard the gates, mental habit patterns (*vāsanā*) are purified as the four boundless minds. May the four rites be achieved without limit!

Oh, you fortunate disciples. You *vajra* brothers and sisters who have today received all these empowerments of secret *mantra* within the profound *maṇḍala* of Vajrasattva. As a result of these empowerments, the ten non-virtues which act as causes for rebirth in the states of woe are all purified. You must therefore perfect the nature of Vajrasattva and reach the stage of a *samyaksambuddha*. May you protect the oaths and commitments with your life! Thus the ten *pāramitās* are attained. Through the complete attainment of the *maṇḍala* of the Vajrayāna, may you quickly ascend the thirteen *bhūmis* of Vajradhara!

The text finishes here with a final note to the effect that, as he makes this prayer for the benefit of his disciples, the *guru* should scatter flowers upon their heads.⁵⁸²

Now, with regard to the rite of empowerment into the black *kṣura* cycle of Vajrakīla, Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem is supposed to have found in the black iron cache to the north the considerably shorter text known simply as the *sPu gri nag po'i bdang chog* (A14, B63, C20), according to which the empowerment itself serves three primary functions. The first of these is the consecration of the mind as awareness, the second is the consecration of the symbols as personal emblems, and the third is the consecration of the *yogin's* own emanated form as the resultant fruit of Buddhahood. With regard to the first of these, the self empowerment (*svādhiṣṭhāna*) through which the mind becomes known as 'the king of awareness' (*vidyārāja*) is established by means of the *maṇḍala* of eleven *kīlas* embedded in the ground of all-pervading light. The consecration of the *mudrās* as personal tokens has three parts: the consecration of symbolic articles, the consecration of the hand symbols (*hastacihna*) and the consecration of the five qualities of desire. The text goes on to explain that the symbolic articles are white mustard seeds, *amṛta* nectar, the sacred crown, the *vajra* and bell, the vase and the eight articles of the charnel ground. The hand symbols are eleven *kīlas*.⁵⁸³ Nothing further is stated at this point with regard to the consecration of the five qualities of desire, nor are any comments made at any stage with regard to the third purpose of the rite: the consecration of the *yogin's* own body as the resultant fruit. The rite itself is said to consist of five main stages: 1) Drawing the *maṇḍala*, 2) Gathering the requisite articles, 3) Invoking the deities through the various steps of *sādhana*, 4) Actual bestowal of the empowerment and, 5) Prayers of benediction when all else has been completed.

582. B12, 586–9.

583. A14, 124–5.

1) Firstly, as for the drawing of the *maṇḍala*: within a square, one armspan across, should be drawn a circle and, within that, a triangle. Around the edge of the circle should be drawn a wheel (*cakra*, but usually drawn as an eight-petalled lotus) with eight spokes, which should then be adorned with eight semicircular moons. Within each moon should be placed a triangle. Then the courtyards and doorways and so on of the enclosing palace should be drawn on all sides.

2) The indispensable articles required for the rite are said to be eleven *kīlas*, a skull with auspicious markings, some white mustard seed, a *vajra* and bell and a five-lobed crown.

3) The rite begins with the purification of a ritual vase and its transformation into the divine palace of the gods by means of the syllable BHRŪM, just as in the rite above. Then the individual grains of white mustard are transformed into deities and so on, as before, until the *maṇḍalas* of residence and residents are established within the vase and offerings have been presented to them. Almost the same words are used to describe this process in both ritual texts but the *mantras* given are different. In this case, however, atop the vase is placed neither skull nor drawing of the *maṇḍala*.

The text then discusses the procedure through which the major deities of the *maṇḍala* are to be established within symbolic *kīlas* arranged upon the diagram on the ground. Each of those eleven *kīlas* should be blessed eight times by performing the ritual of inviting the god to be present within it. Each invited deity should then be presented with offerings and praise and so on in the manner explained in the *sādhana* texts (looked at in our next chapter). It is said that the power of the *kīlas* to bestow the blessings of empowerment upon the disciple arises during that period while the *mantras* that cause the deity to approach are being recited.⁵⁸⁴

Then there follows the ritual of the disciple's entry into the *maṇḍala*. First of all the disciple should bathe (a sprinkle of water on the head from a ritual vase is all that is generally deemed necessary by Tibetans with respect to this injunction). Then, reciting the *mantras* of the *daśakrodha* kings, the *ācārya* should expel the *vighnas* and meditate upon the *raṅṅācakra*. The disciple should then offer the fee for his empowerment and the 'maṇḍala of offering' in which he renounces all attachment to this world.⁵⁸⁵

A note in the margin of text A says that the eyes of the disciple should be blindfolded at this point (symbolic of his current unenlightened state). Nowhere in the subsequent text, however, does it ever say that the blindfold should be removed.

The disciple then takes refuge in the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala*, generates *bodhicitta* and promises to adhere to the general pledges of the five families.⁵⁸⁶ After that he makes this plea to his *guru* in words taken from the BRT:

“Kyai! *Vajrācārya*, please listen to me! I pray that the deities of the Universal *kīla* and you *vidyādharas* who are the representatives of the Buddhas of the three times will bestow upon me the empowerments and *siddhis*.”

584. A14, 125–6.

585. See Sangpo & Hopkins, *Tantric Practice in Nying-ma*, 154–60.

586. See S. Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā*, 406 or SDPT, 102, for the pledges of the five families.

There then follows exactly the same conversation between *guru* and disciple as found in the previous rite except that, in this case, the *guru* explains to his disciple that, if he is able to keep his vows pure, sipping the water of sacred oaths will cause him to become the *jñānasattva* (instead of Vajrasattva, as said above). An interlinear note in text A adds that, as the disciple swallows the drops of nectar placed upon his tongue at that time, the blessings of all the *maṇḍala* deities descend into his body.⁵⁸⁷

Then the disciple, in a state of perfect mindfulness, should recite the *mantra* of the deity and instantaneously arise in the form of the glorious Vajrakīla with three faces, six arms and four legs spread wide, etc. Texts B and C describe him as standing in non-dual union with his consort but A has two lines in which Tr̥ptacakra is mentioned by name and in which she is described as the great consort whose right arm embraces her lord and whose left presses a skull full of blood to his lips.

The great *bindu* from the depths of the sky then enters the disciple's door of life and so on, and the text goes on to describe the deity's ferocious retinue in verses taken from Chapter Three of the BRT, as above.

Then, from the OM, ĀḤ and HŪM in the forehead, throat and heart of himself clearly visualized in the form of Vajrakīla, rays of light radiate out to invite the *maṇḍala* of *jñānasattvas* and the disciple says: "HŪM. In order to receive the *siddhis* and empowerments ...", and so on, as before. Summoning the wisdom deities, the disciple should contemplate that his ordinary body, speech and mind truly become the actual Body, Speech and Mind of the *bhagavat* Śrīvajrakumāra.⁵⁸⁸

4) In the guise of the deity, the disciple then receives from his preceptor the various cult articles beginning with the grains of white mustard. As the *guru* hands these over he says:

"HŪM. These grains of white mustard are the most potent of magical substances. They grow in the land of the heroes (*vīra*), their aspect is that of the *bhagavat*, their *mantra* is that of Vajrapāṇi (HŪM) and their activity is the subjugation of enemies and obstructors. Due to the empowerment of this potent article, oh fortunate disciple, you yourself gain the strength to overthrow all enemies and obstructors."

Then, as the disciple accepts from him a few drops of nectar, the *ācārya* recites:

"HŪM. This sacred substance of swirling nectar is greatly enjoyed by those who have gathered the three worlds under their sway. This fivefold powerful nectar arising from desire annihilates the five families and renders them free of birth and death. The empowerment of this swirling nectar is now bestowed upon you. OM ĀḤ HŪM VAJRĀMR̥TA-ABHIŚIṆCA AM OM ĀḤ HŪM SVĀHĀ."

Next is the consecration of the five-lobed crown which is bestowed with the same verse as found in the empowerment rite of the *mahottara* cycle above but for which the *mantra* given here is RATNAMUKUṬA-ABHIŚIṆCA MAṀ TRAM TRAM TRAM TRAM TRAM.

587. A14, 126–8.

588. A14, 128–9.

Then the disciple is entrusted with the *vajra* and bell as the master explains to him that it is the great empowerment of wisdom and means (*prajñopāya*) and that, whoever maintains the awareness of *vajra* and bell, transforms *saṃsāra* into *nirvāṇa* by purifying it of all faults. OM VAJRAPRAJÑĀBHAVA-ABHIŚIŅCA HŪM.⁵⁸⁹

Following that, as the disciple is given sips of water to drink from the vase, the *guru* recites the verse cited in the previous ritual: “The activities of Buddhahood must be fulfilled ..., etc.”, and, as he recites the combined *hrdaya* of all the *maṇḍala* deities, he bestows the various powers of those deities upon the disciple. The difference here is that, whereas in the previous ritual the consecrations were bestowed by a touch of the *kīla* at various points on the disciple’s body, here the deities enter with the drops of vase water through the mouth.

Then the disciple is consecrated with the hand symbols which are the insignia of the gods, beginning with the *kīla* of Vajrakumāra and his consort. The *guru* takes it from the centre of the *maṇḍala* before him and, as he places it between the palms of his disciple’s hands, he says:

“HŪM. From the centre, this is the spontaneously accomplished great deity, the *bhagavat* Vajrakumāra with his supreme consort Tṛptacakra. He has three faces, six arms and stands in a posture of pride. At the midpoint of this *kīla* is a great knot containing the entire *maṇḍala*⁵⁹⁰ and its three-sided blade tapers to a sharp pointed tip. With this very *kīla* of *yuganaddha* Buddhas I empower you, oh fortunate one!”

He then recites the root *mantra* of Vajrakīla, adding KĀYAVĀKCITTA-ABHIŚIŅCA HŪM ĀH, and thus the empowerment of the lord of the *maṇḍala* is bestowed.

Then, one by one, the *kīlas* standing in the ten directions are taken up from the *maṇḍala* and entrusted to the hands of the disciple. As he does this, the *guru* explains the nature of the gods that reside within that particular nail and the nature of the empowerment that is bestowed by means of it. As in the previous ritual, these ten deities are associated with the ten *vasitās* but once again their order is jumbled. At the conclusion of each empowerment, the disciple is urged to use it as a skilful method to promote the welfare of all living beings and the *mantras* of the individual deities are recited to invoke their presence.

Following the empowerments of the *maṇḍalādhīpati* and the *daśakrodha* deities, the text goes on to say that the empowerments of the four gate-guarding goddesses are to be bestowed. By means of these empowerments of the goddesses from the east, south, west and north, the faculties of love (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*pramuditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*) are said to be gained.⁵⁹¹

Now the disciple is consecrated with the eight articles of the charnel ground in order to adorn those *herukas* of the ten directions abiding within his body. The first adornment is a cloak of freshly flayed wet elephant skin, through which the empowerment of the

589. A14, 129–30.

590. In the meditation of the *bhavakīla* it is the knot at the top of the *kīla* that contains the *maṇḍala* of the gods.

591. A14, 131–4.

dharmadhātu is gained. A skirt of tiger skin is said to provoke terror. Dangling bunches of snakes are the revolving ornaments.⁵⁹² An upper garment of full human hide bestows the power to brighten the darkness of ignorance (by removing the veil of the five *skandhas*). A necklace of severed human heads bestows the power of control over the *traidhātuka* (severing all past and future rebirths. Text C says that it bestows the power of controlling the three poisons.) Spots of blood on the cheeks bestow the empowerment of passionate compassion. A smear of grease under the chin bestows the empowerment of the essence of truth and lines of cemetery ash upon the forehead empower the *yogin* to subjugate enemies and obstructors.⁵⁹³

Then there is the consecration of the five qualities of desire:

“HŪM. All that is required in the way of food and drink and all that could be desired of the objects of the five senses, these are the articles which are offered to the hosts of gods of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* (which now reside within the body of the practitioner) and thus the empowerment of the five qualities of desire is gained!”

Then the consecration of the offerings of food and drink is bestowed:

“HŪM. This meat has the qualities of the five *jñānas* and, through the power of its blessings, your own body, speech and mind are consecrated with those five wisdoms and the power of *vajra* life (*vajrāyus*) is gained!”

Then all the foodstuffs that have been set out as offerings upon the altar are blessed so that they become divine food (*naivedya*) and, as it is distributed among all those present (*gaṇacakra*) in accordance with the method outlined in the *sādhana* texts, the disciple should once more present an offering *maṇḍala* and extensive gifts to his teacher.

5) As the *maṇḍala* is dismantled and the various ritual objects are gathered up and put away, elaborate prayers dedicating the merit of the ceremony to the welfare of all beings (*puṇyapariṇāmana*) should be offered as the final stage of the ritual.⁵⁹⁴

592. A play on the word *āvartana* in which the winding motion (*āvartana*) of a snake is likened to the turning away (*āvartana*) of the enemies and obstructors. Text C, however, says that this consecration gives one the power of coiling with the consort in a mutual embrace.

593. A14, 134–6.

594. A14, 136–7.

Chapter Seven

The Activities

Being received into the cult as a member through the foregoing rites of empowerment, devotees of Vajrakīla are expected to assist in the work of manifesting the universal *bhava-kīla* through regular propitiation of the deity, the importance of which is reflected by the large number of *sādhana*s to be found within the three collections.⁵⁹⁵ Indeed, the *sādhana* is a paradigm for almost all subsequent cultic activities, the various aims of which are put forward by shifts in emphasis of its different parts and/or by the addition of new parts.

In the *Byang gter phur pa'i 'phrin las rgyas pa*, a lengthy manual in one hundred and ten folios by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, the main ritual is prefaced by prayers of a general Buddhist nature (the taking of refuge and generation of *bodhicitta*, etc.) as well as liturgy for the invocation of the lineage holders of the Byang-gter Kīla tradition and verses of self-consecration for the *yogin*'s own speech, his rosary, *vajra*, skull-*ḍamaru*, *kīla* and the various offering articles collected for worship of the deity. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms evidently based his work upon several of the short *gter ma* documents to be found within the three collections currently under consideration and it exemplifies the manner in which the ritual performance of a *sādhana* may be elaborated at will.

Among the *gter ma* documents themselves are to be found both *Mahāyoga* and *Atiyoga* texts, those of the *Mahāyoga* being devoted either to the multicoloured *maṇḍala* or to the *maṇḍala* of black deities. Later liturgical works included within the collections tend to a synthesis of these various approaches.

We may take as example the *Phur pa thugs kyi 'phrin las*, 'ritual activities that pertain to the heart of the Kīla' (A45, B42 & C35), in which the stages of meditation for the performance of the black deity's *sādhana* are briefly summarized. This rite is considered to be of such fundamental significance to the cult that, of all the texts in the three collections, it is unique in having been carved onto xylographic blocks for printing and wide distribution.⁵⁹⁶ Unfortunately the printed edition bears no colophon to indicate when, where or by whom the blocks were carved.

595. At least twenty-one texts may be thus categorized, the majority of which are to be found in more than one collection. Outside the three collections, of course, there also exist many such *sādhana*s in the possession of initiates who require no other text for their purposes.

596. It seems, however, that the distribution of printed copies did not reach the compilers of collections B & C, for they include the text in manuscript form only.

The *sādhana* revealed in this text conforms typically to a standard ritual pattern: 1) *Simābandha* (outer purification), 2) Confession of sins (inner purification), 3) Blessing the offerings (secret purification), 4) Contemplation of the three *samādhis* (commencement of the main practice), 5) Generation of the *maṇḍala*, 6) Invitation of the deities, 7) Welcoming the deities as they arrive, 8) Uniting the *jñānasattvas* with their *samaya* counterparts, 9) Praising the divine qualities, 10) Recitation of the *mantra* in order to stabilize the *bhavakāla*, 11) Presentation of offerings to the *maṇḍala* deities in three parts: a) the presentation of primordial purity represented by the upper portion of the *bali*, b) the presentation of that which has been purified, in which a second portion of the *bali* is offered with a confession of sins, and, c) the presentation of impure flesh, blood and bones of slain demons. Following this, 12) the left-overs are taken outside and given to the lesser gods and spirits to whom they were promised in ages past and from whom oaths of fealty may be demanded. 13) The deities are dismissed and the merit of the rite is dedicated to the future enlightenment of all sentient beings.

The actual wording of the text is very simple. Each meditative stage is listed in due order and, for most of the stages, one or two verses are given in which the meditation is described. These verses may be recited by the *yogin* as they are found in the text or they may be amplified from other sources and elaborated as desired. Most sections conclude with a *mantra* through which the meditation is supposed actually to be put into effect.⁵⁹⁷ The ultimate success of the rite is entirely dependent upon the *yogin*'s ability to effectuate these magic spells and therefore the text states at the outset that it is to be practised only by those who have formerly completed their preliminary tantric training (*sngon 'gro, pūrvayoga*).⁵⁹⁸ Only the *Atiyoga* texts (A32 & 35, etc.) stress the worship of the *guru* as the essential factor in the rite that quickly leads to the attainment of *siddhi*.⁵⁹⁹

At the beginning of the rite the *yogin* should turn his face toward the north and meditate upon himself with unwavering concentration as the actual deity Śrīvajrakumāra. He then establishes a protective circle around himself by imagining the ten *krodharājas* issuing forth from his heart and spreading out into the ten directions. These ferocious deities completely bar the way to all impurity and annihilate the ten wrong deeds in order to establish living beings on the path of liberation. While engaged in such contemplation, the *yogin* recites their *bījamantras*.⁶⁰⁰ In order to confess his failings and bless the offerings, the *yogin* recites:

“HŪM. Mahāśrīheruka and your retinue, please listen to me! Previously, throughout beginningless *samsāra*, I have accumulated causes for rebirth in

597. These *mantras* are for the most part omitted here as they add nothing to our understanding of the ritual.

598. The *pūrvayoga* practices of the Byang-gter tradition are elaborated in a text known as *gZer Inga*, “The Five Nails”, an edition of which was published in 1970 from blocks preserved in the mTho-mthong Monastery, Solu Khumbu, Nepal (no further publication data given). It is also to be found with an English translation as vol. 16 in the Byang-gter series by C. R. Lama and James Low.

599. A32, 222; A35, 248.

the states of woe due to falling under the power of the five *kleśas*. This I confess in the presence of the host of wisdom deities. Please grant the *siddhi* of purifying appearances! Be present here in this *maṇḍala*. Bless the offerings and bestow the empowerments!”⁶⁰¹

In the *Che mchog gi 'phrin las* (B11 & C4), a parallel text from the cycle of Mahottarakīla, blessings and empowerments are received in the form of light rays originating from the foreheads, throats and hearts of all the *maṇḍala* deities. As these rays enter the *yogin*'s body, speech and mind he imagines that all the vows of the three *kāyas* are fulfilled and his sins are purified.⁶⁰²

The Mahottarakīla text then deals at length with the establishment of the ‘natural’ foundation of the *maṇḍala* within the body of the practitioner. This is composed of a central area of faeces with swirling white semen to the east, a heap of flesh like a mountain to the south, foaming red blood to the west and a lake of urine to the north. Above this the *yogin* should mentally construct an awning as he binds the tent *mudrā* and around the outside he should visualize an encircling lotus wall.

Placing his hands together, the *yogin* should imagine Vajrakīla between his palms and the *daśakrodha* kings upon his fingers. Seated with his consort upon his lap, the *yogin* should concentrate upon her *yoni* and visualize the syllable *ĀḤ*, red and shining brightly in its centre. He then imagines rays of white light streaming forth from the *OM* at the base of his *vajra*, bright red light shining from the *HŪM* at its midsection and blue light radiating from the *PHAT* at its tip. His ardent desire for the bliss of her ‘secret cavity’ is said to annihilate all worldly attachments.⁶⁰³

Gradually the *yogin* extends this contemplation until he is able to visualize the entire *traidhātuka* united in non-dual bliss. Then the white *bodhicitta* of that union falls down like rain and he imagines the *maṇḍala* base to become a great lake of nectar. Muttering *ACITTA APARACITTA HŪM*, the *yogin* imagines all the *mudrā* deities to shimmer and dissolve into light which is then absorbed into the centre of the nectar and, as he recites the *mantra* of Amṛtakunḍalin, the *yogin* imagines that lake of nectar to seethe and swirl. In the centre of the lake stands a lotus throne with the corpses of demons heaped upon it as cushions. Reciting *HAYAGRĪVA HŪM*, the *yogin* imagines the snarling red-black figure of Hayagrīva holding sword and *kīla* and around him in the four directions, from *HULU HULU HŪM PHAT*, arise his four wives. In the east is the white *rGyas-'debs*, wielding an iron hook. In the south is the yellow *Za-byed*, holding aloft a noose. In the west is the red *rMongs-byed*, wielding fetters and in the north is the green *Tshe-'phel* who holds a bell.⁶⁰⁴

600. The VKMK specifies exactly which seed-syllable corresponds to which deity but in the present text the *mantras* are simply presented as a group at the end of the instructions for meditation. A45, 404–5.

601. A45, 405–6.

602. B11, 526.

603. B11, 527–8.

604. The four wives spring forth from *huluhulu*, explained in the lexicons as the inarticulate sound of pleasure uttered by women. A red-black Hayagrīva holding lotus and *viśvavajra* is depicted with four goddesses conforming to this description in L. Chandra, *Buddhist Iconography of Tibet*, 1, 132–3. Their names, however, are not those given here.

As these four goddesses embrace their lord, the nectar drops of their union fall slowly downwards causing the goddesses to dissolve into light from the feet upwards. As this light is absorbed into the lake of nectar, Hayagrīva himself descends and melts into it until only his upper half remains there as its guardian.

Reciting PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ, the *yogin* should flick a little of the nectar with his finger. As it touches his own body it is absorbed into himself so that he gains the *siddhis* of body, speech and mind. Touching the offering articles, it is absorbed into them so that they become free of blemish and any defect in their preparation is purified and made good. Touching the bodies of the obstructors and demons, they crumble to dust so that victory over them is won.

The carcasses of those slain enemies and obstructors are imagined to have the outer form of a dish of precious offerings while inwardly they have the nature of a corpse full of nectar. Placing a great heart in the centre of that dish of precious offerings, as the *yogin* recites a binding *mantra* he winds a length of wool around the heart reminding himself of the *samaya* that binds his own heart to the deity. The heart is then adorned with the flesh of ignorance and the bones of anger, sprinkled with the bile of pride and immersed in a pool of the seething blood of desire. Imagining the whole of phenomenal existence to be incorporated within that offering, the *yogin* raises it up as a gift to the deities. Outwardly, the text says, he imagines his gift to be presented by the six goddesses of all sensual pleasure while inwardly meditating upon it as consisting of the five wisdoms derived from the purification of the five poisons. Thus all grasping desire, which is the single cause for transmigration throughout the six *gatis*, is utterly destroyed. Binding the *mudrā* called 'blazing', the *yogin* as Vajrakīla gathers together the eightfold consciousness of the slaughtered universe which he establishes within the *nāḍī* of his heart from where he then radiates a *mantra* causing the world to become flooded beneath a tidal wave of blood. That which is visualized outwardly as an ocean of blood, it is said, is inwardly the truth of no-birth and secretly the fecund drops of the mother.⁶⁰⁵

The *yogin* then immerses himself in the three *samādhis* of the *utpattikrama* which rid his mind of mundane conceptions concerning the material world and serve as a basis for the arising of the divine *maṇḍala*. The first *samādhi* is the contemplation of *tathatā*, epitomized here as the *dharmakāya* (*dharmatā*), the second is the arising of an all-pervading compassion and the third is the production of the causal syllable HŪM.⁶⁰⁶ Thus, from the sky-like *dharmakāya* which encompasses all sentient beings with its compassion, the *yogin* should imagine the spontaneous appearance of the syllable HŪM. From this HŪM spring forth the five elements which pile up, one above the other, and upon this foundation rests a Mount Meru made of bones with the *maṇḍala* palace of the gods upon its summit.

This 'ferocious palace' is briefly described in the Black deity text as dark blue in colour, square, with four doors and festooned with ornamentation. Encircling the *maṇḍala* perimeter are a *vajra* fence and a mass of fire that blazes like the conflagration at the end of an aeon.⁶⁰⁷ In the Mahottarakīla text, however, the entire process is described in a

605. B11, 528–30.

606. cf. T. Thondup, *Buddha Mind*, 38.

607. A45, 406.

manner that emphasizes both the inner nature of the *maṇḍala* (as composed of the *yogin*'s own body) and the identification of the *yogin* with the cosmos. Furthermore, it specifically structures the universe in the form of a *kīla*. According to this text, five lights radiate out from a blue syllable HŪM and as they gather back together they cause that great HŪM to shine as bright as the sun and moon.⁶⁰⁸ As the *yogin* recites PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ HŪM LAM, the HŪM spontaneously explodes into the five directions so that within the sphere of non-dual appearance and emptiness it is as if five syllables had suddenly landed upon an open plain in the formation of a *maṇḍala*. Deep space is born from the dark blue PHAṬ and in the centre of that, from a dark green PHAṬ, arises a churning mass of crossed wind. From a dark red PHAṬ arises a blazing great fire like that at the end of an aeon, and from a bright red HŪM comes a swirling seething ocean of blood. Rising up from the centre of the ocean is a shining Mount Meru of bones, metamorphosed from a white syllable LAM. Then all those syllables unite into a single couple and, as dark maroon light shines forth from OM and LAM, the whole universe of phenomenal appearance is transformed into the three-sided *bhavakīla*, the sharp tip of which pierces the very depths of hell. Its lower great knot envelops the *kāmadhātu* of gods and men. The lower half of its octagonal handle encompasses the *rūpadhātu*, comprising the seventeen heavens of the *brahmaloka*, while the upper half comprises the formless realms of the gods of the four infinities. Within its upper knot is the palace of the *Tathāgatas* around which is established the great circle of the *maṇḍala*. Thus the universe assumes the clear appearance of a *kīla*.

The ferocious palace of the *Tathāgatas* within the upper great knot consists of nine blue-black triangles, around the central one of which stand three semicircles of control and a circular border of skulls. The eight pillars inside the palace are composed of purplish human corpses set upon pedestals of tortoise with the planets as their capitals. The great gods Brahmā and the rest are laid across the tops of these pillars to form the sixteen golden beams of the ceiling. Large numbers of corpses of adults and children are spread over the beams to form the rafters and these are plastered over with a mixture of faeces and urine. Wings of birds are then laid across that to form the roof. Looking up, one sees awnings and decorative projecting mouldings, parasols fashioned from corpses, dangling flags of human skin and a thirteen-tiered spire with the heart of Rudra himself upon its peak. Small golden bells hanging from every corner resound with the sound of the Mahāyāna *Dharma*. Looking down upon the ground, one sees that the four sides of the outer perimeter of the central palace are painted green as a sign of the total accomplishment of the four classes of magical activity. Outside this stand the remaining eight dark blue triangles and everything is enclosed within a courtyard, the whole area of which is filled with a swirling agitated ocean of blood.

The walls of the palace are built up of tightly packed dry human skulls with projecting ornaments of freshly severed heads. From the mouth of each skull blazes fire, from each

608. Buddhist thought in general and especially Vajrayāna thought posits radiance as a fundamental quality of mind. The *Pañcakrama*, I, 43, for example, defines consciousness as luminosity (*vijñānam ca prabhāsvaram*) and thus the creative syllable HŪM which is the compassionate energy of the enlightened mind produces, maintains and manipulates all phenomena by means of radiance. Equating this radiance with the lights of sun and moon symbolizes its nature as the indivisible unity of wisdom and means.

nostril issues smoke and rivulets of blood gurgle down from the eyes. The projecting end of every beam is fashioned in the form of a lion's face, from the great jaws of which dangle tangled bunches of writhing poisonous snakes. All around the walls are hung garlands of intestines with pendant hearts, livers, lungs, eyeballs and so on. From the open windows shine the lights of sun and moon and the inside of the palace is filled with goddesses offering all manner of red articles gratifying to the senses. Around the outside of the palace runs a decorative golden frieze hung with dark blue chains and green half-chains. It has an upper apartment that glitters white and a triumphal archway is situated at the approach to each of its four doors. The four doorways in the four directions are each enclosed within a vestibule and each has a threshold made of tortoise and a lintel of *makara*. The individual doorways are distinguished by the caste of snakes whose corpses are employed in their manufacture,⁶⁰⁹ fixed at the feet with nails of meteoric iron and at the head with vicious nails of the eight great planets. Rays of light spread out from the glorious *maṇḍala* to a radius of ten million *yojanas* and it is enveloped in wreaths of powerful incense from piles of smouldering corpses. The entire edifice is without distinction of outer and inner.⁶¹⁰

Both texts go on to explain that in the centre of the palace there is a great *vajra* rock and a lotus throne supporting the discs of the sun and moon with the eight classes of demons piled up like cushions upon which rests the syllable HŪM. Upon the transformation of this syllable into a *vajra*, rays of light radiate out. When the lights return to the *vajra* the *yogin* himself arises in its place in the form of the deity Vajrakumāra with three faces, six arms and four legs spread wide. Standard iconographic descriptions of the deity follow, the essential difference between the black and the multicoloured systems being that in the latter tradition the deity is said to reside in the *yogin*'s heart and to be no bigger than his thumb tip.⁶¹¹

The Mahottarakīla text then goes on to describe the actual body of the *yogin* which here assumes the eighteen-armed form described above in Chapter Three. Within the head, throat and heart of this vast body reside *jñānasattvas* of his body, speech and mind. United with his consort, the *yogin* makes the sacred oath of 'killing by compassion'.⁶¹²

The *daśakrodha* kings that comprise the deity's retinue are described as single-faced in the Black deity text and as triple-faced in that of Mahottarakīla.⁶¹³ The rest of the *maṇḍala* comprises the supreme sons, the four goddesses who guard the gates and the circles of the twelve oath-bound protectors, the *kiṃkāra* servants and the countless messengers and

609. The door to the east is made of white snakes of the *kṣatriya* caste, the southern of yellow *vaiśya* snakes, the western of red *brāhmaṇa* and the northern of black *sūdra*. Cf. Gega Lama, *Principles of Tibetan Art*, 389-390.

610. B11, 531-4.

611. A45, 406-7; B11, 534.

612. B11, 535-7.

613. A45, 407; B11, 538-42. The latter text provides a separate description for each *krodha* king, delineating the colours of the three faces and the attributes held in the six hands. The *piśācī* emanations are also described and the unique feature of this text is that each emanation is said to wield the very weapons carried by her *krodha* lord in his central pair of hands. See below, Table 2.

assistants. By visualizing them all clearly just as they are described, the *yogin* is instructed to cause them actually to be present before him.⁶¹⁴

The next two verses in which the intention of the rite is declared, beginning with the words “HŪM. All those who hold the awareness of Vajrakumāra must bring into effect the universal *vajra* ...” have been noted above in Chapter Five as occurring in both the BRT and the VKMK. They are followed here by a *mantra* not found in those texts that serves to bestow the consecrations of Vajrakīla’s enlightened body, speech and mind: OM VAJRA-KĪLI KĪLAYA KĀYAVĀKCITTA-ABHIŚIŅCA HŪM AḤ.⁶¹⁵

With a verse that continues to follow the wording of the *tantras* very closely, the wisdom deities are invited to approach the *samayamaṇḍala*:

“HŪM JAḤ. In order that we may accomplish the *bhavakīla* and receive the empowerments and *siddhis*, you unchanging host of wrathful *jñānasattvas* please come here! And, having arrived, may you great gods of wrath please accept these outer, inner and secret offerings. Please bestow on us the Kīla *siddhi* and may the signs and symbols of success appear!”

The Mahottarakīla text states that this verse should be recited in a most plaintive tone with a voice like thunder.⁶¹⁶ As before, the descent of blessings is accomplished by means of *mantra* and then the *jñānadevas* are honoured with salutations:

“With single pointed mind we salute Vajrarākṣasa and his retinue in order to maintain divine pride and to subdue the violent conduct of the three classes of beings”.⁶¹⁷

The *jñānadevas* then merge as one into the *samayamaṇḍala* and in this way the *yogin* becomes united with the body, speech, mind, good qualities and enlightened activities of all the Buddhas. Offerings of cooling water for the feet, flowers, incense, lamps, perfume, food and music are then presented, together with all objects of the six senses and the essential medicine, blood and ornamented *bali*. Flesh, blood, bones, the inner organs and gall bladder are offered together with a continuous stream of nectar which is the non-dual mind of enlightenment. In that way, the text claims, all the outer, inner and secret offering articles without exception are presented to the *maṇḍala* deities who are requested to accept them and bestow empowerments and *siddhi*.⁶¹⁸

614. A45, 407.

615. A45, 407–8. The Mahottarakīla text says that by KAṬAŅKATE YETA KARA OM the blessings of the body melt into the crown of the head. JAYE VIJAYE AḤ, the blessings of the speech melt into the throat. ACITTA APARACITTA HŪM, the blessings of the mind melt into the heart. The ability to slay the three realms simultaneously is the *siddhi* of the body. The sound of the *dharmatā* Vajrakīla is the *siddhi* of speech. Self-clarifying meditation on spontaneously arising wisdom is the *siddhi* of mind. B11, 545.

616. B11, 546, which then goes on to describe the minor deities of the *maṇḍala* in some detail. B11, 547–8.

617. A45, 408. The Mahottarakīla text reads: “ŚRĪVAJRA NAMAḤ. In truth all *dharmas* and oneself are free of duality. In the state of absolute truth we salute the *maṇḍala* of deities and present these offerings.” B11, 548.

618. A45, 408–9. The Mahottarakīla text reduces the long list of offering articles mentioned here to the three essentials of medicine, blood and *bali*. These, however, are presented in elaborate fashion with their symbolism fully examined. B11, 548–9. Cf. below, Chapter Twelve.

The Black deity *sādhana* continues by honouring the body of the lord Vajrakīla, praising it as the quintessential splendour of all *Tathāgatas* of the three times without exception.⁶¹⁹ His consort is honoured as the glorious clarity of unoriginated pure consciousness. The ten *krodharājas* are praised as the ones who bestow liberation through mastery of the ten *bhūmis*, while their ten consorts are honoured as possessing the ultimate meaning of the ten *pāramitās* which purify the ten non-virtues. The assembled host of supreme sons are praised as those who, through the strength of their compassion, ‘liberate’ all vicious trouble-makers and the twenty animal-headed emanations are honoured as the ones who liberate the twenty *kleśas* in their own place. The four fierce goddesses who guard the gates are praised for their enthusiasm in protecting against outer and inner obstacles. Finally, respects are paid to the host of minor protectors around the *maṇḍala* periphery who have taken solemn pledges in the presence of the *Jinas*. The instruction in the text at this point is to recite the *hṛdayas* of all these deities as much as possible.⁶²⁰

Following that, offerings are presented to the entire assembly (*gaṇacakra*)⁶²¹ from the highest gods to the lowest. To begin with, the offerings are purified by fire, air and water⁶²² and blessed by the syllables OM AḤ HŪM, symbolic of enlightened body, speech and mind. Incited by the sound of HŪM, the wisdom *maṇḍala* of wrathful ones is invited to be present at the feast in order that the *bhavakīla* may be accomplished and empowerments and *siddhis* received. The offerings that they are asked to accept are as before but on this occasion they are referred to in Sanskrit with the prefix *vajra* (*vajrārghya*, *vajrapuspa*, etc.). They are described as consisting of the purest ingredients, “an unsurpassed array of offerings from which rays of light of the *pañcajñānas* radiate out, adorned with the excellent sensual qualities of all that could be desired” and the bliss that they bestow is said to fulfil all broken vows.

The actual presentation of these marvellous offerings is in three parts. The first part⁶²³ is offered to all the *maṇḍala* deities with the request that, upon accepting it, they avert all disruptions of enemies and obstructors and bestow both supreme and ordinary *siddhis*. The second part⁶²⁴ is offered with a confession of such breaches of sacred obligation that may have been committed by the *yogin* with either body, speech or mind due to

619. The Mahottarakīla text equates the nine heads of the deity with nine wisdoms of the radiantly clear *dharmatā*. The upper three heads are said to gaze with love and compassion upon all those who are to be converted. The middle three are said to bestow the blessings of empowerment and *siddhi* while the three lower faces purify the body, speech and mind. The text then goes on to identify the symbols held in his eighteen hands, equating many of them with lines from the *mūlatantra*. B11, 554–5. See above, Table 1.

620. A45, 409–10.

621. Time permitting, Tibetan lamas generally begin the *gaṇacakra* section with often extremely lengthy liturgies inviting large numbers of *dharmapālas* to the feast.

The two recensions of the Mahottarakīla text (B11 and C4) diverge at this point. Although both texts cover the same ground, their wording is completely different from here on.

622. The outer appearance of the offerings is dissolved into emptiness by burning etc., just as the universe is destroyed at the end of an aeon.

623. In the performance of the ritual, the *karmācārya* would at this point divide the main *bali* cake horizontally into two parts, the uppermost portion of which is now presented to the chief deities of the *maṇḍala*.

624. The first half of the lower portion of the cake.

carelessness and ignorance and the forgiveness of the ‘lords of great compassion’ is requested for all such errors:

“HŪM. The confused minds of all ignorant sentient beings sink under the power of the delusions of discursive thought. Vows are transgressed even when standing at the very door of the great *maṇḍala* of secret *mantra*. Therefore, whatever confusions, errors, lapses and breaches have been committed with regard to either the primary or secondary *samaya* are now confessed in the presence of the *trikāya-guru* and any impurities in the presentation of the assembled offerings and sacred *bali*s are confessed in the presence of the *ḍākinīs* and *Dharma*-protectors.”

Calling out to attract the attention of Vajrakumāra and his retinue, the *yogin* confesses to those ‘embodiments of the Kīla whose nature is divine activity’ all the mistakes he has made due to grasping at (illusory) objects as real. Having failed to perceive the fundamentally pure wisdom nature of the five *kleśas* and having thus been overpowered by confusion, the *yogin* confesses that he has created for himself a dualistic nightmare in which phenomena are either accepted or rejected on the purely arbitrary basis of personal desire. All this is confessed.

For the offering of the third part,⁶²⁵ having prepared an effigy of the enemies and obstructors, the *yogin* should contemplate the truth very carefully⁶²⁶ and separate the victim from his protector gods.⁶²⁷ He then dispatches messengers to summon the minds of the demons and forcibly install them within the effigy. While the messengers spread out in all directions in pursuit of their quarry, the *yogin* should continuously recite E RAṂ PHAṬ RAṂ JVALA RAṂ TRI YAṂ JAḤ NR TRI VAJRĀṆKUṢA JAḤ VAJRAPĀŚA HŪM VAJRASPHOṬA VAṂ VAJRAGHAṆṬĀ HOḤ PRAVEŚAYA A TRI YAṂ JAḤ HUR THUM JAḤ MĀRAYA PHAṬ. When the effigy has truly become the embodiment of demons it is offered to the wisdom deities with the words:

“HŪM. Mahāśrīvajrakīla and your retinue, open your mouths! Your mouths are like the blazing pit of a sacrificial fire with teeth arranged like firewood and tongues like sacrificial ladles. This corpse of the liberated enemies and obstructors is pressed to your mouths. May you reduce every atom of it to dust! OṂ VAJRAYAKṢA KRODHAVIJAYA KHĀHI!”⁶²⁸

The offerings are then shared out for the enjoyment of the gathered assembly. After they have been distributed the remnants are collected together, sprinkled with nectar and offered to the servants and assistants from the *maṇḍala* periphery who are reminded of their former vows and instructed to act upon them, fulfilling the tasks that they promised to per-

625. The remaining portion of the *bali* is offered here, together with an effigy of the sacrificial victim. Jan Gonda notes that grain offerings have been used to represent animal sacrifices since the Vedic period, with the various parts of the grain standing for flesh, blood and bone. *Rice and Barley Offerings in the Veda*, 23.

626. That is, he should begin this section with a recitation of a “prayer of truth” (*satyavākya*), which Edgerton (*BHS Dictionary*) describes as “a solemn statement of truth as a means of magic control of events”.

627. See below, Chapter Nine.

628. A45, 410–12.

form of protecting the doctrine and the doctrine holders.⁶²⁹ The liturgy for this section of the rite is particularly interesting in our text B11 in which many new iconographic details of the minor deities are to be found. There we read that the *yogin* should imagine the offering dish to be a ferocious *maṇḍala* containing an ocean of blood, a mountain of bones and a great heap of human flesh. The deities are then invited as follows:

“HŪM. From the *maṇḍala* of human flesh piled up like a mountain, you thirty-two wrathful *ḍākinīs* please come here! From the palace with walls built of skeletons, you twenty-eight *īśvarīs* please come here! From the charnel ground of piled-up hearts old and new, you seven mothers and four sisters all bound under oath please come here! From the *maṇḍala* composed of fresh and decaying bones, you three hundred and sixty messengers please come here! DĀKINĪ HŪM HŪM JAḤ SARVA-PAÑCĀMṚTA KHĀHI.

HŪM. Why was the first portion of the offering not given to you? That was presented to the wisdom deities from whom empowerments were received for the benefit of beings. Why was the middle portion of the offering not given to you? That was presented to the mother goddesses and *ḍākinīs* of high rank from whom the *siddhis* of the four magical activities were requested. Why have these remains not been touched by our mouths? They are presented to you servants and obedient messengers as reminders of your former vows. Without mixing everything up into one, you must each perform your duties in accordance with your rank. In the sphere of the *dharmatā*, however, all things are equal!

HŪM. In the red semicircular *maṇḍala* of control, the remainder of the offerings are piled up like Mount Meru and the four continents. Waves of the blood of lust and desire are bubbling, heaps of the bones of anger rattle and chunks of the flesh of ignorance quiver. The sensuous delight of the fivefold nectar is beyond imagination. You thirty-two oath-bound worldly *ḍākinīs*, receive this offering of Mahāśrī’s orders and perform your tasks as promised on behalf of we *yogins*.

You *vajrakimkāras* of great wrath whose ferocious breath pervades the three realms, *vajrayakṣas*, *vajrarākṣasas*, *vajrabhūtas*, *vajraśvānas*, *vajrayamas*, *vajravetālas*, *vajra* lords of death, *vajrakālarātris*, the great ones who catch the breath with an iron hook, the obedient ones who carry away calumny, you who move like the formless wind, you who push back trouble as if moving in a dance, you who delight in the acquisition of a thousand skulls, who cast beckoning gestures to the triple world, the great ones who liberate the threefold world with compassion, you great *mudrās* of the assembly and so on, together with all your retinue of *vajra* sons and daughters, the eighteen great *kimkāras* who liberate the triple world—the sensuous delight of the fivefold nectar is beyond imagination. Receive this offer-

629. A45, 412–13.

ing of Mahāśrī's orders and perform your tasks as promised on behalf of we *yogins*.

Displaying demonic forms utterly impossible to bear, you twenty-eight powerful *īśvarīs*—the sensuous delight of the fivefold nectar ..., etc.

Daughter of Indra,⁶³⁰ shining goddess whose noose is composed of rays of sunlight; daughter of the *ṛṣi* Agni, shining goddess with the lustre of fire whose garland is composed of lightning; daughter of Yamarāja, blazing ferocious daughter, she of the *vajra* mortar; daughter of the *rākṣasa* king, shining goddess of death wielding a sword; daughter of king Varuṇa, great blazing one attached to scent; daughter of Vāyu, king of the wind, you shining goddess with an eagle overhead; daughter of the *yakṣa* king, all-pervading shining goddess whose face is a shooting star; daughter of the king of obstructors, great shining goddess with the ears of an ox (elephant?), to all you eight great blazing goddesses—the sensuous delight of the fivefold nectar ..., etc.

She who dessicates the triple world in an instant, she who brandishes a sword and she who wields a net, she with a corpse, she who summons and she who bestows sensual experience, to all you *mātrīs*⁶³¹—the sensuous delight of the fivefold nectar ..., etc.

In the east is the swiftly moving one, princess of the *gandharvas*; in the south is she who hurries, princess from the realm of Yama; in the west is the swiftly moving one, princess of the *nāgas*; and in the north is she who hurries, princess of the *yakṣas*. To you four great sisters who have taken oaths with sincerity—the sensuous delight of the fivefold nectar ..., etc.

Messengers in the eastern direction, you sixty women in the family of Conch moving faster than the wind, you must perform your task of slaying the enemies and obstructors! Messengers in the southern direction, you sixty women in the family of Iron moving faster than the wind, you must perform your task of slaying the enemies and obstructors! Messengers in the western direction, you sixty women in the family of Copper moving faster than the wind, you must perform your task of slaying the enemies and obstructors! Messengers in the northern direction, you sixty women in the family of (there appears to be a hiatus here. According to C24 the family of the north is called Turquoise. This should be followed by Gold from the nadir and then, from the zenith, those in the family of) Rosewood moving faster than the wind, you must perform your task of slaying the enemies and obstructors! Each of you three hundred and sixty messengers has four faces and four arms, wings, fangs and claws. You grasp at the life force and slay the enemies; to all of you—the sensuous delight of the fivefold ..., etc.

630. Textual hiatus omits Indra's daughter. This group is known as the eight blazing goddesses (*'bar ma brgyad*).

631. One mother goddess appears to have been omitted for there should be seven in this group.

MAHĀMĀṂSA-RAKTA-CITTA-BASUTA-GOROCANA-SARVAPŪJĀ KHĀHI. Thus they are entrusted with their duties.”⁶³²

The last group to be called are the twelve *bsTan-ma* whose sacrificial *bali* is described as excessive and powerful (*lhag la dbang ba*). In accepting this cake they reaffirm their oaths and are instructed to fulfil their appointed tasks.⁶³³ Going outside and scattering the offerings, the *yogin* takes the dish upon which they were gathered and, turning it upside down, he suppresses beneath it the vow-breaking demons. Invoking Vajrakīla and all the deities of the *maṇḍala* by calling upon their former vows, the gods are asked to trample these demons down to dust:

“The dance of pleasure of the glorious great *herukas* stomps upon the hearts of vow-breaking demons. The dance of pleasure of their ferocious consorts stomps upon the hearts of enemies and obstructors. By the pounding thrusts of the wrathful males, their ferocious consorts are filled with pleasure.”

Finally, returning inside the temple or place of meditation, the *yogins* gather up the sacrificial articles and recite auspicious prayers as a general benediction for all beings.⁶³⁴ The *Atiyoga* rites said to have been taught to Padmasambhava in India by Śrīsiṃha⁶³⁵ dispense with the bulk of that discussed above. The emphasis in these short texts is placed upon the mind of the *yogin* who is instructed to abandon mental weariness and contemplate the purity of all *dharmas* that by nature lack any objectivity. Having generated an all-pervading compassion that reaches to the limits of space, in a state of blissful awareness that is free of discursive thoughts he should meditate upon the *maṇḍala* of black deities (described in these texts in orthodox manner) and thus all demons are overthrown.

The *rTsa ba dril sgrub* (A32), however, also presents interesting sidelights on the nature of the Kīla cult. It includes, for example, a detailed description of the magical *kavaca* that may contemplatively be ‘worn’ as a protective charm. Arising in the vast form of the deity, the *yogin* should imagine each pore of his body to be protected by a miniature wrathful guardian brandishing aloft a fearsome weapon and that, all together, these tiny emanations cover him completely as a protective suit of armour. On his navel stands the ferocious Vajragaruḍa who takes as his food all dangerous beings. Conch shell white in colour, this eagle has iron wings, rolling yellow eyes, an indestructible body and should be clearly visualized grasping a serpent in his iron beak and claws.⁶³⁶ This text is also unique in offering guidance to the *yogin* with regard to the problem of demonic possession. All other texts scrutinized in the current study treat demons as (symbolic) outer phenomena, teaching methods for their subjugation requiring the meditator to reach out into the ten directions in order to “drag them forth and slay” them. The present text, however, also considers the necessity of dealing with an offending demon that has taken residence

632. B11, 558–62.

633. The Mahottarakīla text adds here that after the twelve *bsTan-ma* who dwell on the periphery of the *maṇḍala* have received their offerings, the *maṇḍala* itself gradually dissolves from the edges until all surrounding deities are absorbed into the central figure. B11, 562; C4, 61.

634. A45, 413.

635. A32 & 35, etc., found in all three collections. Vairocana, also, is said to have studied the doctrines of Vajrakīla in India under Śrīsiṃha. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 25.

within the *yogin*'s own body. In that case, it is said, one should meditate very deeply upon fire and, with the demon held clearly in mind, burn him up where he stays.

Table 2: Iconography of the Daśakrodha Kings

	colours				attributes ¹		
	body	right face	left face	central face	right hand	left hand	
Hūmkāra (zenith)	sky (deep blue)	white	blue	vajra-conch	bow	arrow	
Krodhavijaya (east)	white	red	green	vajra-conch	trident	discus	
Niladaṇḍa (southeast)	blue	white	red	vajra-conch	club (<i>dbyug tho</i>)	mass of fire	
Yamāntaka (south)	blue-black	black	blue	vajra-conch	club (<i>be con</i>)	club (<i>dbyug tho</i>)	
Arya Acala (southwest)	blue-green	red	maroon	vajra-conch	razor	noose	
Hayagrīva (west)	red	blue	white	vajra-conch	sword	noose	
Aparājita (northwest)	red	yellow	green	vajra-conch	ensign	fan	
Amṛtakunḍalin (north)	green	white	yellow	vajra-conch	<i>viśvavajra</i>	bell	
Trailokyavijaya (northeast)	yellow-green	yellow	red	vajra-conch	(?) <i>khra dong</i> ²	discus	
Mahābala (nadir)	smoke	green	yellow	vajra-conch	hammer	pestle	

Derived from the *rDo rje phur pa che mchog gi 'phrin las* (B11), 538-42

¹ These columns refer to the central pair of hands. Each deity wields a *vajra* and skull in his upper pair of hands and rolls a *kīla* between the palms of the lower. Note that in this text the animal-headed emanations to the right and left of each *khroda* king are also said to carry the attributes listed here.

² Also found as *kha trom*, *kha dong* and *kha tong*.

Chapter Eight

Gaining the Power of the Deity

Having mastered the stages of *utpattikrama* and accomplished the mental transformation of the universe into the vast *maṇḍala* of Kīla deities (*bhava-kīla*), the *yogin*'s next task is to manifest perfect enlightenment within that ideal theatre through the process of *saṃpannakrama*.

The Northern Treasures Kīla text presented as the ultimate “guide to the attainment of unsurpassed enlightenment” is the *dKar po lam gyi sgron ma*, ‘The Lamp of the White Path’ (A9, B15, C6), which is said to be like a lamp illuminating the procedures through which the power of Vajrakīla may be gained. The colophon of the text claims it to be a quintessential instruction derived from *tantras*, taught to Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal by Padmasambhava, and within it are found details of the three *cakras* of body, speech and mind. Certainly the basic structure of the meditation, based upon the three *vajra* syllables (OM ĀḤ HŪM) residing in the *yogin*'s forehead, throat and heart, is fundamental to tantric methodology but its special application here in combination with the condensed DHADDHI *mantra* of the Vajrakīla cycle is most unusual. Innumerable variants of the DHADDHI *mantra* are taught in the texts of the Black deity cycle with the sole purpose of inciting the servants of the Vajrakīla doctrines to set about their violent tasks of attacking the enemy. Within this Mahottarakīla text, however, the *mantra* is internalized and applied directly to the goal of enlightenment. In the absence of any parallel or similar instruction for meditation to be found within the root *tantra* of Mahottarakīla (A3) analysed above, we are unable to determine whether this commentary derives from the personal insight of the teacher⁶³⁷ or from some other, as yet unnoticed, traditional source.

The text begins with a salutation to “the wisdom embodiment of spontaneously arisen great *vajra* wrath” and the statement that this teaching is the quintessence of all the combined *upadeśas* of Vajrakīla within a single succinct explanation. The *yogin* who wishes to practise this meditation, it is said, may either engage the assistance of a *samaya* partner or perform the task alone “in the manner of a lion”. Collecting together the requisite ritual articles he should retire to an auspicious place, blessing and purifying the site in the usual manner. Setting out the *maṇḍala* in its elaborate form, he should arrange upon it the necessities of worship. He should meditate upon the *rakṣācakra* and purify all

637. A similar teaching is to be found in brief in the Mahottarakīla *sādhana* (B11, 536–7) also said to have been taught by Padmasambhava.

the sins of his body and speech. He should bless the three essential offerings of medicine, blood and *bali* and generate the *bījas* of the elements from the sphere of appearance and emptiness. Then, constructing in his mind the divine residence of the gods, he should visualize himself clearly as the deity Vajrakīla seated upon a throne in the non-dual embrace of his consort. Around him he should see the *daśakrodha* kings and their queens together with their retinues of assistants and so on, all generated in accordance with the procedures outlined above. Before him and to his left and right stand the three supreme sons of his body, speech and mind, said here to be the life force of the essential purity of 'liberation'. Having thus established the *samayamaṇḍala*, this should be blessed as wisdom by the descent of the *jñānadevas* and the *yogin*, his own nature perfected as skilful means, should present all the deities with offerings and praise. In this way, applying himself assiduously to the *yoga* of approaching and becoming one with the deity, the *yogin* establishes his mind in divine pride and accomplishes through *mantras* an attitude of supreme *bodhicitta*, utterly free of all worldly hopes and fears.⁶³⁸

Clearly visualizing himself in the form of the great glorious Vajrakīla, the *yogin* should see upon the crown of his head a white wheel with nine spokes upon which is arranged the body *mantra* consisting of nine syllables which bar the doors of nine moral downfalls. In the centre of the wheel stands the syllable OM and around its rim are arranged the letters of Vajrakīla's *hrdaya* called "the *mantra* of violent suppression and repulsion" and the whole wheel blazes with light.

The combined *mantra* to be arrayed upon the crown of his head is given in the text as OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA KĀYAVAJRA KAṬANKAṬE YA YETA KARA IMĀN SARVAVIGHNĀN BAṀ HŪM PHAṬ, explained as follows: The eight seeds of violent suppression (OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA) are the luminous body (KĀYA) marked with the triple VAJRA. By KAṬANKAṬE sins are purified and by many repetitions of YA, the *nirmāṇakāya* is attained. All other beings are purified by YETA KARA (? *yeṣṭhakāra*). Moral downfalls of the body are purified in their own place by IMĀN and all sins of the body are gathered together by SARVA. The heads (of the demons of sin) are crushed by the *yoga* of VIGHNĀN, and by BAṀ the manifestation of *dharmatā* is accomplished. By HŪM, indivisible reality is contemplated and by PHAṬ the *yogin*'s body is liberated as the *nirmāṇakāya*. This is the ultimate goal (*abhiprāya*) of the body on the path of secret *mantra*.

Remaining in a state of ecstatic fixation upon this wheel, the *yogin* recites the *mantra* and imagines the wheel to revolve in an anticlockwise direction as rays of white light stream out to pervade the entire trichiliocosm. As they rise upwards, the light rays summon the hearts of all *Tathāgatas* and present them with offerings. Spreading out in every direction they strike the bodies of all beings in the six classes, purging them of sin, and gathering back together again those rays of light are absorbed into the wheel which then becomes exceedingly bright. As it revolves, each and every defilement within the *yogin*'s body is drawn into the light and burned up like feathers in a bonfire.

At the completion of the *mantra* recitation, the wheel melts into the all-pervading *mahābindu* until it remains like a solitary white pearl, the emblem of the *yogin*'s natural

638. A9, 92-3.

purity, upon the crown of his head. The notion of a material body made of flesh and blood is turned aside and the *yogin's* clearly visible appearance is known to be devoid of inherent nature (*svabhāva*). This is the attainment of *bodhi*, the great secret of the secret Mantrayāna.⁶³⁹

The wheel at the throat is red in colour and also has nine spokes. At its centre is the syllable *ĀḤ* which has the blissful nature of the enjoyment of six tastes and the *mantra* of violent suppression is arrayed around its rim. Upon its spokes are the nine syllables that are the essential means of accumulating *siddhis* which, the text explains, become ineffective if seen by those who have no vows.

The *mantra* of this wheel is given as *OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA VĀKVAJRA JAYE VIJAYE KURU KARA IMĀN SARVAVIGHNĀN BAM HŪM PHAṬ*, about which it is said that the unstoppable eight seeds (as above) arise as the *mantra* of divine speech (*VĀK*) which is the second *VAJRA*. *JAYE* is the speech of utter purity. *VIJA* indicates victory over mundane speech and *YE* purifies all defilements of the speech of others. By *KURU KARA* wisdom arises and by *IMĀN* is shown the ultimate truth⁶⁴⁰ of the natural condition. *SARVAVIGHNĀN* purifies sin. *BAM* is the sphere of speech that pervades the *dharmatā*. *HŪM* contains within itself the nature of unstoppable and *PHAṬ* is the liberation of speech as the *saṃbhogakāya*. Such is the ultimate goal of speech on the path of secret *mantra*.

As the *yogin* begins his recitation of the *mantra*, the wheel flares up in a bright blaze of light which completely envelops his body and purifies him of sin. Radiating outwards, the rays of light delight the *Tathāgatas* of the ten directions who purge away all defilements of speech of the six classes of living beings. Returning to the wheel, the red light is absorbed within it and all defilements of the *yogin's* speech are washed clean as if by water so that both outwardly and inwardly he becomes radiantly pure as if permeated by the light of sun and moon.⁶⁴¹

The *cakra* of light at the heart is blue in colour and has either nine spokes and rim, as before, or else it may be visualized in the form of a *śrīvatsa* with eight corners.⁶⁴² In the centre of that diagram in the heart is located the syllable *HŪM* which is the *bindu* of the indestructible life force itself, the very essence of the wisdom mind. By just this syllable are all worlds emptied and *śūnyatā* made manifest. The eighteen *bījamantras* are said to abide in purity and around them is arrayed the *mantra* of violent suppression.

The secret *mantra* for that profound state is *OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA CITTAVAJRA ACITTA APARACITTA MAMA VAŚAM HŪM MATAM MYAK KARA IMĀN SARVAVIGHNĀN BAM HŪM PHAṬ*, about which it is said that the eight seeds of violent suppression are the self-secret

639. A9, 93–5.

640. C says it shows the two truths.

641. A9, 95–6.

642. Although Sir Monier-Williams in his *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* says that this emblem looks like “a cruciform flower”, in Tibetan art it is always depicted as an endless knot (usually having ten loops) and it is very difficult to see how it could be arranged “with eight corners”. B11, 536, speaks of an eight-faceted jewel in the heart with a three-pronged *vajra* in its centre. *dPal be 'u* may therefore stand here for some kind of gem. In any case, the *mantra* given here has ten divisions (also called “eighteen” by a curious process of reckoning) and yet the wheel that contains it is still said to have nine spokes.

of the mind (CITTA) which is the third VAJRA. ACITTA (inconceivable) is the mind free of faults. The five syllables APARACITTA (unsurpassed mind) is the *vajra* mind which cannot be overthrown by another and the five syllables MAMA VAŚAṂ HŪM are the five *jñānas* which spontaneously arise when all mental fabrications of ignorance are abandoned. MATAM blocks the door to becoming and rebirth. By MYAK KARA, consciousness is purified and by IMĀN the door to the lower realms is closed. SARVAVIGHNĀN purifies all defilements of mind and BAṂ is the mind's self-luminous wisdom. HŪM is the uncontrived understanding of reality and by PHAṬ the mind is liberated as the *dharmakāya*. This is the ultimate goal of the mind on the path of secret *mantra*.

As he performs the recitation, the *yogin* imagines the wheel to blaze with light so that as it revolves it burns away all the defilements of mind. The rays of light that spread out from that wheel make offerings to the hearts of all *Tathāgatas* and as they return they purify all sins of the six classes of living beings. They then gather together and melt back into the wheel. All sins of mind everywhere are cleansed so that the mind becomes like a highly polished mirror within which the *yogin* confidently views all appearances as the natural clarity of wisdom spontaneously arising from the *dharmatā* sphere of emptiness.⁶⁴³

The *yogin* should practise the three goals in that way until the stage of 'heat' (*ūṣman*)⁶⁴⁴ is attained in body, speech and mind. Until then, the text insists, the *yogin* should keep these three wheels as his inexhaustible ornaments and thus purify the habitual patterns (*vāsanā*) of holding to the duality of appearances in terms of subject and object. Ignorance will thereby become illuminated as a state of wisdom and he will attain the perfect three *kāyas*. By means of these meditations the wisdom mind will become clearly manifest and the state of omniscience quickly gained. This *upadeśa* is a 'tree of life' (*srog shing*) composed of unchanging crystal and the *yogin* should know that by putting these instructions into practice, all obstacles will be cleared away so long as he recites these syllables of the condensed DHADDHI *mantra*.

643. A9, 96–7.

644. Heat or warmth is a stage associated in the *sūtras* with the path of *yoga*, the second of the five paths (*mārga*). In this context, however, the term refers to the attainment of a satisfactory climax in meditation.

Chapter Nine

Gaining Control of the Mischievous Spirits

Having attained the highest degree of occult power through total identification with the deity, the *yogin* is now in a position to demonstrate his mastery of the phenomenal world in the fulfilment of his Mahāyāna pledge to liberate all beings from *samsāra*. The way in which he honours that commitment forms the subject matter of both this and the following chapters.

In particular, the *yogin* at this stage should be capable of bringing under control those mischievous spirits who formerly swore an oath of allegiance to support and protect the Vajrakīla *Dharma* and its practitioners and which, if properly coerced, may greatly assist the *yogin* in the execution of his religious duties. Although such occult mastery is often much admired by a largely superstitious public, Buddhist hierophants since the sage of the Śākyas himself have denounced these practices as improper and unsuitable for those whose minds are seriously set on enlightenment. Tāranātha, for example, says that the attainment of power over worldly *dākinīs* is really a hindrance to spiritual progress⁶⁴⁵ and bDud-'joms Rinpoche warns that the practice of black magic is like playing with a sharp weapon that may easily cut off the practitioner's own life.⁶⁴⁶ The popularity of such rites with both *yogins* and laymen alike, however, is evident throughout Tibetan culture at large and amply testified to by the number of treatises dealing with the subject to be found among the material presently under consideration.

The *bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka*, 'Iron Cloak of Obedient Servants' (A10, B19, C7), is one of the rites specifically mentioned in our *them byang* through which the *yogin* may seek to gain control over those 'elemental spirits'. Referred to in its colophon as 'the central heart of *yoga*', it is said to have been taught by Padmasambhava to Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal in the lion's cave at sPa-gro stag-tshang before being hidden away as treasure for the benefit of future generations. The *bSe lcags dung gsum srog gi citta* (B28) indicates it as the means through which Lang-lab byang-chub rdo-rje gained his remarkable occult power although, it may be remembered, the service rendered him by the protectors proved ultimately insufficient to prevent his untimely demise by black magic.⁶⁴⁷ B28, in which

645. D. Templeman, *Tāranātha's Life of Kṛṣṇācārya*, 88.

646. T. Clifford, *The Lamp of Liberation*, 50–1.

647. An account of Lang-lab rdo-rje is to be found above, Chapter Four.

the pith teachings described here are much elaborated, proved invaluable in determining the meaning of the present text.

A drawing of the three concentric *maṇḍala* circles⁶⁴⁸ and so on and the arranging of ritual articles is said to be unnecessary for the practice of this rite⁶⁴⁹ but the *yogin* must have a clear recollection of enlightened intention (*abhiprāya*, the subject of our previous chapter) and be established in the state of *tathatā*. Thus mentally prepared, the *yogin* summons all the servants (*bran*), messengers (*pho nya*) and obedient ones (*bka' nyan*) and tells them that the time has come for the fulfilment of their oaths. Maintaining his position of authority over them through mindfulness of the *sādhana* of Vajrakīla (referred to throughout this text as Vajrayakṣa), the *yogin* recites the *hṛdaya* of the deity (“the *mantra* of suppression and control”) and the individual *mantras* of his wrathful entourage. He then recites “the *mantra* of twice eighteen syllables that pertain to the *māṭṛs*”⁶⁵⁰ and thus the oath-bound ones are summoned by hooking their hearts with their *hṛdayas*. Overpowering them with the fierce *sādhana* of HŪM, the *yogin* should recite the vital *bījas* of the messengers on the day of the full moon and, when they have come, he should remind them of their former vows.

Keeping them suppressed, the *yogin* should recite seven times the *mantras* of the fierce kings Yamāntaka, Hayagrīva and Amṛtakuṇḍalin followed by the words which entrust them with their sacred duties, twice. Those deities then seize the servants by the life force of body, speech and mind and place them before the *yogin* like standing statues.⁶⁵¹ With himself clearly visualized as the god, he should fix his gaze upon the oath-bound ones and strike them with rays of light emanating from the *mantra* revolving in his heart.⁶⁵² As the rays turn around and gather back together, those spirits let out wailing cries of misery. Tormented by suffering, they are guided to the *samaya* and, being thus affirmed in their oaths, they are given their instructions. The signs of success that arise in the awakened

648. The inner circle consists of the *maṇḍalādhipati* and his consort, the intermediate circle is that of the *daśakrodha* kings and the outer circle is the assembly of oath-bound protectors. C32, 340.

649. B28, however, describes in detail a *maṇḍala* which may be drawn specifically in order to accomplish this rite. At the heart of the diagram is a six-pointed star, the points and intermediate spaces of which serve as seats for the twelve chief protectors. B28, 124.

650. The division of the DHADDHI *mantra* (referred to here) into groups of nine, nine and eighteen has already been noted (Chapter Eight, above). It is met with again (this chapter) below.

651. The text at this point offers a short alternative to the full invocation of those three deities in which it is said that, in order to incite them to act, the *yogin* should recite BANDHA, JVALA, CHINDA and with a crazed mind (*yiḍ smyo ba*) he should imagine a blazing weapon upon his tongue and three times he should cast a violent curse against his enemy so that the enemy's head is burst assunder.

652. B28 describes this meditation as follows: Whenever those oath-bound goddesses become rebellious or angry and refuse to obey their orders, the *yogin* should clearly visualize himself as the glorious Vajrakīla with those twelve protectors imprisoned in front of him within a triangular box of iron. Then, from the deity's heart, countless red-black JAḤ syllables should be sent out to strike those mischievous *dākinīs* on the syllables MA in each of their own hearts. Those MA syllables are attracted to the JAḤ syllables like iron needles to a magnet and thus the *dākinīs* are robbed of all self control and summoned helplessly before the *yogin*. Only after they have submitted to his authority and offered up their life essence (*srog snying*) should the *yogin* re-empower them and bind them under oath. B28, 126.

mind are like the experience of carnal pleasure with a woman, the appearance of ferocious carnivores, treasure or the miracle powers of the leprosy *nāga* (*mdze can klu*).⁶⁵³ All defilements vanish as quickly as shadows on the sky but until then the *mantras* should each be recited hundreds of times.⁶⁵⁴

The nectar on the altar should be replenished with a mixture of the finest ingredients and the offerings of nectar, blood and *bali* should be presented. The *yogin* should recite the *mantras* that invoke and incite the helpers and then enjoy the assembled offerings. The secret *mantras* themselves may either be recited separately on that occasion, piling them up like weapons as each one is recited a hundred times, or else all three may be amalgamated into a single long *mantra*: OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA ACITTA APARACITTA MAMA VAŚAṂ TRAG MATAṂ MYAG KARA A IMĀN ŚIKRAṂ STAMBHAYA NAN CHINDA CHINDA HŪṂ PHAṬ. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA JAYE VIJAYE KURU KARA IMĀN JA JA VAŚAṂ JA NAN ŚIKRAṂ STAMBHAYA NAN JVALA JVALA HŪṂ PHAṬ. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA KAṬAṆKATE YA YETA KARA IMĀN KA KA VAŚAṂ KA NAN ŚIKRAṂ STAMBHAYA NAN BANDHA BANDHA HŪṂ PHAṬ. All this is to be recited seven times. Then the abbreviated version, IMĀN VIGHNĀN STAMBHAYA NAN, which is said to be the body, speech and mind of all the deities, followed by DHADDHI MAMA KARMA ŚRĪKRAMA KAṆKA KĀRAYE OM LAM LAM HŪṂ LAM LAM IMĀN VIGHNĀN STAMBHAYA NAN.⁶⁵⁵

The text then gives a *mantra* which, it claims, will effectuate the stages of nourishment and healing (*gso ba*): OM VAJRĀMRTAKUṆḌALI HŪṂ VAJRASAMAYAM IDAM TENA RAKṢAM KĀYAVĀKCITTAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO 'HAṂ SAMAYA IMĀN *beat on the life force of So-and-so* BHYO. Thus, supposedly, the *yogin* refreshes his vows with nectar and unites himself fully with divine body, speech and mind. So doing, the oath-bound ones are deprived of their personal power and put to work as his servants.

This concise, cryptic text ends with an apologia in which it is claimed that the true purpose (*artha*) of secret Mantrayāna, clarified at length in other teachings, is here condensed into 'the triple essence of Vajrayakṣa'. Thus, his white face on the right is said to be the real Yamāntaka, who stirs up the brain blood in the skulls of the four bSe-mo goddesses. His red face on the left is the powerful Hayagrīva, who cuts to pieces the base of the tongues of the four Śvanmukhā sisters. His blue central face is Amṛtakuṇḍalin, who confounds the heart *cakra* of the black *ḍākinīs*. This triple essence is a curse through which the oath-bound servants may be kept under control. Calling them hither with force, they may be incited to attack the enemy and the *yogin* should lavishly offer them the assembled foodstuffs and *bali*. Other than this there is no secret instruction that can act as an iron cloak of obedient servants.⁶⁵⁶

With regard to these three groups of protective goddesses, said above (Chapter Four) to have offered their services to Padmasambhava in Nepal as he meditated upon the Vajrakīla doctrines sent to him from Nālandā, B28 informs us that the white group (called

653. Oneiric indications listed in B28 include the appearance of a well-dressed noble lady, a black yak, black birds and carnivorous beasts.

654. A10, 100.

655. A10, 101.

656. A10, 102.

the family of Rosewood) consists of those who have transcended *samsāra* and who move like wild animals in the evening twilight. They are the life force of speech (more usually associated with the colour red) and their correspondence in the body is a white syllable MA in the centre of an eight-petalled lotus on the tongue. There they dwell supported upon a white wind (*prāṇa*), going in and out like the repeated attraction of iron to a magnet. The black goddesses (the Iron family) with hair of matted blood locks hover between the transcendent and the mundane and move like *rākṣasa* demons in the dead of night. They abide in the heart as the life force of the mind upon a black syllable MA in the centre of an eight-sided sun and they are attracted to anything black just as bees are attracted to flowers. The worldly class of red goddesses (the Conch family) are most potent just before dawn, a characteristic they hold in common with medicine. They are the life force of the body (more usually associated with the colour white) and abide in the ‘conch ocean’ (skull) upon a red syllable MA in the centre of an eight-spoked wheel between the eyebrows (“on the *ūrṇā*”). They depend upon blood in the way that children depend on mother’s milk.⁶⁵⁷

These three groups of goddesses, hitherto called Śvanmukhā and the rest, are internalized here in a manner typical of doctrines from the Mahottarakīla cycle. Clearer descriptions of the twelve are to be found in our texts A7 (60–6), A28 (193–5), A44 (356–8), A53 (677–81 & 704–6), B36 (230–4), etc. and in a lengthy commentary by Padma ’phrin-las not found within the three collections.⁶⁵⁸

Śvanmukhā herself is described in these texts as being dark blue in colour with the head of a wolf (*spyang*). Her mount is a female nine-headed wolf of iron and she wields in her hands a skull-topped staff and a *kīla* of iron. Her sister Sri-ra (the meaning of which is unclear) is yellow in colour and has the head of a wild dog. She wields an iron hook and a golden *kīla* and rides upon a wild yellow bitch with eight tongues. Stretching out her tongues in the eight directions, this mount is said to bring the eight classes of local demons under control. Sṛgāla⁶⁵⁹ is red and has the head of a fox. Her weapons are a *vajra* and a *kīla* of copper and her mount is a three-legged vixen. Kukkura (Ku-ku) is green in colour and has the head of a dog. She waves a banner made from the skin of a child and has a *kīla* of turquoise. She rides upon a turquoise-coloured bitch with long hair. These are the four Śvanmukhā sisters in the Rosewood family, also known as ‘the goddesses of evening’.

The next group are the four Mahātmādevīs (bDag-nyid-ma):⁶⁶⁰ Rematī (Re-tī)⁶⁶¹ is dark blue in colour and her long black hair pervades the *traidhātuka*. She carries “the supreme

657. B28, 128–9.

658. I have in my possession the relevant pages of a third generation photocopy of this text (lacking the title page) which I obtained from C. R. Lama in 1989, who informed me that it is known as the *bKa’ ’brgyad nam nges*.

659. Orthographic variants of this name include Śana, Sṛiṅga and Srila.

660. The term *mahātma* (*bdag nyid chen po*) is employed within *Atiyoga* to indicate the spontaneity and freedom of natural enlightenment. S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 130. Cf. NSTB, II, 13, n. 152.

661. A goddess Revatī is described in the *Yoginī-tantra* XIII as the consort of Śiva who is forced to remain in exile in the barbarian (*mleccha*) borderlands where her children are appointed to be

kīla fashioned from a human leg”⁶⁶² and a *khaṭvāṅga*, wears a cloak of human skin and rides upon a three-legged mule. Remajā (Re-dza) is dark yellow, carries a golden sickle and a turquoise box, wears a rainbow cloak of peacock feathers and rides upon a doe. Remajū (Re-dzu) is dark red, carries an iron hook and a skull cup full of blood, wears a belted cloak (*re lde’i lwa ba*) and rides upon a blue water buffalo. Remajī (Re-dzi) is dark green, carries a notched stick (*khram shing*)⁶⁶³ and a ball of thread (*gru gu*), wears a water-patterned cloak of black silk (*chu dar lwa ba*) and rides upon a camel. These are the four ‘midnight goddesses’ in the family of Iron, also known as queens of the four seasons (Rturājñī, sometimes with Rematī as their chief and fifth member of the group)⁶⁶⁴ and occasionally as ‘the Śrīdevī group’.

The final group of four consists of the Conch family Bhūmipati sisters (Sa-bdag-ma), also known as ‘the bSe-mo goddesses’ and ‘the goddesses of morning’. Of these Ya-byin, ‘the daughter of the *bdud*’, is dark blue in colour and she carries an iron hook and a *kīla* for striking (*gdab phur*). She wears a long-sleeved gown of blue silk and rides upon a ‘horse of Māra’ (*bdud rta*) or turquoise dragon. De-byin, ‘the daughter of the planets (*gza*)’, is yellow in colour and carries a golden *kīla* (or lasso) and a porcupine. She wears a gown of black silk and rides upon a ‘horse of the planets’ (*gza’ rta*) or sea monster (*makara*). bSe-byin, ‘the daughter of the *btsan*’, is dark red in colour and carries an iron chain and an excellent *kīla* (*mchog phur* or *bse phur*). She wears a trailing robe of red silk and rides upon a red ‘horse of the *btsan* demons’ (*btsan rta*) or noose of lightning (*glog zhags*). Phag-byin, ‘the daughter of the *klu*’, is dark green in colour and carries a bell and turquoise *kīla*. She wears a long gown of blue silk and rides a blue-green ‘horse of the *nāgas*’ (*klu rta*) or sea horse (*chu rta*). For an account of the manner in which these twelve goddesses were first elected to become protectors of the Kīla doctrines (*phur pa’i bsrung ma*), see Chapter Four, above. Compare also below, Chapter Twelve, where their Rosewood, Iron and Conch brothers are discussed.

The next text in all collections and the one specified by name in the *them byang* as a partner to the above is the *Nag po dug gi ’khor lo* (A11, B19, C7), also said to have been

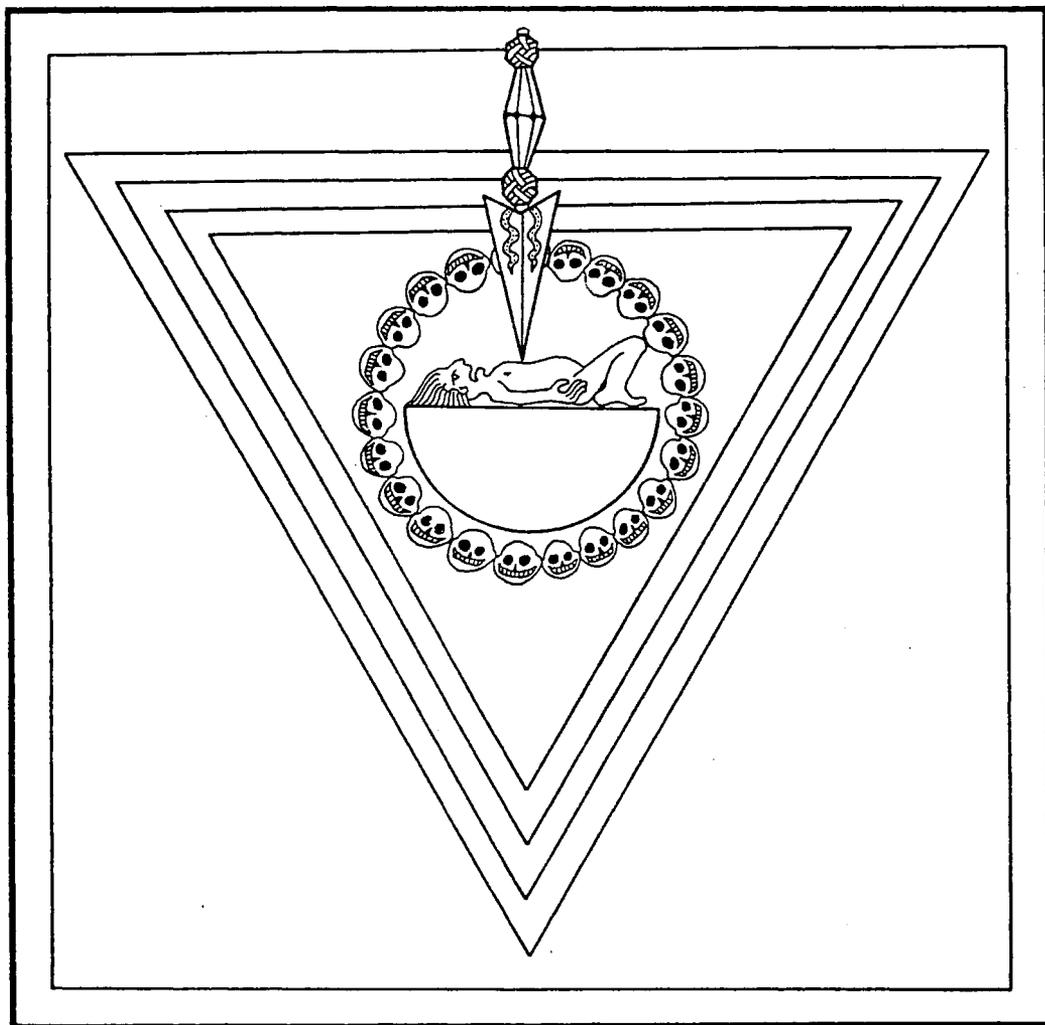
the guardians of local shrines to the goddess Kāmākhya. Schoterman’s comments about her seem pertinent here in the light of our findings above (Chapter Four) when he says: “The story of Revatī in the *Yoginī-tantra* can be regarded as an illustration of a common phenomenon ... the embedding of a foreign/local deity into an established religious system”. J. A. Schoterman, *The Yoni-tantra*, 7. Revatī is also the name of a constellation of stars (*nakṣatra*) said to be inauspicious. *Garuḍa-purāṇa*, II, IV, 176.

662. According to the *bDud ’joms phur pa* cycle, this goddess carries a mirror.

663. The notched stick has been shown to be an incised wooden record of sin and thus a tally of punishment due. A. Rona Tas, “Tally-stick and Divination Dice in the Iconography of Lha-Mo”, *Acta Orientalia Hungarica*, VI.1–2, 1956, 163–79. In his article, Tas points to the association of the four goddesses currently under discussion (in their guise as queens of the four seasons) with “midnight” but does not account for it (pp. 174, 177). The association, therefore, may have been brought into the myth of their subjugation by Padmasambhava so that the latter was not its original source.

664. For their icons see L. Chandra, *Buddhist Iconography of Tibet*, 154–8. These five are again depicted in the same collection within a single icon in both 899 and 905 where Rematī has *garuḍa* wings. As an independent deity, Rematī is depicted wielding a *kīla* in icon 900 where

taught by Padmasambhava to his consort Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal in the lion's cave at sPa-gro stag-tshang. In this text the oath-bound servants, having satisfactorily been brought under control, are incited to perform their violent task of attacking and slaying the enemy, here specifically said to be "the ten kinds of beings who must be killed" (*bsgral ba'i zhing bcu*).⁶⁶⁵ As before, it is stated that this rite may only be performed by one who has successfully mastered the Vajrakīla *sādhana* and is capable of maintaining an imperturbable attitude of divine pride. Such a *yogin* should take up his dwelling in a charnel ground with all the appropriate characteristics and there, during the period of the waning moon, this rite of 'the transference of consciousness'⁶⁶⁶ should be performed.



she is called Svayambhū-devī, and as the subduer of *nāgas* in 903 she is shown with a *makara*-headed Kīla as her companion.

665. These are: (1) Those who cause harm to the Buddhist religion, (2) Who bring dishonour to the *triratna*, (3) Who embezzle the property of the *saṅgha*, (4) Who slander the Mahāyāna, (5) Who place the life (body) of the *guru* in danger, (6) Who sow discord among the *vajra* brothers and sisters, (7) Who prevent others from attaining *siddhi*, (8) Who are without love and compassion, (9) Who abandon the sacred *samaya* and *saṃvara* vows, and, (10) Who have perverted views concerning *karma* and its retribution.
666. *mda' 'phen*, "shooting the arrow", refers to the slaying of an enemy whose consciousness is then "transferred" to the realm of bliss.

The *yogin* should construct the violent *maṇḍala* an arrow's length in width and anoint it with poison and blood of various kinds.⁶⁶⁷ In its centre he should build a triangular pit ('*brub khung*), one cubit deep and one cubit long. The first of the three tiers of this 'iron house' should be daubed with black paint, the second with red paint and the third with white. A *kīla* of thorny wood (*rtsang phur*; but C has *gtsang phur*, "a pure *kīla*") should be enclosed within a circle ("bound with a garland") of skulls, the area within which is then smeared with blood and charcoal from the funeral pyre. The *maṇḍala* should be constructed with a red half-moon in its centre, a white border around the outside and a yellow courtyard in between. Upon it should be placed an effigy of the enemy made in the form of a rag doll with cloth from the one to be attacked (*dri ma'i gos*, "cloth having the scent" of its owner) stuffed with *kuśa* grass from the charnel ground.

A piece of shroud taken from a corpse in the cemetery should be prepared as an artist's canvas by smearing it with a paste of chalk (*sa dkar*) and it should be anointed with human flesh, poison and blood. Using as ink a preparation of blood, poison and charcoal from a cremated body that have been stirred with a sharp pointed weapon, an image of the enemy should be drawn upon that canvas using a knife or an arrow as a pen. The head, tongue and heart of that image should be marked with *cakras* having the form of four concentric circles. In their centres should be written the three *bījas* of "the life support of blackness": HAM as the support of the lifespan (*āyus*), ŚA as the support of the breath (*prāṇa*) and NR̥ as the support of the life force (*jīvita*). On half-moon seats⁶⁶⁸ should be drawn the Mother God (*ma lha*), the Life God (*srog lha*) and the Enemy God (*dgra lha*).⁶⁶⁹ Finally that image of the enemy is to be enclosed within a series of six concentric triangles, expressed in the text as six bewildering ('*khrol mig*) iron houses.⁶⁷⁰

667. This line is unaccountably varied in the three texts. A adds ashes to the list of substances with which it should be anointed, B says that it should be anointed skilfully, and C says that it should be anointed all the way out to its edges.

668. These half-moons could equally well be intended as seats for the three *bījas* just listed. The text is ambiguous.

669. Tucci in his *The Religions of Tibet* (p. 193) writes of the group of five personal gods known as the '*go ba'i lha* who are born together with the person they protect. Throughout that person's life they reside on his or her body from where they function as guardians of the vital forces of life and well-being. The *mo lha* resides in the pit of the left arm, the *srog lha* in the heart and the *dgra lha* upon the person's right shoulder. These, then, are presumably the places that the *yogin* should select when drawing those gods upon the image of his enemy.

All Tibetans are probably familiar with the oft told tale concerning the death of the last of the line of early "sky descended kings" as recounted in the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*. The assassination of this king was made possible by a subterfuge that caused him to wear the highly impure article of a fox's corpse upon his right shoulder. Offended by the corpse, the *dgra lha* (whose special function it is to protect one from enemies) abandoned his position and thus left the king vulnerable to attack. This, of course, is exactly the purpose of its inclusion within the present ritual and, presumably, is a uniquely Tibetan contribution to the rite.

G. Tucci (TPS, 741) says "the mythology of the *dgra lha* is very complex" and he lists the names of a group of nine *dgra lha*, both male and female, some of whom "represent atmospheric phenomena" while others "have the aspects of birds". He concludes that they are clearly a legacy of the Bon tradition with no discernable Indian ancestry. Elsewhere (*The Religions of Tibet*, 194), Tucci describes the *dgra lha* as the god who materially protects one from his or her foes throughout that person's lifetime and then goes on to act as "counsel for

With his own body clearly visualized in the form of the deity Vajrakīla, the *yogin* should meditate upon the six secret *mantras* in due order, as they are given in the *bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka* text above. The *mantras* on his forehead and throat are to be arranged upon nine-spoked wheels and those in his heart upon a wheel with eighteen spokes. Around the outside of the wheels run powerful *mantras* of sorcery (*thun sngags*) with forty syllables, thirty-two syllables and thirty-one syllables respectively.⁶⁷¹ Rays of light radiate out from those *mantras* and accumulate within the sharp weapons that the *yogin* has on the table before him for use in the rite. Thus those weapons are empowered.⁶⁷²

As the *yogin* recites NR he transforms the rag doll into the actual presence of the enemy and meditates that the enemy's consciousness is absorbed within it. That effigy is then imprisoned within the triangular pit by sealing its opening with an eight-spoked *cakra*.⁶⁷³

A second red half-moon should be drawn, divided into six parts: On the first part is placed frankincense that separates good from evil (*dbye ba'i gu gul*) and this should be offered in the morning (*zhogs*). On the second part is placed the white mustard seed of absorption (*stim pa'i yungs dkar*). On the third part is placed a bundle of green and red strings for the deeds to be done (*bya byed sngo dmar phung*). On the fourth part are placed the poisonous substances of sorcery that lead to madness (*smyo ba'i dug rdzas thun*). On the fifth part are placed weapons consisting of the three nails that strike (*gdab pa'i phur gsum mtshon*). On the sixth part is placed the glorious *bali* which is to be hurled (*btap pa'i dpal gtor*).

the defense" before Yama at the time of death. Nebesky-Wojkowitz (*Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, 332) describes him as red in colour and wielding a hatchet.

Quoting from *dNgos grub rgya mtsho 'i cha lag bsang brngan 'dod dgu'i rgya mtsho*, Tucci says (TPS, 720) that the *ma lha* is to be depicted wearing an ornament set with gems and Nebesky-Wojkowitz (*op. cit.*, 327) adds to this that she is youthful, beautiful and dressed in white silk with a blue silk cloak. She holds a divination arrow in her right hand and a mirror in her left. Her function is to increase and guard the family (*ibidem*, 332).

The *srog lha* is described (*ibidem*, 327) as "a man with a powerful body of a white colour and riding a black horse with white heels. He wears a helmet and a cuirass of gold." It is also said that he carries a vase containing the nectar of long life and that his function is the preservation of the life force (*ibidem*, 332).

670. The term *'khrul mig* may also refer to a lattice-like structure, usually prepared of sharpened poison sticks. A11, 104–5.
671. I presume that these three sets of *mantras* are to be derived from those given later in the text but can find no satisfactory correspondence between the *mantras* given there and the numbers of syllables required here.
672. A short text found in all three collections (A16, B57, C32) explains the meditation to be performed at this time: Having become one with the deity by sealing his body with the *mudrā*, the *yogin* should radiate from his heart a syllable MA which transforms into a sun marked with a blue-black HŪM. From this causal syllable arise the letters of the *mantra* OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA SARVAVIGHNĀN BAM HŪM PHAT, and this should be recited. At the outset of the recitation, from the chief *nisevanakīla* emerges an emanation of the deity who summons the threefold Kīla *maṇḍala* and all *Sugatas*. As soon as the oath-bound protectors arrive they offer their life essence and are ordered to fulfill their task of "liberation". The wrathful emanation then returns to the *kīla* on the altar, causing it to glow with exceeding brightness. A16, 141.
673. A fierce weapon in the form of a heavy metal discus with (eight) sharp blades that the ancients used to hurl at one another during times of warfare. Clear illustrations of their use in such rites as those currently under consideration are to be found in S. Karmay, *Secret Visions*, especially plates 20(1), 22D, 36, 40, 47, 55.

Upon the platform around the outside of the imprisoned effigy, the *yogin* should arrange all the articles required for the invocation and worship of the deity as well as those required for the fulfilment of his vows.⁶⁷⁴ Magical necessities include the *hrdaya* of the three groups, sprinkled with *amṛta* and wrapped up inside a skull, butter, oil, fat, honey, milk, blood, black pebbles, a child of incestuous union, a child of a young girl, the skull, heart and blood of a chicken and the flesh and blood of a dog, wolf, fox and wild dog. To the sides and in front should be placed three castles⁶⁷⁵ adorned with arrows to which silk ribbons have been attached and victory banners made from the hides of humans, dogs, crocodiles and birds. Small morsels of food should also be placed within those castles.⁶⁷⁶

The gods of the *maṇḍala* should be clearly visualized and summoned until they are actually present. The *yogin* then offers them gifts of food and so on and, remaining firm in his resolve, he should focus his attention upon the sharp weapons that he will use in the destruction of his enemy. The first task to be completed is the separation of the enemy from his protector gods (the *dgra lha* and the rest). The consciousness of the enemy is dragged forth by the *yogin*'s ferocious assistants and cast down into form by causing it to be absorbed within the effigy. It is held there by binding it with the weapons of green and red thread and, as the *yogin* hurls poisonous substances of evil magic (*dug thun*) at it, the protector gods flee and the enemy is driven insane. Those four deeds are to be accomplished by means of the substances arranged on the first four parts of the red half-moon, as above.

As for the actual rite of defeating the one to be subjugated (which euphemism is glossed by an interlinear note in A as 'killing the enemy'); this the *yogin* does by adding the *mantra* of summoning and slaying to the secret *mantra* of the deity. Thus: OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA, *So-and-so must be dragged forth* JAḤ HŪM VAṂ HOḤ. MĀRAYA VAŚAṂ KURU HAPARAYA HATANAYA HŪM PHAṬ. AVEŚAYA AVEŚAYA HŪM PHAṬ. ŚIKRIN ANAYA ŚIKRIN ANAYA HŪM PHAṬ. JALAPAYA JALAPAYA HŪM PHAṬ. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA ACITTA APARACITTA MAMA VAŚAṂ TRAG MATAṂ MYAG KARA IMĀN JAYE VIJAYE KURU KARA INAN KAṬAṆKAṬE YA YETA KARA IMĀN DHADDHI MAMA KARMA ŚRĪKRAMA KAṆKA KĀRAYE MĀRASENAPRAMARDANĪYE⁶⁷⁷ *the enemy called So-and-so must be dragged forth* JAḤ HŪM VAṂ HOḤ. MĀRAYA CITTA NAN NR JAḤ JAḤ TADYATHĀ TADYATHĀ HŪM PHAṬ.⁶⁷⁸

These *mantras* are explained as follows: OM is the reality of the five *jñānas* and VAJRA is the *mūlamantra* of oneself as the deity. KĪLI is the assembly of *krodharājas* in the ten directions and KĪLA stands for their ten wisdom consorts. YA is the supreme nail son.

674. The personal accoutrements of a *yogin* such as the skull drum, thigh bone trumpet, bone ornaments, *khaṭvāṅga*, *vajra* and bell, and so on.

675. I understand that brass pots are normally used here. (Verbal communication from C. R. Lama.)

676. A11, 105–6.

677. As a collective term covering all unwholesome moral states, the term *mārasena* is enumerated in the Pāli *Suttanipāta*, 436–8, as passion, aversion, hunger, thirst, craving, sloth, torpor, fear, doubt, self-will, cant and various forms of self-exaltation. T. O. Ling, *Buddhism and the Mythology of Evil*, 59. The epithet *mārasenāpamaddino*, "the crusher of Māra's host", as applied to the Buddha is frequently met with in the Pāli canon. See, for example, *Dīghanikāya*, III, 196.

678. A11, 106–7.

These eight *bījas* of the secret *mantra* of blackness (*nag mo'i gsang sngags*) draw forth the heart and suck in the heart's blood.

By MAMA VAŚAM the four arteries are chopped to pieces. By TRAG the great Lord of Life (*srog bdag*) is summoned and with MATAM he enjoys the *samaya* offering of life force.⁶⁷⁹ Reciting MYAG, the *yogin* presses the offering of flesh and blood to his lips. Taking up the sword with KARA, the *yogin* slays the enemy with IMĀN. By means of this eighteenfold secret *mantra* of the Mahātmādevīs (on the spokes of the blue wheel in the heart), cuts are made that slice up the four arteries in the heart of the enemy.⁶⁸⁰

By JAYE the messengers are instigated to action and VIJAYE indicates victory over the foe. By KURU KARA he is quickly 'liberated'. By means of these nine *bījas* of fierce spell belonging to the Śvanmukhā sisters in the nine-spoked red wheel, the centre of the enemy's throat is cut to pieces.

By KAṬĀNKATE the bSe-mo goddesses are incited and by YA their brothers are called to devour the life force. Reciting YETA KARA, the blood of the brain is churned to a frenzy. By means of these nine syllables of secret *mantra* on the nine spokes of the white wheel in the centre of the brain, the body of the enemy is hacked to bits.⁶⁸¹

In brief: by means of the six syllables DHADDHI MAMA KARMA, the assistants are summoned to act and, with ŚRĪKRAMA, they are entrusted with their duties. These *mantras* apply equally to all the deities. Then there are the five syllables for the males (*pho'i 'bru*) KAṆKA KĀRAYE, nine for the 'butchers' MĀRASENAPRAMARDANĪYE, the four of summoning JAḤ HŪM VAḤ HOḤ, the three of slaying MĀRAYA, the six syllables that drag forth the enemy's consciousness CITTA NAN NṚ JAḤ JAḤ, and the eight that grind him to dust TADYATHĀ TADYATHĀ HŪM PHAṬ. If all these secret *mantras* are recited with strength then the result will be attained, as surely as fat is drawn forth from a side of mutton.

Becoming proficient in this practice of the life force of the oath-bound protectors, the *yogin* may speedily press them to his service. These evil wheels of *mantras*, which have the nature of sharp weapons, throw into total confusion the *cakras* in the three places of the enemy upon whom he meditates, severing the *nāḍīs* and causing the life-sustaining *prāṇa* to cease. The first group are those in the *brahmācakra* which split open the head and confound the brain. The second group belong to the *cakra* in the throat and they drive their victim insane and cause him to vomit blood. The third group are associated with the *cakra* in the centre of the heart and they sever the four arteries and separate purity from pollution. This, in brief, is their function. If one merely wishes to scatter one's enemies, this can be achieved within three days by means of the eight syllables of fierce subjugation (OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA).

679. The *samaya* pledge of the *yogin* is to draw out this evil life force and dedicate it to the great *Dharma* protector known as "Lord of the Life Force". Thus all "demonic energy" is consumed and transformed into that which is of service to the *Dharma* and all living beings.

680. This section as given, however, contains only twelve syllables. In the previous chapter we noted the eighteen syllables upon this *cakra* to be ACITTA APARACITTA MAMA VAŚAM HŪM MATAM MYAK KARA.

681. A11, 107.

Thus, it is said, the *yogin* gathers together the protectors of the *maṇḍala* and immediately entrusts them to their various tasks. He who turns these wheels of secret *mantras* a thousand times each, both day and night, will achieve thereby the activities of sorcery (*thun gyi las*). Urgently performing the invocations at both dusk and dawn, the *yogin* should hurl the enchanted substances⁶⁸² against the effigy and thus strike down his enemy. Calling upon the irresistible force of the oath-bound ones, the *yogin* can gather together all the haughty gods and demons and slay them. He can then appropriate their personal splendour for himself and make a feast of their flesh and blood.⁶⁸³

Thus the ritual concludes, but the text itself continues in the same vein with a shorter alternative rite designed to achieve the same purpose. According to this second rite, a *yogin* who wishes to perform these violent acts of sorcery should place together the male ingredient of poison and the female ingredient of blood in a skull taken either from a border tribesman (*kirāta*) or from a person who is the last member of his family line. He should then take three of Māra's arrows with poisoned tips and a mixture of ingredients that cause insanity and a curse should be placed upon those articles by means of evil spells. The victim should be summoned during the hours of daylight and slain in the dark of night. At the twilight times of dawn and dusk the *yogin* should summon the male and female active messengers who will quickly fulfil the tasks allocated to them by whoever recites this long *mantra* completely free of distraction: OM ..., etc.

The long *mantra* which follows in the text contains a number of indecipherably corrupt passages, apparently witten in a mixture of languages. The three separate manuscripts present us in several instances with entirely disparate readings, with even the interspersed Tibetan phrases being so garbled that it remains impossible to determine whether or not they were ever intelligible. Some, perhaps, are Tibetanizations of earlier Sanskrit or Prakrit forms now irretrievably lost, for there is about the entire passage a definite aura of antiquity. One notable feature of this *mantra* is the application of the epithet Gaṇeśa (lord of the *gaṇa*) to the deity Mahākāla. In Hindu mythology, Gaṇeśa is the master of obstacles (*vighna*) and may be responsible either for their cause or removal. The *gaṇa* over which he rules are especially those inferior deities or demigods considered as Śiva's attendants.⁶⁸⁴ Śiva, furthermore, is said to be Gaṇeśa's father. In terms of Buddhist mythology, however, Mahākāla himself is considered the manifest consciousness of the arch demon Rudra (Śiva) bound under oath to act as defender of the Buddhist faith and entrusted with the specific role of lord of the troops (*gaṇa*). His function is to rule over those inferior and often mischievous deities or demigods now included among the attendants of Heruka, many of whom were formerly in the retinue of Śiva. Both the current text as a whole and the previous *bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka* are concerned with the *yogin*'s status, whilst meditating upon himself in the form of Vajrakīla, as supreme

682. Listed as blood and poison and so on, but usually just mustard seeds.

683. A11, 108–9.

684. The *gaṇa* are *pramathas*, *bhūtas*, *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas*, etc., all that are deformed or ugly and “conceived of as *vighna*”; V. S. Agrawala, “The Meaning of Gaṇapati”, 1–4. According to STTS, XI (*trilokacakra mahāmaṇḍala*), outside the circle of *krodha* kings are to be found *gaṇapatis* (leaders of the troops), *dūtas* (messengers) and *ceṭas* (slaves).

commander of those unruly troops. It is interesting to find here yet further confirmation of an Indic origin for these myths and doctrines in their most primitive form.

Towards the end of the text we meet with the pun so often encountered in this literature in which it is said that “this rite of power which entwines⁶⁸⁵ the three classes of oath-bound messengers” should be used to arouse them to action during periods of inertia. As they are imagined to descend upon the enemy, the *yogin* should see the belly of that *rākṣasa* demon deluged beneath a welter of poison, blood and sharp weapons, his life force burned to ashes by tongues of fire. The three *Kīlas* (‘the three supreme sons’) that bring about this total annihilation are the body, speech and mind of wrath to whom the final verses of the text are addressed:

“Oh Lords! You who wear the armour of blessings,
Strike from on high with the hand that holds the hammer!
Hurl your sharp pointed arrows from above!
Yamāntaka, hurl yourself against the enemy’s crown!
Purify the place of the body and
Hack at the vein of Brahmā!
Hayagrīva, attack the throat!
Purify the place of speech and
Sever the arteries of blood!
Amṛtakunḍalin, descend upon the heart!
Purify the place of the mind and
Slice through the vein of life!”⁶⁸⁶

The *yogin* should then appropriate for himself the remaining lifespan, vital force, charisma and power of the conquered enemy⁶⁸⁷ but his ‘essence’⁶⁸⁸ should be released into the bliss of the *dharmadhātu*. The impure sediments of flesh and blood are to be enjoyed by the unruly troops of assistants who hacked it to bits with their terrifying swords and the glorious *bali* is presented to the assembly of *krodha* kings.

This wheel of ferocious sharp weapons, belonging to the three groups of red-black oath-bound protectors, terrifies even the king of the gods. So what needs to be said about its effect on others? (A note in A obligingly informs us that by “others” is meant the enemies and obstructors.)⁶⁸⁹ Only B tells us that this text was taken from the golden southern section of the Byang-gter treasure cache at Zang-zang lha-brag.

685. The word used here is ‘*dril ba*, “to entwine, envelop, roll up” and this rite which “entwines” the three classes of unruly messengers is brought about by “rolling” (‘*dril ba*) the three *kīlas* between the palms of the hands.

686. A11, 109–11.

687. Although the lower *yānas* teach the karmic result of killing to be a short and miserable lifespan, the Vajrayāna presents this as a skilful means through which the *yogin*’s life force is enhanced. Cannibals and head-hunters in primitive societies all over the world also hope to appropriate just such intangible qualities of heroic prowess from their victims.

688. *dvangs ma, rasa*, “juice”, in this context can only mean “consciousness” (*rnam shes, vijñāna*).

689. A11, 111.

Although those two are the sole texts specifically named in the *them byang*, intended as a guide exclusively to the literature of the Mahottarakīla cycle, several other documents present similar instructions for the incitement of the fierce protectors. It seems pertinent, then, to deal briefly with those texts of the Black deity cycle from the iron cache in the north which are also to be found in common within each of the three collections.

The short *Drag po'i bzlas pa* (A16, B57, C32) deals with only two topics: the contemplation appropriate to the radiating and gathering of light, and the appropriate contemplation for the moment of slaying. The first of these topics has been dealt with above in note 672. With regard to the act of slaying, the text states that while the fierce *mantra* is being recited the *yogin* should visualize an imaginary *kīla* flying out from the material *kīla* in his hand and attacking the enemy in his own place. Thus, while the material *kīla* is being stabbed into the head of the effigy, the imaginary *kīla* enters the victim's crown and travels down through his body until it reaches the soles of his feet. When it finally re-emerges from the top of his head, the enemy's body is dead. It then lands on the tongue and enters the throat. Having buried itself in the windpipe, when it re-emerges from the tongue the speech is dead. Finally it sinks into the heart until it revolves within the "cavity of life" (*srog khong*). As it re-emerges from the heart, all the subtle traces (*vāsanā*) are known to be destroyed. Thus, as the material *kīla* is stabbed into the head of the effigy and along the entire length of its body, the victim is surely killed. "This meditation should roll forth like an unimpeded wave rolling on a vast ocean."⁶⁹⁰

In the *Las thams cad kyi don bsdus pa* (A20, B60, C23) the *yogin* finds further guidance for the preparation of a ritual effigy. The existence of an effigy is apparently taken for granted in redactions A & B for only C23 begins with the instruction to "create or draw an effigy of the enemies and obstructors and place it upon a *cakra*." Details said to be derived from the *Vidyottama-tantra* are then given concerning the *mantra* of wrath to be inscribed upon the effigy. Thus: OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA *snying khrag shad* JAḤ ACITTA APARACITTA are the nineteen syllables of the *mātr̥s* and butchers which should be inscribed upon the head of the effigy and recited. MA RAKMO YAKMO KĀLARŪPA *snying rtsa la* YAM YAM THIB THIB are the sixteen syllables which should be inscribed upon the right hand of the effigy and recited. CITTA *srog la* THUNG THUNG *srog la* YAM YAM JAYE VIJAYE *myags myags sod sod* CAKRASENA *btubs* are the twenty-four syllables of the male and female haughty ones which should be inscribed upon the left hand of the effigy and recited. *sNying phril phril srog la* CHUM CHUM KAṬAṆKATE *snying rtsa la* YAM YAM *snying kha rak dun* TRI are the twenty-one ferocious syllables of the Śvanmukhā sisters which should be inscribed upon the right leg of the effigy and recited. MAMA VAṢAṢ KURU DHADDHI MAMA KARMA IMĀN ŚRĪKRAMA TAM NYA KĀRAYE MĀRASENAPRAMARDANĪYE HŪM PHAṬ are the thirty-three syllables of the male and female confusion-mongers which should be inscribed upon the left leg of the effigy and recited. If the *yogin* then strikes with the iron *kīla*, the *mantras* and the magic articles (*thun rdzas*), it is said that the enemies and obstructors will die at that very moment.⁶⁹¹

690. A16, 141–2.

691. A20, 163.

Within the short *Man ngag rtsa thung* (A37, B56), Padmasambhava explains that when the three groups of goddesses came to him during his period of meditation and offered these *mantras* of their life essence, they promised that their fierce spells would act for the benefit of *yogins*, “like butchers of the life force or a burning fire against all trouble-makers”. Consequently, it is said, any *yogin* who wishes to practise the rites of Vajrakīla without knowledge of these *mantras* is like a dog chasing a bird in the sky (with no chance of catching it). OM is to be understood as Vajrakīla and VAJRA, his consort Tṛptacakra. KĪLI represents the *daśakrodharājas* and KĪLA their ten fierce wives. YA indicates the supreme son. SARVA means ‘all together’ and VIGHNĀN are the oppressive enemies and obstructors. BAM means that they should be bound with iron fetters. HŪM is the heart essence of the deity and by PHAṬ the emanations are sent forth. JAḤ calls in the *siddhis* and HŪM means that they are gathered to oneself. ĀḤ establishes those *siddhis* firmly in the mind-stream of the *yogin*. MA RAKMO refers to the Mahātmādevīs, YAKMO to the Bhūmipati sisters and KĀLARŪPA indicates the Śvanmukhās. *sNying rtsa la* YAM YAM stands for the four brothers of Rosewood and *srog la* YAM YAM for the long-armed butchers. *sNying la khril khril* stands for the male and female killers. *Srog la* CHUṂ CHUṂ indicates the life force of the enemy while CITTA *srog la* THUNG THUNG is the Lord of Life (Srog-bdag) himself. *sNying khrag shad* indicates the Master of Activity (Las-mkhan) and *thum ri li li* stands for the form of the enemy. *sNying rtsegs rtsegs ur ur* is sound and light while by *shig shig gul gul* are indicated the ‘devourers’. *Myags myags sod sod* DHADDHI MAMA is the black host (of Mahātmādevīs) and KARMA ŚRĪKRAMA KĀRAYE stands for the bSe-mo goddesses. MĀRASENA is the *rgyal po* and *btsan mo* demons, and by PRA-MARDANĪYE PHAṬ is meant Śvanmukhā and her sisters.⁶⁹² With this in mind, the *yogin* should bless the iron *kīla*, transform his body into the *maṇḍala* of gods, place the effigy of the enemies and obstructors within the *cakra* and slay it.⁶⁹³

The final text of this category to be found within all three collections is again reputed to be based upon the experience of its author Padmasambhava as he “bound the eight classes of gods and demons under oath” to act as protectors of the Buddhist docrines. Called the *sDe brgyad bsrung bzlog* (A30, B58, C29), this text explains that, as well as being (a) the means of commanding the unruly hosts of oath-bound protectors, these ferocious *mantras* and their attendant rites may also be used (b) in rites of consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*).

(a) Their first function is discussed under the three familiar rubrics: (i) outer, (ii) inner and (iii) secret (*phyi nang gsang gsum*). ‘Outer’ refers to an amulet to be worn upon the body, ‘inner’ refers to offerings to be presented to the protectors and the ‘secret’ aspect is the inner meditation associated with recitation of the *mantras*.

(i) For the purpose of outer protection, the *yogin* should draw the magic *cakra* on a piece of Chinese paper (*rgya shog*) or human skin, using as ink either burnt horn, filth scraped from the skin or fingernails (*rta bon*) or sulphur. A drawing (*dpe chung*) of the enemy should be prepared with poison and blood and within the belly of Vajrakumāra should be written the *mantra* of ferocious averting. All of these articles should then be smeared with

692. Final two attributions reversed in text.

693. A37, 280–2.

frankincense, solidified cattle-bile, elephant musk,⁶⁹⁴ sandalwood, *Acorus calamus*⁶⁹⁵ and realgar.⁶⁹⁶

(ii) The section dealing with the 'inner protection' consists simply of an obscure list of requisite magical substances, including *Costus speciosus* (*ru rta*), *ya dha* (?), magnolia (? *ka li* for *ka li ka*), umbilical cord (? *lte bur*), areca nuts (? *kra ri*), clay (? *lder po*), water (*chu*), fat (*tshil*) and asafoetida (*rtsi bo*) etc. "All of these should be collected together on the *cakra* and fumigated with black *guggul* incense." It must be supposed that such substances are considered to delight the eight classes of spirits and that their presence within the rite therefore increases its magical potency.

(iii) Secret protection is afforded by the *mantras* met with above, which the *yogin* should inscribe upon a *cakra* and set down in front of a standing nail honoured as the *niṣevanakīla*. He should then imagine a *vajra* arising from the syllable HŪṂ which is his own mind and this, in turn, transforms into the deity Vajrakumāra. Keeping the visualization clear, the *yogin* should recite the deity's *mantra* and the long razor spell (*spu gri'i sngags ring*, the DHADDHI *mantra*), all the while imagining rays of light to radiate out from the *kīla*. Whirling around like a mass of sharp weapons, those light rays strike the *cakra* and, as they are absorbed into it, the *cakra* begins to emit ferocious sparks ("like sharp weapons") which circle around in a clockwise direction and hack the enemies and obstructors to pieces. This done, those sparks become *vajras* which whirl around in an anticlockwise direction and create a great blazing wall of fire. The *yogin* then imagines himself standing in the centre of that mass of flames in the form of a golden nine-pronged *vajra*, grinding all trouble-makers to a pulp. When his meditation has reached the stage of heat, the *yogin* should assume the divine pride of the deity beyond imagination (*mi dmigs*).⁶⁹⁷

(b) When the *cakra* is to be used within a rite of consecration, upon its reverse side should be inscribed the three syllables (OM ĀḤ HŪṂ) and the 'formula of dependent origination'.⁶⁹⁸ These should each be recited aloud one hundred and twenty-one times and the *mantras* (on the obverse) of the *cakra* should each be read out twenty-one times. Flowers should be scattered and a prayer of benediction offered. The *yogin* then invites the *jñānasattvas* by means of his *samādhi* and offers them praise and gifts. If the article to be consecrated is solid he should imagine that, with the twirl of a silk tassel, rays of light are

694. All manuscripts read *glang rtsi* at this point. But see below where all read *gla rtsi*.

695. An aromatic root described as being bitter in taste and "useful in the treatment of insanity, epilepsy and afflictions by *rākṣasas*." Vaidya Bhagavan Dash, *Materia Medica of Indo-Tibetan Medicine*, 38.

696. Said to cure poisoning, affliction by evil spirits and skin diseases. Vaidya Bhagavan Dash, *op. cit.*, 407.

697. A30, 206–8.

698. YE DHARMĀ ..., etc. This well-known verse summary of the Buddha's doctrines formulated by the sage Aśvajit is said to have been spoken to Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, resulting in their conversion to Buddhism. First recorded in the Pāli *Vinaya*, i, 40, 28–9, it was repeated in the *Mahāvastu* and is even included in the closing passages of the *Kālacakra-tantra*.

transferred from the *cakra* to the material or object. Otherwise the *cakra* itself may be enclosed within an iron amulet or concealed within the chest cavity⁶⁹⁹ of a statue, etc.

Finally the text states that, in order to maintain the continuity of protection, whatever path of action the *yogin* follows (such as the prescribed path of *mantra* recitation and *samādhi* four times per day) he should at all times continuously maintain the divine pride of himself as the deity. If he does this without a break, all the unruly *'dre* and *srin* will be subdued. “Even an army of gods will certainly be repelled. This *upadeśa* on the protective method of keeping the arrogant ones at bay is a piece of paper that acts as a castle for the life force of *yogins*. Vows. Triple seal.”⁷⁰⁰

Appended to the end of the text is a brief commentary supposedly taught by Padma-sambhava concerning the outer, inner and secret three *cakras*. From what has been written above, however, it seems that a hiatus in the text may have resulted in a conflation of the outer and the inner here, for items listed in the two groups, above, are combined within a single list and the text itself jumps directly from the outer to the secret.

Describing the material *cakra*, this commentary says that the letters of the ‘secret name’ (*gsang ba'i ming*) should be clearly inscribed in substances that are known to possess a special occult affinity with the eight classes of demons. For the *btsan* demons one should use burnt horn (*rva gshob*) and filth (*rta bon*) for the *rgyal po*. For the *'chi bdag* one uses sulphur (*mu zi*) and musk (*gla rtsi*) for the *gza'*. *Acorus calamus* (*shu dag*) is suitable for the *klu* and wolf dung (*sphyang brun*) for the *ma mo*. For the *gnod sbyin* one uses frog flesh (*sbal sha*) and for the *bdud*, wood (*shing*).

As for the secret *mantra* protection, this is achieved by means of the spell that is taught in the texts for the worship of the deity: OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA SARVAVIGHNĀN BAṂ HŪM PHAṬ JAḤ HŪM ĀḤ MA YAKMO RAKMO KĀLARŪPA *dregs pa'i snying rtsa la* YAṂ YAṂ *snying la* KHRIL KHRIL *srog la* CHUṂ CHUṂ CITTA *srog la btung btung snying khrag srog la shad shad* JA *thum ri li li sde brgyad kyi snying tsegs tsegs ur ur shig shig gul gul myags myags sod sod* DHADDHI MAMA KARMA ŚRĪKRAMA KĀRAYE MĀRASENAPRAMARDA-NĪYE *gnod byed che ge mo* MĀRAYA HŪM PHAṬ VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA VAJRAYAMARĀJA MĀRAVAJRA YA TRI KOT NĀGA RAKMO YAKṢAGRĪVĀYA MAHĀ RAṂ YAṂ KHAM KṢATAŚATRŪN MĀRAYA MĀRAYA *sod bzlog* BHYO. Reciting this secret *mantra* four times per day with the god held clearly in mind, the *yogin* should strike the effigy of whatever trouble-makers there are with the purified iron *kīla*, the invocation of the god and the *mantra*. In times of great trouble, this superior method provides more effective protection than the rites of *sīmābandha*, hurling the magic weapon (*zor*) or imprisoning within the triangular iron box. By this recitation alone, all arrogant ones are kept under control. “These are the words of the *guru* taken out as treasure from the iron cache in the north.”⁷⁰¹

699. *mChan khung* usually means “armpit” but in this context I take it to mean any cavity within the body of the statue or image being consecrated.

700. A30, 208.

701. A30, 208–10.

Chapter Ten

Displaying the Activities

Chapter Three of the root BRT makes it clear that the function of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* is to “pulverize all the enemies and obstructors in the ten directions” and, accordingly, the Byang-gter texts in our three collections include a number of violent rituals calculated to bring this about. The *them byang* proclaims ‘the heart of the fierce rites’ to consist of three primary aspects: scattering (*zor*),⁷⁰² burning (*sreg*) and trampling down (*mnan*), activities mentioned in the eighth chapter of the root *tantra* and elaborated in virtually every ritual text thereafter. In particular, the essential features of these three activities are clarified in the tripartite text *mNan bsreg 'phang gsum* (A13, B20, C11)⁷⁰³ as follows:

Scattering

Prior to commencing the rite of scattering,⁷⁰⁴ the *yogin* should fill either “a skull with evil signs” (*thod pa mtshan ngan*)⁷⁰⁵ or the horn of a yak that twists to the right (*gYag ru gYas pa'i skyogs*) with various kinds of poison and blood. The text also says that poison and blood should be mixed with the seeds of white mustard to be thrown (*yungs kar thun brabs*) and then a ‘golden libation’ (*gser skyems*) should be offered to the local gods and demons. Detailed instructions for this libation are to be found in the dance manual (*'Cham yig*) by the present sTag-lung-tse sprul-sku who explains that, as the liturgy of invitation and praise to the various deities and demigods is recited, dancers wearing the garb of ‘black hat sorcerers’ whirl around in a circle so that goblets held in their hands are caused to scatter their contents of alcohol and grain (‘gold’) over a wide area. These libations being enjoyed by the invisible inhabitants of every direction, the *yogins* appeal to the

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702. This activity is variously known in the texts as *zor* (“magic weapon”), *'phang* or *gtor* (both of which mean “scatter” or “cast”). The noun *gtor ma* indicates “that which is scattered”, which, in the context of these rites, refers to the *zor*, which is hurled against the enemy. The result of such rites is called *bzlog pa* (sometimes *log pa*) “turning away”, “reversing” or “averting” evil influences.
703. This text was taken from the golden southern section of the treasure casket and thus belongs to the Mahottarakīla cycle. Incorporated into that three-part text is A39 (A40).
704. The *maṇḍala* for this rite of scattering is described in the *Khro bo rol pa'i gtor bzlog* as a yellow *cakra* with ten spokes, drawn within a black border and surrounded by a *vajra* fence and fire wall, etc. A43, 306.
705. The skull of a murder victim is considered to have the greatest occult power. The skull of one whose life was cut short by disease or violent accident is said to possess medium power but

deities for their help in the subsequent main section of the rite. Proceeding with the magic weapon to an unobstructed site on elevated ground (which is an occasion of much splendour and pomp when the ritual is performed by an entire monastic assembly), the participants should clearly visualize the form of Vajrakīla holding in his hand a freshly severed head, “streaming with blood and beautiful with long hair”. The role of the deity is assumed in the rite by an appointed expert (*zor mkhan* or *'phen mkhan*) who should be fully adorned in the attire of the deity. As the liturgy of invocation and the root *mantra* of the deity are recited “in a melodious voice of wrath”, the weapon (the severed head)⁷⁰⁶ is hurled in the direction of the enemy. Being flung like a stone from a sling (*'ur rdo brgyab bzhin*), it whizzes through the air against the array of inimical forces. The oath-bound protectors are summoned with the chant: “BHYO. Don’t be idle, don’t delay, you who are bound under oath!” (*ma gYel ma gYel dam can rnams*), and they are urged to arrest and bring before the court all malicious wrong doers. The Triple Gem are exhorted to be present as judge and jury, final arbiters in the trial that distinguishes gods from demons. Thus the good elements are carefully separated from the bad (*legs nyes srid pa'i lha 'dreb rtsis*) and the three groups of red and black protectors are incited to rain down pestilence and disease upon the households of the enemy and avert their power.⁷⁰⁷

Much of the imagery employed in this text is similar to that of the *Nag po dug gi 'khor lo* above but, whereas the former document concerned itself primarily with the inner aspects of the rite, the present readily lends itself to dramatic interpretation. Indeed, within Buddhist communities this imagery is regularly put to spectacular effect for the edification of the lay faithful, the rite being annually performed as a masked dance in which the participants present a gorgeous pageant of lavishly attired divine beings. The *'Cham yig* cited above quotes the liturgy for every section of the rite as it is given in the *Khro bo rol pa'i gtor bzlog* (A43), a text far more elaborate than the one being dealt with here. That liturgy is then broken down into its component parts and for every syllable there are instructions for both dancers and musicians. In accordance with these ‘stage directions’, the entire rite⁷⁰⁸ may be performed by a large company of players (normally the assembly of monks in any given monastery) who thus dramatically bring these difficult symbolic teachings to life as they annually reenact the enduring religious motif of the triumph of good over evil.

Burning

Instructions for the *homa* rite are found in several of the texts in the three collections. Each of the original *gter ma* texts (A12, A39, B21) outlines in brief the wrathful (*raudra*) rite and it is only in the long and detailed liturgy by Padma 'phrin-las (A46) that instructions are given for the three ‘gentle’ (*mañju*) attainments. In performing the fierce rite of

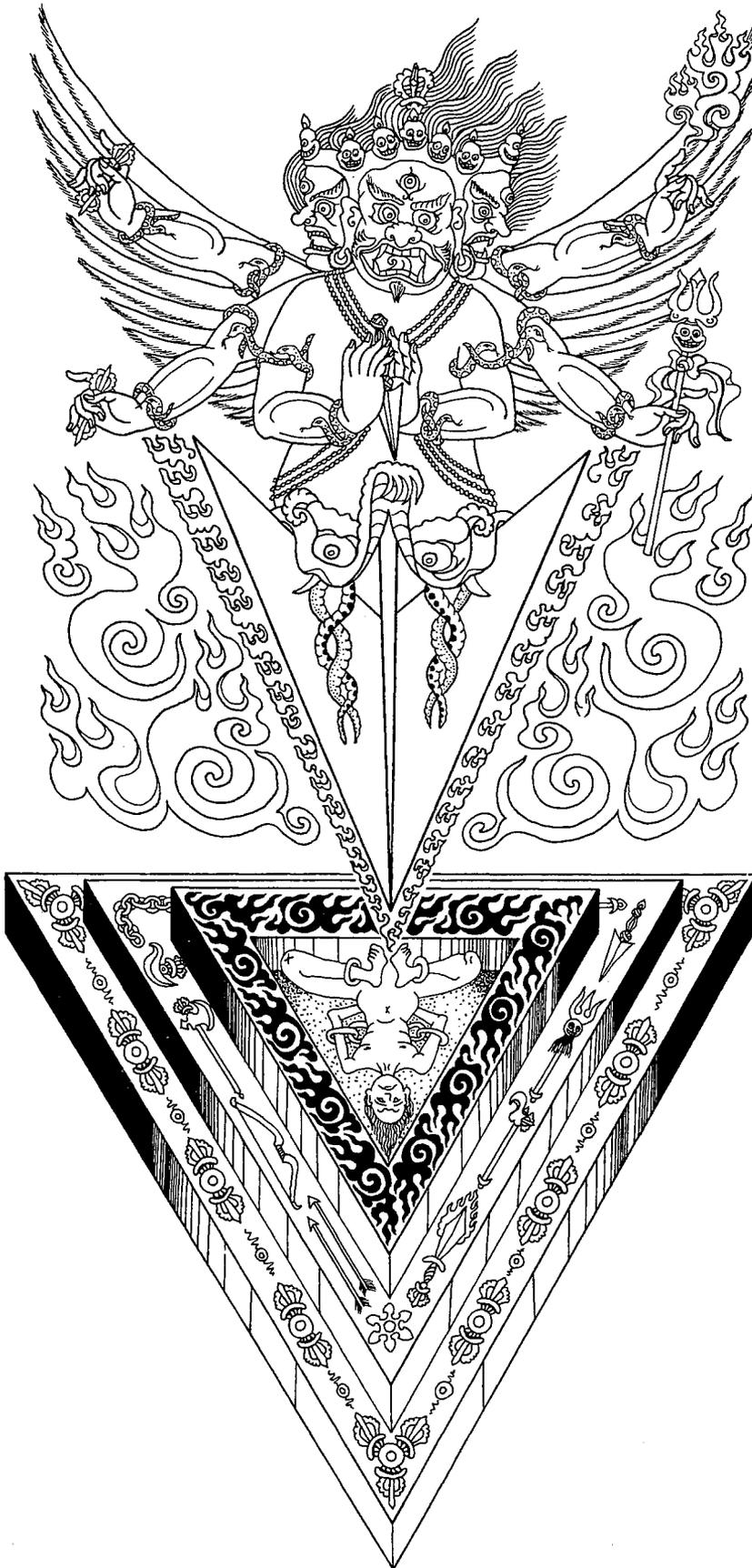
that of a person who passed away peacefully in old age is ritually powerless. Oral communication from C. R. Lama.

706. The *Khro bo rol pa'i gtor bzlog* names the weapons as *gtor ma*, arrow *zor*, blood *zor* and mustard *zor*. A43, 307.

707. A13, 117–8.

708. The fifth Dalai Lama prepared an elaborate choreography for the entire Vajrakīla *sādhana*, the text and translation of which are to be found in René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Tibetan Religious Dances*.

burnt offerings, all sources state that a pile of wood with thorns should be arranged within a triangular hearth and kindled with fire taken from the house of a widow. The specifics of the hearth, however, are variously described in the several texts. Neither A12 nor A13 (A39) give any details but B21 and Padma 'phrin-las' long commentary are quite explicit.



B21 deals with a *homa* rite dedicated to ‘the solitary hero Kīla’ (*ekalavīra*, a term meaning ‘without consort’),⁷⁰⁹ said to have been taken from the black northern treasure of iron. This very clear text discusses the ritual under three rubrics: 1) the fireplace and fuel, 2) the collection of articles for burning, 3) the generation of deities.⁷¹⁰

1) With regard to the fireplace and fuel: The hearth should be triangular in shape with each side measuring one cubit in length, standing one handspan in height. It should be painted black with charcoal from a funeral pyre and in its centre should be placed an effigy of whichever enemies and obstructors one wishes to kill. It is constructed with three borders, each four inches wide, which rise up like steps. On the first step one should draw *vajras*, on the middle step should be depicted a multitude of weapons and on the top step one should sketch a mountain of fire. Then a pile of thorny firewood should be built up in a triangle, the shape of which is maintained by binding it with the hair of a widow.

2) Next, as well as general offerings for the enjoyment of the assembly (*gaṇacakra*), the following articles for burning are required: Various kinds of flesh and blood, poisonous oil, an article belonging to the enemy (*ming byang*)⁷¹¹ that has been smeared with blood, an effigy chopped up into pieces, a pair of sacrificial ladles and specially prepared lengths of firewood (*yam shing*). All of these must be gathered together.

3) With regard to the generation of deities, this has two sections: The generation of the *yogin* himself as a deity and the generation of the gods in front. Having generated himself as the solitary hero, the *yogin* brings the articles to be burned near to the hearth and blesses them all as the flesh and blood of the enemies and obstructors. Purifying the fireplace with nectar,⁷¹² he blesses it as the triangular symbol of *tathatā*.⁷¹³

He then generates the deities in front and these are threefold: Agni,⁷¹⁴ Vajrakīla, and the retinue. For the generation of the fire god the *yogin* imagines a brown billy goat arising as the transformation of the brown seed syllable TRI within the fireplace. He imagines the sun

709. All other sources describe the *yuganaddha* deity.

710. A46 adds such preliminary considerations as the nature of the site: An area in which the sky has the aspect of an eight-spoked wheel and the earth the form of an eight-petalled lotus is said to be suitable for the rite of pacification. Where there is found a mountain like a heap of jewels is good for increase. A delightful garden in which there stands “a wish-fulfilling tree” is an auspicious place for the rite of overpowering. The wrathful rite should be performed in a charnel ground, by a solitary tree, at a crossroads, a place frequented by wild animals, where the sky is like a knife and the earth triangular, a place with thorny trees to one side, etc. A46, 418. This text also provides verses for the invocation of the Earth goddess, presentation of payment for the use of the site, its ritual purification, and so on. A46, 420–1.

711. In the absence of any actual article belonging to the enemy, a slip of wood upon which his name has been inscribed may be burned.

712. Padma ’phrin-las points out that the nectar used here should swirl in an anticlockwise direction while clockwise-swirling nectar is appropriate to the three gentle rites. A46, 431.

713. At A12, 113, the hearth is described as the *dharmodaya* arisen from the syllable E. The use of a triangular fire altar for “the annihilation of rivals” apparently stems back to a Vedic tradition which adds that, when the end is desired for both the present and the future, the shape of the altar should be that of a six-pointed star composed of two interlocking triangles. N. K. Majumder, “Sacrificial Altars: Vedis and Agnis”, *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, VII, 1939, 39–60.

714. According to A13 it is not necessary to generate the god of fire separately within the fireplace. A13, 118.

as a cushion placed upon that goat and a blue syllable RAM upon that cushion. Then, as he mutters AGNIDEVARṢI RAM HŪM, the fire god arises with a blue body having one face and two hands. He has three eyes. In his right hand he holds a *trisūla* and with his left he counts the beads of a rosary. He is seated upon his mount, the brown billy goat, and is adorned with the bone ornaments of Karmaheruka. His body, speech and mind should be consecrated with the three syllables (OM AḤ HŪM) and thus the *samayasattva* Agni is produced.⁷¹⁵ The *jñānasattva* is then aroused with the prayer:

“HŪM. Oh mighty sage, god of fire. In former times you consumed the offerings burned for the gods. Now we invite you here and present you with gifts and, as a result of our faith and commitment, you must come here. Oh, great element, come! You must come through the power of our bond. AGNAYE SAMAYA JAḤ.”

And the text instructs the practitioners to snap their fingers while reciting this. He is then invited with the words:

“HŪM. Through faith and commitment, you must come here. Oh, great element, come! King of the fire gods, supreme among sages, we pray that you will come here to this place in order to accept the food offered with the sacrificial ladles and, having come to this very place, we pray that you will happily stay firm. AGNIDEVARṢI JAḤ A.”

And the text instructs the practitioners to beckon with the thumb while reciting this. Now the practitioners should imagine the inner offering of human flesh to be clearly visible before them and, muttering JAḤ HŪM VAḤ HOḤ, they should merge the *jñānasattva* and the *samayasattva* into non-duality. Following that, respectful salutations are offered to the deity:

“HŪM. The long hair of your head is wound up in a bun, your teeth are showing like a great white rose and the light of fire is in your eyes. We pay homage to you, great sage. AGNIDEVARṢI ATIPŪHO.”

Then the offerings are poured onto the fire. First the oil and then, one by one, the other articles are burned:

“HŪM. Oh, mighty sage, this ambrosial food arising through the power of *samādhi* is like nothing ever offered before. Being purified, it is prepared as an offering of sanctity and therefore, moving your mind by wisdom and compassion, we beg you to accept it. AGNIDEVA HAVYA KAVYA STAVYA KHĀHI KHĀHI *So-and-so must be killed* HŪM PHAṬ!”

Next, singing his praises:

“HŪM Son of Brahmā, lord of the world. King of the fire gods, supreme among sages, incarnate through the power of compassion for the sake of protecting all beings. Greatest of the ṛṣis who have mastered the spells and

715. B21, 46–7.

formulae. Burner of defilements,⁷¹⁶ wisdom light⁷¹⁷ that blazes like the mass of fire at the end of an aeon. Mounted on a goat that is the emanation of skilful means, you bear a vessel containing the essence of nectar and with the nectar of *Dharma* you soothe (all troubles) completely. Holding a rosary as you count the recitations of *mantra*, you are the compassionate one made lovely by tranquillity. You abide in the world and yet you have transcended misery. Salutations, offerings and praise be to you.”

Then Agni is requested to fulfil his function in the rite:

“Ho! Agni, great sage. Please remain here as one with the blazing fire and convey to the mouths of the wisdom gods all the foodstuffs offered in this burnt sacrifice.”⁷¹⁸

Following which, the assembly of deities should be generated either in his stomach or heart. Muttering BHRŪM CAKRAMANDALA, the *yogin* imagines a dark blue triangular *maṇḍala* with four doors. In its centre is a sun, moon and eight-petalled lotus upon which is the syllable HŪM from which the lord Vajrakīla arises as his *mantra* is recited. The *yogin* then generates the remaining deities of the retinue, including the four supreme sons above the four doors and the twelve oath-bound protectors around the periphery. The liturgy for this is to be taken from the *sādhana* discussed above in Chapter Seven and the deities are to be consecrated with the power of body, speech and mind.

The wisdom deities are then called forth with the well-known verse: “HŪM. In order that empowerments, *siddhis* and the successful accomplishment of the *bhava-kīla* may be attained, you deities of wisdom wrath must please come here ..., etc.” ending SAMAYA HO JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ, by means of which they are inseparably united.

Muttering OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA and the rest and adding ATIPŪHO they are saluted and then the outer and inner offerings are presented by means of *mantras*. Pieces of the effigy are offered and then the practitioner offers in succession all the remaining articles to be burned. Finally he presents the *ming byang* with *mantras* after stabbing it with the *kīla*. Casting it into the fire, the *yogin* recites:

“HŪM. From within the depths of such fire
as blazes at the end of an aeon,
upon piled-up cushions of haughty great gods,
overawing the enemies and obstructors
with the heroic mode of his stance
is the lord Mahāśrīvajrakumāra
with three faces, six arms and adorned with
apparel from the charnel ground.
From his heart blazes forth a mass of

716. Agni, traditionally, has been “generally regarded and worshipped as the mighty protector against demons, goblins, sorcerers, hostile magic and any other evil influences”. J. Gonda, *Rice and Barley Offerings in the Veda*, 195–6.

717. Citing the *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa*, Gonda says that the light of fire counteracts evil: “Agni, the brightly flaming ... light, purifying drives away the demons”. J. Gonda, *op. cit.*, 196.

718. B21, 47–9.

wisdom fire like that at the end of the world.

Into this swirling pit of fire
within the vastness of wisdom
are offered the sacred articles of
slaying the enemies and obstructors.

Accept them!

Burn the trouble-makers!

The demons must blaze!

Kill the vow-breakers!

Enemies and obstructors MĀRAYA!

OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA KHĀHI KHĀHI!

So-and-so MĀRAYA HŪM PHAṬ!

HŪM Within the four doors
of the divine *maṇḍala* palace
are the four wrathful
emanations from the heart,
the four door-keepers that
perform the violent activities.

Into this swirling pit of fire ..., etc.

Enemies and obstructors MĀRAYA!

VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ

KHĀHI KHĀHI!

So-and-so MĀRAYA HŪM PHAṬ!

The three classes of vow keepers
emanated from your body, speech and mind
and the many further emanations
must kill the enemies and obstructors
without remainder!

Into this swirling pit of fire ..., etc.

Enemies and obstructors MĀRAYA!

OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA

REMATĪ REMAJĀ REMAJŪ REMAJĪ

(and so on ...)

ŚVANMUKHĀ SRIRA SRĠĀLA KUKKURA

(and so on ...)

KUMADARI ŚULACAMUDARI KĀKADARI⁷¹⁹

So-and-so MĀRAYA HŪM PHAṬ!"

With these words he burns the *ming byang*.⁷²⁰

719. By position in the text it is apparent that the names given here are intended to refer to the Bhūmipati sisters but such appellations are unattested elsewhere.

720. B21, 49–51.

When all the articles have been offered, five pieces of thorny wood should be cast into the fire with the curse “May So-and-so be reduced to dust!” Then offerings should be made to the lower classes of servants and they also should be given their orders. When the ritual is over, all participants should circumambulate the Kīla *maṇḍala* in the hearth⁷²¹ and perform the dance of pacification whilst muttering the SUMBHA-NISUMBHA *mantra*.⁷²²

This “*homa* ritual of the solitary hero” is said to have been composed on the basis of the *Vidyottama-tantra* by Padmasambhava in the ‘Upper Yak’s Horn Cave’ (gYag-ru-gong) for the protection of the teachings and assembly of Nālandā monastery.⁷²³

Pressing down

One who wishes to press down the enemies and obstructors in order to arrive at the end of the fierce activities should mix the ashes of the wrathful *homa* rite with black clay and fashion from it an effigy in the likeness of the enemy and a model of a camel. He should then insert the heart (the name *mantra*) of the enemy into the effigy⁷²⁴ and securely bind it with lengths of green and red string. Loading the effigy upon the camel’s back, he should place it within a skull of evil portent and, separating the enemy from his protector gods, he should summon his consciousness to be bound within the effigy’s form. Imagining the camel to be real, the *yogin* places it to the north bearing the burden of the enemy upon its back.⁷²⁵

He should then take a *bali* offering for the local *nāgas* and *bhūmipatis* and so on and go either to a great charnel ground or to a place where gods and demons reside (*lha ’dre gnas pa’i sa*, usually crossroads). At that place he should dig a triangular pit in the ground, one cubit deep, and bury that skull and its contents within it. Making the gesture of the sword (*khadgamudrā*) and muttering VAJRATĪKṢNAKHADGA HŪM, the *yogin* strikes the ground and imagines it rent assunder as a mass of black fire comes bursting forth. In the midst of that fire, arising from the *mantra* OM KRṢṆAYAMĀRI HŪM JAḤ, the *yogin* is instructed to imagine the sudden real appearance of the black Yama of *karma* (Karmayama).⁷²⁶ It should be noted here that Krṣṇayamāri is not normally Yama but rather his adversary, ‘the enemy of Yama’, a form of the Buddhist deity Vajrabhairava (a wrathful emanation of Mañjuśrī) who subdued the Vedic Yama and bound him under oath to protect the

721. This ritual circumambulation is to be performed in an anticlockwise direction in the case of the fierce rite. A46, 434. Other minor points mentioned by Padma ’phrin-las as appropriate to the fierce rite are that it should be performed during the dark of night (419), in the winter (419), using a rosary of bone or *rudrākṣa* seeds (429), with the left leg extended (429), with the little finger outstretched (439), and so on. Other times, seasons, rosaries, body postures and the rest are indicated for the three gentle rites and it is explained that whatever omens are considered inauspicious for those three rites are deemed excellent in the case of the fierce rite. A46, 440.

722. See above, Chapter Two, note 241.

723. B21, 51–2.

724. C reads *snying kha gtsugs* (“tear out the heart”) here for *snying khar bcug*.

725. Although the north is the quarter generally associated with rites of destruction, the way to Yama’s abode lies to the south and this is the direction we should expect here.

726. The *Vimalaprabhā* says that the nature of Karmayama is threefold: as a ghost (*preta*) he inhabits a plot of earth, as the lord of death (*mṛtyu*) he dwells in the body of living beings and as defilement (*kleśa*) his abode is the mind. A. Wayman, “Studies in Yama and Māra”, 126.

Buddhist *Dharma*.⁷²⁷ Originally, however, the epithets Yamāri and its virtual synonym Yamāntaka were indeed applied to Yama himself who was known as ‘Death, the enemy’ or ‘Death, the ender’.⁷²⁸ These terms were later reinterpreted to mean ‘the enemy of Death’ and ‘the ender of Death’ when applied to the overthrower of Yama who succeeded in crushing his power.⁷²⁹ The question then arises: does our Byang-gter text have its roots in a time when Kṛṣṇayamāri was actually an epithet of Yama, or did the author of the text (said to be Padmasambhava) simply confuse their (current) discrete identities?

The invited god is then to be presented with a *bali* offering and requested to fulfil his task as follows:

“HŪM. You who dwell in a doorless iron house⁷³⁰ in the dense wind beneath the dark depths of the great ocean below the mighty foundation of the king of mountains (Sumeru).⁷³¹ You, the black-bodied one with coarse, stunted limbs from whose mouth issues forth the foul vapour of death. Mounted upon your black buffalo steed you hold in your hands a skull club and noose. Your land is known as ‘the World of Black Blemish’ (‘Jig-rten rme-nag) and for those who are born there it is a place of no escape.⁷³² Oh lord of death, king of the *Dharma* (Dharmarāja), you who have the power of great insight (*abhijñā*) and the performance of miracles (*rddhi*). Discriminate now between virtue and vice. This enemy is entrusted to your hands, oh Yama. Oh lord of death who maintains the *samaya*, do not release the entrusted enemy!”⁷³³

727. B. Siklos, *The Vajrabhairava Tantra*, 38.

728. These and other epithets of Yama are listed in the lexicon *Amarakośa*. A. Wayman, “Studies in Yama and Māra”, 44–5.

729. W. D. O’Flaherty, *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*, 232.

730. Described as having sixteen very sharp edges, reminiscent of the sharp-edged discus (*cakra*) employed in so many Vajrakīla rites to press down upon demons. A. Wayman, “Studies in Yama and Māra”, 127–8.

731. The *pretakāṇḍa* of the *Garuḍa-purāṇa* devotes Chapter XXXIII to a description of Yama’s realm and XXXVII to a description of the river Vaitaraṇi which lies at the threshold of Yama’s city.

732. According to the *Vajrabhairavākhyāna-kalpa*, Yama’s city (named there as Galava) contains sixteen gateless iron dwellings, thirty-two houses, etc. B. Siklos, *The Vajrabhairava Tantra*, 177.

Chapter V of the *pretakāṇḍa* in the *Garuḍa-purāṇa* describes the torments suffered by the deceased as he is dragged away to the south in the direction of Yama’s realm. There are said to be sixteen cities to pass through *en route*: Yāmya, Sauripura, Nāgendrabhavana, Gandharva (Gandhamādana), Śailāgama, Krūrāpura, Krauñca, Vicitrabhavana, Bahvāpada, Duḥkhada, Nānākrandapura, Sutaptabhavana, Raudra, Payovarṣaṇa, Śītāḍhya and Bahubhīti. *Garuḍa-purāṇa*, II, V, 81–154. V. Fausboll, *Indian Mythology*, 136, gives the name of Yama’s city as Saṃyamana.

733. The character of Yama is thought to exhibit two clearly distinct facets. As the god of death he is the much feared destroyer of life whose retinue consists of dreadful diseases and whose messengers drag the deceased through barren lands devoid of shade and water towards his realm in the south. Within his wondrous palace, however, Yama is the wise and just judge of the dead, the righteous king of *Dharma* whose laws and nature have their roots in the *karma* of the one who stands before him to be judged. V. Fausboll, *Indian Mythology*, 138.

Then, muttering once more the name *mantra* of the black Yamāri, the *yogin* imagines himself pressing food to his lips and inviting him to eat the flesh of the enemy, to drink his blood, devour his heart and consume the entrails and sense organs.⁷³⁴

After that the *yogin* should recite the DHADDHI *mantra* as he imagines that wind camel (*rlung gi rnga mo*)⁷³⁵ travelling to the land of Yama with the enemy upon its back. Muttering IMĀN VIGHNĀN STAMBHAYA NAN, the *yogin* meditates upon a *kīla* as the actual Amṛtakunḍalin and nails it into the effigy. Then a slab of stone upon which have been drawn Mount Meru and the four continents of Buddhist cosmology is placed over the burial chamber and this presses down upon the enemy with the whole weight of the universe. This stone slab should be covered over with earth so as to make it invisible and the celebrants perform dances of the four activities upon its surface. Finally, as a benediction for the site, a golden Mount Meru should be visualized upon the road and there, in a ritual vase, one should meditate upon the lord Amoghasiddhi⁷³⁶ in the company of his inconceivable retinue.⁷³⁷

734. A13, 119–21.

735. The consciousness after death is carried upon the back of a very subtle life-bearing wind which, in this ritual, is replaced by a camel. See Jeffrey Hopkins & Lati Rinbochay, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*, 49. In Chapter Two of the *Mahāvajrabhairava-tantra* we read: “Then, if the *mantrin* wants to drive someone away, he should make a camel out of earth from the seven places and should then imagine on its back a wind *maṇḍala* in the shape of a half-moon transformed from the syllable YAM. Above it he imagines the victim and on his back he imagines the form of Yama holding a staff in his hand. He thinks that the victim is beaten with that staff and is lead off facing south.” B. Siklos, *The Vajrabhairava Tantra*, 100.

736. The *Tathāgata* who presides over the northern quarter of the *maṇḍala*, the peaceful equivalent of the wrathful Amṛtakunḍalin.

737. A13, 121–2.

Chapter Eleven

Activities For the Benefit of Yogins

Those *yogins* who have accomplished the rite of the *bhavakīla* and wish “to postpone the termination of either their own or another’s lifespan” are instructed in the process of this achievement by A18 (B22, C12), a longevity ritual (*tshe sgrub*) apparently based upon the twenty-first chapter of the *Vajrakīla Garland of Flames Tantra* (*Me lce’i ’phreng ba*) (A31, C13).⁷³⁸

Opening with a homage to Vajrakīla as “the deity of *vajra* life” (*rdo rje tshe’i lha*), this ritual instructs the *sādhaka* to assemble the necessary articles such as the long-life vase (*tshe’i bum*)⁷³⁹ and the various life-prolonging medicines⁷⁴⁰ and perform the *Kīla sādhana* in a solitary place, inserting the rite of longevity in the section devoted to the assembled offerings (*gaṇacakra*).⁷⁴¹ There the *yogin* should contemplate that from the syllable

738. Chapter Twenty-one alone appears extant of this otherwise unknown *tantra*, originally supposed to have been taught by “the *bhagavat heruka* king” (*bcom ldan ’das khrag ’thung gi rgyal po*) in response to a request made by the deity Vajrakīla. It is possibly also the primary source for the *Tshe dbang* found as A19 & B23.

739. The *Garland of Flames* says that this jewelled vase should contain five kinds of gem, five kinds of medicinal herb, five sorts of grain, five fragrances, five essences (not listed individually but see A. Wayman, *The Buddhist Tantras*, 81), the three sweet substances (sugar, honey and molasses) and white mustard, “the supreme seed” (*’bru mchog*). It should be filled to the top with water, covered over with a red half-moon and richly adorned with ornaments before being placed in the very centre of the *maṇḍala*. The text then gives the *mantras* required in order to invoke the presence of the *Kīlas* of the five *kulas* which are imagined to take up residence within the belly of the vase. They are said to be generated and invited “in accordance with former rites” (see Chapters Five–Seven, above). Once present, those deities are honoured with incense and flags and the *maṇḍala* itself should be surrounded by the necessities (*yo byad*) of the ritual. A31, 213. The *Tshe dbang* text fills the vase with beer instead of water, closes its mouth with “a long-life teat” (*tshe’i ’brang rgyas*), seals it in four places around the outside with HRIḤ and finally binds it with five-coloured thread. A19, 154.

740. Unspecified in the text. Generally, however, Tibetan lamas collect together an assortment of ingredients both sacred (relics of diverse sorts) and medicinal (herbs, minerals, etc.) which are ground to powder, bound together with roasted barley flour and moulded into pills. These pills are then consecrated in the process of the ritual to become “long life medicine”.

741. In this regard it is interesting to note the explanation given by the *Garland of Flames* in which it is said that, in a superior practice such as this, the activities of presenting offerings to the deity and so on are perfected by maintaining an awareness of utter purity. This text also glosses “the radiating and gathering of the recitation syllables” (normally imagined internally in the form of light) as “right speech (*samyagvāk*) within which neither confusion (for others)

BHRŪM arises a jewelled *maṇḍala* palace, square with four doors and replete with all adornments. In its centre, arising from the transformation of the syllable HRIḤ, Buddhāmitāyus rests upon cushions of lotus and moon. He is white in colour and holds a long-life vase on his lap. In front of him, to the east, is the blue Vairocanāmitāyus with the yellow Guṇāmitāyus to the south, the red Amitābhāmitāyus to the west and the green Karmāmitāyus to the north. All of them hold long-life vases upon their laps and are held in non-dual embrace by the leading ladies of the five *kulas*.⁷⁴² Surrounding them are the eight offering goddesses: Lāsyā, Mālā, Gītā, Nṛtyā, Dhūpā, Puṣpā, Ālokā and Gandhā,⁷⁴³ and the four gate-guardian goddesses holding the hook, noose, fetters and bell. The *yogin* is instructed to visualize all of these deities clearly so that no confusion arises in his mind concerning their colour, form or insignia. Each of them is said to be adorned with all the usual attributes.⁷⁴⁴

When the visualization is stable, the wisdom counterparts (*jñānasattva*) of those deities should be invited, praised and presented with offerings and their *mantras* recited. For, it is said, it is precisely by means of standard meditative procedure that the attainment of long life is gained. OM AḤ HŪM NR BHRŪM VAJRĀYUṢE HŪM Ā.⁷⁴⁵

That this *siddhi* of longevity is considered a natural corollary of orthodox yogic praxis is then demonstrated in the text as it goes on to cite from the *Garland of Flames Tantra* the adage: “One should perform the acts of devotion (*sevā*), secondary devotion (*upasevā*), evocation (*sādhana*) and great evocation (*mahāsādhana*) for long life”.⁷⁴⁶ The *yogin* is

nor error (in oneself) arise”, and says that this is the manner in which the ritual is to be performed. A31, 214.

742. Instead of generating the *pañcakula* Amitāyus in front, the *Garland of Flames* describes self-generation in four-armed form. According to this *tantra*, the *yogin* should imagine rays of light streaming out from the syllable A in the centre of a *viśvavajra* in his heart. As those light rays gather together and return to his heart he himself becomes Amitāyus, shining white like a snow mountain with one smiling face and four arms. In his two right hands he holds a *viśvavajra* and a bag made of mongoose skin. In his two left hands he holds a bell and a vase of nectar. He is adorned with strings of jewels and seated in non-dual embrace with his consort. A31, 214.
743. The *Garland of Flames* and the *Tshe dbang* list only four of these eight goddesses. Lāsyā to the east is white and she carries a vase of crystal. In the south is the blue Mālā (all mss: Lāsyā) who has a garland of turquoise and a jewelled vase. In the west is the red Gītī, goddess of song who has a vase of coral and in the north is the green Nṛtyā, goddess of dance whose vase is made of beryl. All are said to summon the lifespan and to contain within their vases the essence of the five nectars with which they nourish life force and vitality, restoring the weak. A31, 218–9. The *Tshe dbang* fills their vases with the distilled essence of flowers, juices, fruits and forest herbs respectively. A19, 157.
744. Details of colour, form, attribute, position in the *maṇḍala*, *mudrā*, *mantra*, etc., of the minor deities mentioned here are to be found in SDPT (*passim*), where Vajraghaṇṭā is called Vajrāveśa. For their icons see Lokesh Chandra, *Buddhist Iconography of Tibet*, 177–84.
745. A18, 146.
746. *tshe bsnyen dang ni nye bsnyen dang, tshe sgrub dang ni sgrub chen bya*. The verse in the *tantra* ends: *las rnam yongs su rdzogs par bya*. “(Thus) one fully accomplishes all activities”. A31, 213. These four categories of praxis, within which are included the stages of both *utpattikrama* and *sampannakrama*, are discussed at length in Alex Wayman, *Yoga of the GST*, (*passim*), where the term *upasevā* is replaced by *upasādhana*.

then instructed to imagine that the entire animate and inanimate world dissolves into light and is absorbed into himself and into the 'long life substances' upon the altar before him.

Now, as for summoning the lifespan, calling HRIḤ the *yogin* contemplates Buddhāmitāyus in the non-dual embrace of his consort Caṇḍālī⁷⁴⁷ and invokes the *siddhi* of long life and glory (*śrī*) from the *maṇḍala* of their non-dual heart. Then he calls to Vairocanāmitāyus and his consort from the eastern direction, Ratnāmitāyus and his consort from the southern direction, Padmāmitāyus and his consort from the western direction and Karmāmitāyus and his consort from the north. He calls to the goddesses Lāsyā, Mālā and the rest, to Vajrāṅkuṣā, Vajrapāśā, Vajrasphoṭā and Vajraghaṇṭā. He imagines that all of these deities hold 'life silks' (*tshe dar*, arrows festooned with silks of five colours) in their right hands which they wave in all directions and 'life vases' in their left which are filled with the nectar of immortality. By means of these articles they bestow the blessings of long life upon the fortunate ones (those of meritorious *karma*).

“HRIḤ. Oh lord Mahāśrīvajrakumāra and the great divine mother
Trīptacakra, bestow the attainment of long life upon us fortunate ones!”

The *yogin* then proceeds systematically to appropriate for himself the lifespans and attractive qualities ('glory') of the denizens of the universe. This he achieves through the agency of the *daśakrodha* kings and their consorts, the rulers of all who dwell in the ten directions:

“HŪM. The span of life that pertains above in the realm of Brahmā must be brought forth by the *krodharāja* Hūṃkāra. His consort sGra-'byin must preserve the glory.”

With such words as these, the *krodha* couples of the ten directions are urged to bring forth the lifespans and merits of the *gandharvas* from the east, of the retinue of Agni from the southeast, of Yama from the south, of the *rākṣasas* from the southwest, of the *nāgas* from the west, of the wind gods from the northwest, of the *yakṣas* from the north, of Īśāna from the northeast, and of the *bhūmipatis* from below. OM ĀḤ HŪM NR BHRŪM VAJRĀYUṢE HŪM.⁷⁴⁸

The text continues in this manner with a further series of ten verses exhorting the animal-headed 'devourers' and 'killers' to gather in the lifespans and protect the glory that are to be found in the sky, in the southern forests, on rocky mountains, on open plains, in the borderland of snow and slate (the snowline), in areas of farmland, within the shadows

747. The *Garland of Flames* presents the rite of the consort as a backup technique to ensure the attainment of *siddhi*. If the signs of success are not fully attained by means of the previous rite, it says, the *yogin* should invoke the white goddess Caṇḍālī from the heart of Amitāyus by muttering OM VAJRACANDĀLĪ HA JA JA HŪM. Blazing in a mass of fire she appears with one face and four hands within which she holds a *vajra* made of gems, a precious vase of nectar, a jewel and a casket. She has jewels in her hair and from her body radiate countless emanations which fill the ten directions of the six destinies and grind to dust all those who hold false views. A31, 216.

748. A18, 147–8. According to the *Tshe dbang*, the *mantra* given here is to be added in turn to that of each individual deity in the *maṇḍala*. A19, 154.

on the western face of forests, in the wild regions of snowy mountains, upon the northern plains and within the depths of the great oceans.⁷⁴⁹

“The goddesses with the hook, noose, fetters and bell—those four goddesses who guard the *maṇḍala* gates—must gather in the lifespans and all the oath-bound protectors must preserve the glory.”⁷⁵⁰

The *Garland of Flames* explains that whatever demons there are in the ten directions of the world are subdued and annihilated by the recitation of the *mantras* and that their lifespan is to be drawn in with the syllable NR. It is also said that the *yogin* may use this technique in order to gather the ‘essential nectar’ (*rtsi bcud*) of the elements or the *bodhicitta* of all the Buddhas in the ten directions which he then either unites with himself or dissolves into the vase (or sacred food and drink) upon the altar so that it becomes “like the wish-fulfilling gem”, supreme among jewels. Thus, the text says, “the excellence of the vase is that it contains the auspicious qualities of the lifespans of others and makes them immediately available for the benefit of the *yogin*.”

In order to reap the maximum benefit of this appropriation, the *yogin* should absorb the lifespan and other qualities into himself in the form of enlightenment, visible either as the three syllables OM ĀḤ HŪM or as the five syllables OM on the crown of his head, AM on the top of the tongue, HŪM on the heart, TRAM on the navel and A on the soles of both feet. This absorption may be completed either successively or simultaneously and then the *yogin* should protect the attainment and keep it hidden “in the blissful dance of natural awareness”.⁷⁵¹

The *yogin* having thus vastly enriched the store of longevity abiding within his life vein (*jīvitānāḍī*), the texts then deal with the method of hiding away that lifespan so as to conserve it. The *Garland of Flames* says that the essential vitality (*snying po bcud*) is to be sealed by means of a *vajra* weapon within the closed container of a *viśvavajra* (presumably within his heart),⁷⁵² whereas the *tshe sgrub* instructs the *yogin* to visualize a green syllable NR (the syllable that attracts the life force of humans) and imagine that the entrance to his life vein is guarded on the outside by Hayagrīva and on the inside by Amṛtakunḍalin, both of whom arise from HRĪḤ and stand like soldiers with their feet together.⁷⁵³

749. These forty-two deities of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala* are to be visualized holding iron hooks in their right hands (with which to capture the lifespan) and vases in their left (containing the stored nectar of immortality). From the three places of each deity radiate innumerable “Lords of Boundless Life and Wisdom” (Aparimitāyurjñānanātha) so that the entire world is filled with wrathful wisdom beings who, having taken the best of all things, restore whatever is impaired, distorted, dissipated or unstable for the *yogins* and their sponsors. Otherwise, the captured lifespan of all worldly gods and demons is dissolved into the vase in the form of the syllable A and the vase is seen to glow with light. A19, 154–5.

750. A18, 148–9.

751. A31, 214–5.

752. A31, 219.

753. These two deities are to be imagined holding clubs in their right hands and making the *tarjanīmudrā* with the left. The *Tshe dbang* has them standing guard over the lifespan contained within a “wisdom palace” arisen from the syllable HŪM on the forehead, not within the heart. B23, 66–7 (page missing in A).

Alternatively, that 'lifespan with excellent qualities' may be concealed within the *dharmadhātu* where even a Buddha will not perceive it. In either case, this 'precept of longevity' is said to be an excellent activity which possesses the unexcelled armour (*kavaca*) of *mahāśūnyatā*, armour with the seal (*mudrā*) of protection against perverted views. The *Garland of Flames* says that, of all armours, knowledge of *śūnyatā* is supreme for it destroys all objective weapons. The *yogin* should therefore conceal his acquired lifespan within the sphere beyond imagination where obstructors and misleaders can do it no harm.⁷⁵⁴ "By donning the indestructible *vajra* armour (one) is protected from the demons of mistaken ideas." OM VAJRAKAVACA HŪM.

"HOḤ. The hosts of gods of deathless *vajra* life must take up and gather in the lifespans of we *yogins* here and straighten out whatever is crooked, replace that which has broken off, renew whatever has become worn out and nourish that which has become weak. Please bestow upon us the blessings of a lifespan that has never been born, a lifespan which is the nectar of immortality, an undying lifespan, a lifespan which is a banner of victory that never droops, a lifespan of unchanging great happiness and all the good fortune of long life, power and merit."⁷⁵⁵

The *Garland of Flames* concludes with a few lines that indicate the normal significance of 'immortality' in this world—the begetting of children so that the name (and especially the religious tradition) of the *yogin* may live on after death.⁷⁵⁶

The text claims that, through the proper performance of the ritual, even a hermaphrodite or a barren woman or a decrepit old person will receive the empowerment of life and their family lineages will be increased, so what more need be said? Either the family line will be increased with unending virtue⁷⁵⁷ or, if the results are not applied in that (mundane) way, the *yogin* who practises this rite will blaze like Bhairava in the *maṇḍala* of ferocious deities. From such a one will emanate various hand symbols and weapons that will spread out and cut down all demons in the ten directions of the world and the glorious attributes of Hayagrīva will drag them forth from whichever place they stay. The various weapons such as the *vajracakra* will 'liberate' the powerful gods, even those long-lived gods of the higher heavens, and thus the *yogin* will gather the lifespans of the five classes of beings under his power.⁷⁵⁸ By means of the ploughshare and other such weapons that till the fields and overturn the world beneath the surface of the earth, the *yogin* subjugates Yama, the *nāgas* and other (subterranean) troublesome beings and, 'liberating' them, he gathers them under his power. By means of the iron hook and the discus, etc., the unimaginable weapons of the dangerous ones filling the whole of the sky, the eight classes of *bhūtas*⁷⁵⁹ are liberated in an instant.⁷⁶⁰

754. A31, 220.

755. A18, 150.

756. A31, 220.

757. Text A reads: "virtue will increase".

758. Text A reads: "will gather it up in the form of light".

759. Enumerated in the text as "*btsan, bdud, the 'u rang* and the rest".

760. A31, 217.

It is also stated in the *Garland of Flames* that this method of enhancing longevity should be practised “in accordance with the stages of secret Vajrayāna” by the *yogin* joining in a *samādhi* of union with a youthful woman whose body possesses the appropriate signs and symbols. Then the precepts and *siddhis* of this rite should be transmitted to any children born of that union, to whom also should be given the empowerments of the five *Tathāgatas*, the crown consecration and the wisdom consecration and the rest.⁷⁶¹

In the case of these *siddhis* of long life being bestowed by a *guru* upon his disciple at the time of the latter’s *abhiṣeka*, the *tshe sgrub* instructs that the various preliminaries such as the expulsion of obstructing demons and so on be completed first. Then the disciple should take a purificatory bath, present the *maṇḍala* of offerings to his teacher, take refuge in the *triratna*, generate *bodhicitta*, vow to protect the *samaya* and *samvara*, and respectfully request his *guru* for the great method of prolonging his lifespan. “These preliminaries should all be performed in accordance with the authoritative texts of Vajrakīla.”

The disciple then makes a request for empowerment by reciting the well-known verse from the Vajrakīla *mūlatantra* met with so often above: “HŪM. Empowerments and blessings must be bestowed in this place ...” etc. He then recites the *mūlamantras* of Vajrakīla and his retinue, adding the words ABHIṢIṆCA MĀM (consecrate me) at the end. And for the vase consecration he recites BUDDHA- VAJRA- RATNA- PADMA- KARMA- KALAŚA-ABHIṢIṆCA BHRŪM.

“HRĪḤ. Glorious lord, Vajrāmitāyus, the sovereign whose form extends to the limits of space, we pray that you will bestow the empowerment of the lifespan of the *vajra* heart and the enjoyment⁷⁶² of dominion with the all-pervading *vajra* body.”⁷⁶³

Thus, says the text, the empowerment of all the good qualities and enlightened activities of the various *kulas* are received in unity. Also the empowerments of ‘the seven precious things’ (*saptadhanāni*)⁷⁶⁴ and ‘the eight auspicious symbols’ (*aṣṭamaṅgala*)⁷⁶⁵ are gained.

Then the *guru* and disciple imagine the *siddhi* of long life being gathered in from the sacred field (*kṣetra*) of Lotus Light (Padma-’od) in the west. As they contemplate

761. A31, 220.

762. A reads *brnyes pa* (*prāpta*), ‘got, received’. B & C read *mnyes pa* (*toṣita*), ‘delighted’.

763. The longevity of the *trikāya* alluded to here is bestowed in three separate verses in the *Tshe dbang*. A19, 161.

764. A wealth of faith (*śraddhā*), a wealth of moral conduct (*śīla*), a wealth of shame (*hrī*), a wealth of modesty (*apatrāpya*), a wealth of learning (*śruta*), a wealth of renunciation (*tyāga*) and a wealth of wisdom (*prajñā*). These spiritual attributes are symbolized in ritual consecrations by seven jewels or “the seven attributes of a *cakravartin*” which are his magic wheel (*cakra*), elephant (*hasti*), horse (*aśva*), jewel (*maṇi*), queen (*strī*), home minister (*grhapati*) and military general (*pariṇāyaka*). Cf. SDPT, 79, n. 11.

765. Regarding these, Buddhaguhya says: “*Yoga* displays itself as the eight emblems on the true nature of body; the endless knot (*śrīvatsa*) which is lotus-like, the wheel (*cakra*) which is frightening, the banner (*dhvaja*) which is victorious, the umbrella (*chattra*) which is dignified, the lotus (*padma*) which is luminous, the flask (*kalaśa*) of acute mind, the conch (*śaṅkha*) of purity and the golden fish (*matsya*) of auspicious mind.” A. Wayman, *The Buddhist Tantras*, 108.

Vajrāmitāyus arisen from the syllable HRĪḤ, they imagine that from the amulet of half-moon and *śrīvatsa* in his heart flows the *bodhicitta* of longevity in the form of red light. By means of this, “all those present here must receive the *siddhi* of long life and be blessed with this great secret of longevity.” Thus the *siddhis* are gained.⁷⁶⁶ When the ritual is over, whether or not it had been the occasion of a disciple’s *abhiṣeka*, the usual benedictions (*maṅgala*, *svastika*) and distribution of merit (*pariṇāmana*) should be performed.

So much for the magical enhancement of the lifespan. According to the *them byang*, however, the Vajrakīla cycle should also provide for the benefit of *yogins* the means of enhancing wealth.

In the *Garland of Flames* it is said that the ten *krodha* kings, their queens and animal-headed assistants are to be visualized brandishing *vajras* in their upper right hands (with which all those who hold false views are overthrown) and iron hooks in the left (by means of which their lifespans are drawn forth). In the right hands below those the gods hold bags full of gems from which wealth is bestowed upon all the poor and needy; while from precious caskets held in the left, glory and lordliness are dispensed to all whose merit is exhausted. “Especially the glory and splendour of the threefold world is to be bestowed upon virtuous *yogins*.”⁷⁶⁷ Apart from this, however, no text devoted specifically to the enhancement of wealth (*nor sgrub*) is to be found.

The collections do, however, provide for the enhancement of the *yogin*’s food and drink in a number of texts.⁷⁶⁸ Of these, the only title to be found in all three collections (A23, B24, C14) gives merely the briefest outline of the steps in the ritual procedure, leaving the liturgical details (if required) to be supplied from elsewhere. Opening with a salutation to Śrīvajrakumāra, this short text, said to have been written by Padmasambhava, styles itself “the *samādhi* within which the *yogin* should dwell on all occasions when eating (or drinking)”. It begins with a general outline of the ritual procedure for the blessing of food and drink and then adds those details deemed to be specifically appropriate for practitioners of the Kīla cult. In general, it is said, the *yogin* should gather all his food and drink together within ‘the great vessels’ (*snod chen*)⁷⁶⁹ without indulging in mental discriminations of ‘pure’ and ‘defiled’. Imagining himself to be in the presence of the lord, he should generate the mind of enlightenment⁷⁷⁰ and meditate upon himself in the form of the deity. Purifying and blessing the food by means of the three syllables, it should be offered. The *yogin* may then entrust the deities to perform the four activities (*karma*), gather from them the *siddhis* and enjoy the food in the nature of truth. Finally the leftovers are presented, the deities are dismissed and prayers are dedicated to the welfare of all beings. So it is said.

766. A18, 150–1. The *Tshe dbang* names the Buddhafield Padma-dbang. A19, 161.

767. A31, 218.

768. According to ’Jigs-med gling-pa, the technique of taking food and drink (“the objects of enjoyment”) as the path to enlightenment is a special characteristic of Vajrayāna. T. Thondup, *Enlightened Living*, 132.

769. By this is indicated the *yogin*’s imaginative transformation of his own ordinary plates and utensils into the divine vessels of the gods.

770. This line is missing in B.

Having thus outlined the topics to be discussed, the text goes on to elaborate only very slightly. We are now told that those *yogins* who are accomplished in the practice of Vajrakīla should, on all occasions gather their food and drink on a plate and recite RAM YAṂ KHAM⁷⁷¹ so as to render it pure. By OM ĀḤ HŪṂ the six goddesses of all desirable qualities infuse it with their blessings and then the *guru*⁷⁷² and the host of divinities are invited and the food and drink is presented to them as an offering with the words OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA KRODHA KHRODHĪ HA HE PHAṬ DHADDHI MAMA KARMA KAṆKA KĀRAYE KHA KHA KHĀHI KHĀHI. Making prayers to those deities, the *yogin* should imagine that they bestow *siddhis* upon him so that he becomes full of satisfaction and joy.

After eating, he presents a feast of the remainders with the words SARVAPŪJĀ KHĀHI and then entrusts the remains-taking guests with the four activities by adding ŚĀNTIM PUṢṬIM VAŚAṂ MĀRAYA PHAṬ. They are then dismissed under oath to protect the doctrines. Finally, the *yogin* should recite a benediction:

“Ho! Salutation to the hosts of joyful gods. With a wealth of benefit and vast in blessings, enjoying permanent blessings, having purified the two obstructions and amassed the two accumulations of merit, may all things (beneficial) without exception be increased! A LA LA HO.”⁷⁷³

In that way, initiates in the cult of Vajrakīla transform the everyday act of eating and drinking, uplifting it from the mundane so that it becomes, in miniature, a sacred rite along the lines of the *gaṇacakra* discussed above in Chapter Seven. Such a procedure is the logical corollary of the *yogin*'s self-transformation into the deity. Further demonstration of its importance is to be seen below in the final chapter of this work.

771. These are the seeds of fire, air and water respectively. Cf. above, Chapter Seven, note 622.

772. Text B says “oneself”.

773. A23, 175–6.

Chapter Twelve

Rites to Make Good Deficiencies in Yogic Praxis

The first text in this category (A24, B24, C14) is a brief outline of the meditations to accompany the preparation of *sācchas*.⁷⁷⁴ The extraordinarily corrupt condition of the text in all three redactions seems indicative of a general disinterest in this procedure on the part of Kīla initiates. Although the orthographic standard of the entire corpus of material presently being studied is generally low, this particular text seems to have been written out with a singular lack of attention. Said to be an original *gter ma*, the text bears neither attribution of authorship nor any reference to its sources.

Following the homage to Śrīvajrakumāra, it is said that an area of sanctified ground should be sprinkled with fragrant perfumes and upon it should be arranged the various necessities (unspecified) for offering to the deities. The *yogin* should then generate himself in the form of the god and recite the *hr̥daya* of Vajrakīla as many times as possible. He should prepare a mixture of clay using mud, (powdered) gemstones, sandalwood and perfumed water⁷⁷⁵ and he should bless this lump of clay by placing upon it the three syllables OM ĀḤ HŪM which he radiates out from his heart. Then, muttering OM DHARMADHĀTU OM ĀḤ HŪM A, the *yogin* imagines rays of light to stream forth from those three syllables upon the heap of clay. Gathering in the rays of light and returning them to their source, the *yogin* imagines that the syllables dissolve into light and he contemplates the void nature of the clay.⁷⁷⁶

Imagining his own body to be marked with the syllable BHRŪM, the *yogin* visualizes light rays emanating from that syllable and then, as he mutters BHRŪM VIŚVAVIŚUDDHE VAJRAJÑĀNACAKRA BHRŪM, he imagines the light returning to the syllable and his body transformed into a palace of the gods (*vimāna*). He then recites the deity's *hr̥daya* OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA OM ĀḤ HŪM and is thereby further sealed with the *mudrā*.⁷⁷⁷

774. *Sācchas* (Tib. *tsha tsha*) are small relief images prepared by impressing clay into a metal mould. See Li Jicheng, *The Realm of Tibetan Buddhism*, 170–6, for clear photographs of *sācchas* being stamped out with a metal mould, a brief description of the process and close-ups of the finished articles.

775. A surprising omission from this list is ashes belonging to a deceased *guru* or other holy person for these *sācchas* are regularly manufactured in Tibet as reliquaries of the dead.

776. This section is missing in B.

777. This line is found only in A. I take it to mean that the presence of the deity is installed within the palace of the *yogin*'s body.

At this point both the *yogin* and the clay have been fully prepared so that the manufacture of the *sācchas* can begin. The text, however, gives no instructions concerning either the form or the quantity of *sācchas* to be made in order to fulfill the purpose specified in the *them byang* of restoring broken vows and making good any defects in yogic praxis. It seems natural to assume that the clay will be stamped in the likeness of the deity Vajrakīla but the text is not specific on this point and its instructions undoubtedly hold good for *sācchas* modelled in other forms such as miniature *stūpas*, etc. Indeed, the texts are particularly corrupt at this point with text A having four lines more than either B or C. The only instruction given for the actual manufacture of the *sācchas* concerns the non-dual unity of wisdom and means which the *yogin* must recognize as inherent within both himself and the small lumps of clay that are to be moulded into shape, “all forms arising from the sphere of the *dharmadhātu*”.⁷⁷⁸

Once the *sācchas* have been manufactured, however, they should be consecrated (*pratiṣṭhā*) as divine palaces, each inhabited by a host of gods. Thinking thus, the *yogin* should hold flowers in his hand and recite seven times the formula YE DHARMĀ, etc. He should then cast the flowers onto the *sācchas* and imagine that all aspects of cause and result have been fully perfected. Following that he may worship the *sācchas* in whatever manner he deems suitable.

“Ho! Whatever (Buddhas) there are who are desirous of passing into *nirvāṇa*, I implore you compassionate ones not to pass beyond this realm of sorrow so long as *saṃsāra* abides.”

Saying this, the *yogin* should scatter flowers and imagine that (the compassionate Buddhas) remain until *saṃsāra* has been emptied. This is the means of manufacturing *sācchas* with the purpose of obtaining the complete enlightenment of oneself and others. Vows. Triple seal.⁷⁷⁹

The final text to be found in all three collections is a summary of votive rites for those initiated into the *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla, simply referred to as ‘the Appendix’ (*zur ’debs*) (A28, B25, C16). Described in its colophon as a treasure from the golden southern cache, this document commences with the deity’s *hr̥daya* and informs us that the body of the glorious Mahottara Vajrakumāra is dark blue in colour with nine heads and eighteen hands. His three faces on the right are pale yellow, red and blue. Those on the left are dark yellow, maroon and green while his central three faces are white, yellow and dark blue.⁷⁸⁰ All are wrathful with gaping mouths, eyes that stare in opposite directions (*spyān bzlog*) and beards that bristle like fire. The long brown hair on his head is described as twisting upwards and the implements said to be held in his eighteen hands have been given above in Chapter Three, Table 1. With his eight legs in the *pratyālīḍha* posture he advances to the left and tramples upon Rudra, the enemies and obstructors. His form is fully adorned with the eight articles of the charnel ground and, with his *vajra* wings, he overawes the *tribhava*. The great mother Tr̥ptacakra is blue in colour, with a single face and two hands. She holds a *vajra* in

778. A24, 177.

779. A24, 177–8.

780. cf. above, Chapter Three.

her right hand⁷⁸¹ and, with her left hand, she presses a skull full of blood to the lips of her lord. The divine couple are vast with rough limbs and they emit terrifying roars.⁷⁸²

The *yogin*'s awareness (*vidyā*) should instantly arise in that form without stages in the process of generation. Then, with a spontaneous sound of joy, the *daśakrodha* kings and their entourage, the supreme sons, the guardian goddesses of the gates and the rest, all arise as the unity of appearance and emptiness (*prabhāsaśūnyatā*) filling the ten directions and setting the wheel of *Dharma* into motion. Vast numbers of oath-bound messengers should be dispatched in pursuance of their tasks and the entire vision is seen to blaze with light like the raging inferno at the end of time.

Following this description of the *maṇḍala* of Mahottarakīla, the text continues with verses from the BRT and *Thugs kyi 'phrin las* (A45),⁷⁸³ two texts pertaining to the Black deity cycle. Thus, the intention of the rite is declared with "HŪṢ. All those who hold the awareness of Vajrakumāra ..., etc." and "HŪṢ. Empowerments and blessings must be bestowed in this place ..., etc." The section ends in the usual fashion with a *mantra* for the empowerment of the *maṇḍala*: OM ĀḤ HŪṢ OM HŪṢ SVA AṢ HĀ KĀYAVĀKCITTAGUṆA-KARMASIDDHI ABHIŚIṆCA HŪṢ.

The wisdom deities are then invited to enter this consecrated *samayamaṇḍala* with the usual "HŪṢ. In order that the empowerments, *siddhis* and successful accomplishment of the *bhava*kīla may be attained ..., etc." and verses follow in which the deities are asked to accept offerings, bestow *siddhis* and remain firm until the two purposes are fulfilled.⁷⁸⁴ With verse and *mantra*, the deities are praised.⁷⁸⁵ In that way the *yogin* should clearly bring to mind the *maṇḍala* palace and its retinue of gods. With an understanding of non-duality he should then respectfully salute the deities with his body, speech and mind—ŚRĪVAJRĀYA NAMAḤ—and present them with offerings. First there is the offering of *bodhicitta* nectar which is to be understood as the distilled essence of all consciousness, an effective counter-agent (medicine) for all wrong views, represented on the physical plane by *semen virile*:

"HŪṢ. Self-arising from desire and very pure, with eight major and one thousand minor ingredients,⁷⁸⁶ this offering of nectar medicine (*bdud rtsi sman*) is offered to Mahāśrī (Vajrakīla) and his retinue. Please bestow the *siddhis* of body, speech and mind.⁷⁸⁷ MAHĀSARVAPAṆCĀMṚTA KHĀHI."

781. Not the *khatvāṅga* of Chapter Three.

782. A28, 184.

783. A45, 407/6–9/1.

784. The supreme *siddhi* of enlightenment for the benefit of the *yogin* and the various mundane *siddhis* of pacification, enrichment, etc. for the benefit of others.

785. A28, 185.

786. The eight major ingredients are the eight *vijñānas* while the term "one thousand minor ingredients" refers to the countless thoughts and sensations derived from these. By offering it to the deities in this way, all consciousness is purified. The *Che mchog gi 'phrin las* further characterizes this *bodhicitta* nectar as "the reality of the five *samaya* substances of the five *kulas*, the article of the total fulfilment of the five wisdoms". It is said to be the nectar which clears away the five poisons and to be derived from the slaying of all sentient beings in the six *gatis*. B11, 548.

787. The *Che mchog gi 'phrin las* explains the absorption of the deity's *siddhis* thus: Having satisfied the gods with nectar, the *yogin* sees three syllables radiate out from the three places of

Next, the offering of *bali* in which all manifest phenomena are included, produced by the union of semen and menstrual blood.⁷⁸⁸

“HŪM. This amazing great *bali* prepared with pure ingredients, emanating from the depths of the unborn *dharmatā* fully adorned with the five desired qualities,⁷⁸⁹ must satisfy the sacred hearts⁷⁹⁰ of Mahāśrīvajrakīla and his retinue. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA MAHĀBALIM TE KHĀHI.”⁷⁹¹

The offering of blood (*rakta*) is the female counterpart to the male *bodhicitta*. It is the wisdom of *śūnyatā* that underpins the effective medicine of *upāya*:

“HŪM. The great red blood of *samsāra* obtained by slaughtering the afflictions is swirling in the skull cup.⁷⁹² We press this to the lips of Mahāśrīvajrakīla and his retinue in order that the *traidhātuka* may be emptied. OM VAJRAKĪLI KĪLAYA MAHĀRAKTA KHĀHI.”

Next is the offering of killing in which the primary *kleśas* are destroyed.⁷⁹³

“HŪM. Having slain all the enemies and obstructors, to the mouths of Mahāśrīvajrakīla and his retinue we offer ignorance as a quivering mound of great flesh,⁷⁹⁴ desire as a shimmering ocean of blood, and hatred as a glistening pile of broken bones. MAHĀMĀMSA-RAKTA-KEMNIRITI⁷⁹⁵ KHĀHI.”⁷⁹⁶

The offering of union is presented with the closing lines of BRT Ch.V:

all those satisfied deities and land in the form of light in the centre of the nectar. He then takes up the nectar and, muttering OM AḤ HŪM KĀYASIDDHI OM VĀKSIDDHI AḤ CITTASIDDHI HŪM, places a few drops upon his tongue and contemplates its absorption into his own three places. B11, 549.

788. Even in Vedic times the sacrificial cake was considered to have regenerative properties, the mixing of water and flour in its preparation being viewed as the uniting of male and female. J. Gonda, *Rice and Barley Offerings in the Vedas*, 5.
789. As the *yogin* presents the *bali* offering he imagines all manner of sensual pleasure being offered to the *maṇḍala* deities by beautiful goddesses who delight the six senses. B11, 549.
790. *Thugs dam bskang*, a term that refers to the fulfillment of vows. By this offering the deity is satisfied and the *yogin*'s broken vows are restored.
791. A28, 186.
792. *Kapālas* have been the designated vessels for sacrificial offerings in India since the prehistoric period. In the Vedas, however, the term referred to “pieces of pottery (not necessarily potsherds)”. J. Gonda, *Rice and Barley Offerings in the Vedas*, 4.
793. This great offering of the slaughter of the entire three realms arises as a result of the annihilation of all attachment and desire. Outwardly it is composed of the slaughter of the ten classes of enemy to be killed. Inwardly it is the symbolic form of the *kleśas*, the greenish corpse of the overthrown Rudra. B11, 549.
794. *Mahāmāmsa* usually indicates human flesh but since the “enemies and obstructors” are deemed to be of both human and non-human types, I have chosen here to render the word more literally as “great flesh”.
795. This word is attested in all manuscripts. Unknown in the lexicons, it perhaps derives from a lost Prakrit for *kaṅkāla* (skeleton).
796. As the effigy of Rudra is dismembered, so the *yogin* should liberate appearances and let go of the view of subject and object. In that manner he makes the highest offering of *dharmatā*. B11, 550.

“HŪM. Within the shining *yonis* of the wrathful queens are the blazing *vajras* of the *krodha* kings. The pounding of those *vajra* hammers is sufficient to kill even those who are gods! KATHAṂ KATHAṂ KATHAṂ HŪM HŪM HŪM PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ VAJRAYAKṢA KRODHAVIJAYA KHĀHI KHĀHI KHĀHI HA HA HA HŪM HŪM HŪM PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ.”

The prayer of the proclamation of truth (*satyavacana*):

“Ho! Please listen to me. By the truth of *dharmatā*, the blessing of *guhyantra* and the power of the Buddhas, the time for the wrathful act has come.⁷⁹⁷ The severe deed must be performed! By this method, through the power of the wonderful rites of secret *mantra*, I pray that I and all sentient beings will be blessed within the circle of the lord Śrīvajrakumāra to enjoy throughout the aeon (ie., for all time) the inexhaustible body, speech, mind, good qualities and perfect activities of the deity himself.”⁷⁹⁸

Then praise:

“HŪM. Arise, all you who have attained knowledge of Vajrakīla! Arise from the *dharmadhātu* and, by the truth of *dharmatā*, perfect the form that encompasses the wisdom of all the Buddhas! Manifest the clear light of *dharmatā* in the form of nine wisdom faces, the epitome of wisdom wrath! The upper three faces subjugate all those who are to be converted by means of love and compassion. The middle three faces bless all beings with the consecrations and attainments while the lower three faces purify body, speech and mind.”

The text then goes on to collocate Vajrakīla’s eighteen arms and the symbols that they hold with various powers and lines from the root text. Thus the first pair of hands are associated with the lines “Anger must be destroyed by means of *vajra* wrath” (right) and “The *bindu* arises in the centre of the sky” (left). For the second pair are “Arousing the mind of supreme *bodhicitta*” (right) and “Their hearts must be burned on the pinnacle of *vajra* fire” (left). The third pair hold “The blazing great blue weapon” in the right and the *khaṭvāṅga* of body, speech and mind in the left. Fourthly are “Must seize! Must pulverize!” which is represented by the hammer in the right hand while the great hawk (here called *garuḍa*) held in the left is the ABHICĀRA *mantra*. The *viśvavajra* in the fifth right hand is indicative of Buddha activity while the fifth left hand wields the *bhava-kīla*. The sixth right hand is Hūmkāra who has the power of life while Amṛtakūṇḍalin is represented by the vase in the left. The seventh pair of hands hold the iron hook of love and compassion (right) and the *kartrikā* which slays the misleaders (left). In the eighth pair are the pounding *vajra* hammer (right) and the blazing *yonis* of the wrathful mother (left). The ninth pair wield the battleaxe that chops to pieces (right) and the jewel that fulfils all desires (left). The eight legs spread wide are associated with the phrase “The time has come!”⁷⁹⁹

797. Line missing in C.

798. A28, 187–8.

799. A28, 188–9. Cf. above, Chapter Three, Table 1.

The arising of this powerful figure, the very embodiment of the Kīla *tantra*, immediately renders powerless all those who obstruct the progress of *yogins*, whether those trouble-makers be gods or demons. Trampling them down, “the performance of skilful means for the benefit of all sentient beings is accomplished” and empowerments and blessings are bestowed upon the meditator. With the life force arising as the *jñānasattva*, Hayagrīva and his consort are established in the heart and, by means of light rays radiating from the heart *mantra*, the ten directions of space are filled with the ten *krodharājas*. The *yogin* should meditate upon his consciousness in the form of ‘the Wisdom *Vajra*’ adorned with the ornaments of universal accomplishment and blazing with unbearable wrath.

“Such is the form of the lord who is the embodiment of all the Buddhas, the chief of wrathful *herukas*, master of all *mātr̥s* and *dākinīs*, the body, speech and mind of the assembly of *Sugatas*,⁸⁰⁰ the supreme emanated son who subdues all those to be converted, who dispatches the three classes of red and black emanations as his messengers. Great being, to you be praise!”

Saying thus, he is praised.⁸⁰¹ Then ‘drawing in’ (*bsku*), beginning with the *vidyādhara*:

“HŪṂ. The time has come for all you *vidyādhara*s who are heirs to the Buddhas of the three times to arouse the supreme mind of *bodhicitta* and descend!”

The text then invokes the early Vajrakīla masters Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, Śīlamañju and Padmasambhava’s Tibetan disciples, each one being urged to come forth from a site where once he or she demonstrated some miracle power gained through Vajrakīla praxis.

Then the summoning of the deities:

“HŪṂ *Bhagavat* Mahāśrīvājakumāra, wrathful king who subdues through anger, arise from the *dharmadhātu* in the embrace of Tṛptacakra! The time has come for you to perform your great deeds. Drawing forth the trouble-making demons and obstructors, immediately destroy them!

HŪṂ. From the blissful union of wisdom and means arise the ten *krodha* kings and their consorts upon cushions of the piled up bodies of enemies and obstructors, the lords of the ten directions and the sun and moon.”

With them are their twenty *piśācī* emanations and all of them are urged to act in accordance with their sacred oaths. The *krodharājas*, their consorts and emanated assistants are invoked by name, each one being summoned individually from the appropriate direction and told “The time has come for you to do your terrible⁸⁰² deed!” They are followed by the supreme sons and the four guardian goddesses of the gates.⁸⁰³

The summoning of the oath-bound protectors: “BHYO. You oath-bound goddesses of the evening!” (There follows a description of the four Śvanmukhā sisters.) “BHYO. You oath-bound goddesses of midnight!” (There follows a description of two of the four

800. These epithets are omitted from B. Text C ends at this point although that collection does include a *skul ba* (C36) through which Padmasambhava is invoked in his eight names.

801. A28, 189–90.

802. This word is changed with each repetition of the line.

803. A28, 190–2.

Mahātmādevīs. “BHYO. You oath-bound goddesses of the morning!” There follows a description of two of the four Bhūmipati sisters.)⁸⁰⁴

The text then calls forth their twelve brothers.⁸⁰⁵ The four *skyes bu* (*puruṣa*) are the brothers of Rosewood and they stand to the right of the four Śvanmukhā sisters. From the east comes Rākṣasa skyes-bu, the great champion of the *rākṣasas*, white in colour wielding a *kīla* of conch shell. From the south comes Yama skyes-bu, also known as Kālayama. He is black in colour and wields a *kīla* made of iron. From the west comes Ya-bdud skyes-bu of Mongolian descent (*sog po mi rigs*). He is red in colour and wields a *kīla* of copper. From the north comes Yakṣa skyes-bu the Mon-pa,⁸⁰⁶ blue in colour wielding a *kīla* of turquoise.

The four *bdud po* are the brothers of Iron and they accompany the Mahātmādevīs. In the east is the white *māra* who bites his lower lip and wields a *kīla* of conch. In the south is the blue *māra* with long hair wielding a *kīla* of turquoise. In the west is the black *māra* who wields a *kīla* and a noose. In the north is the green *māra* wielding a *kīla* and sword.

The four *kiṃkāras* (*ging*) are the brothers of Conch who stand to the right of the Bhūmipati sisters. The military commander of the east is Karmarāja, the *kiṃkāra* of the *rākṣasas*. He is white in colour and carries a *kīla* of conch. The military commander of the south is Yamarāja, the *kiṃkāra* of the *yamas*. He is blue in colour and carries a *kīla* and knife. The military commander of the west is Daśagrīva, the *kiṃkāra* of the *māras*. He is red in colour and carries a *kīla* and knife. The military commander of the north is Yakṣagrīva, the *kiṃkāra* of the *yakṣas*. He is yellow in colour and carries a *kīla*.

The *yogin* invites all those oath-bound protectors who guard the precepts of Vajrakīla to accept an offering of *bali*. He then commands them to drag forth the enemies and obstructors and slay them immediately. The text ends with the exhortation: “You must accomplish your tasks as you promised!”⁸⁰⁷

804. For descriptions of these twelve see above, Chapter Nine. There is a lacuna in both manuscripts of the present text so that two goddesses of the morning follow immediately after the first two midnight goddesses. A28, 193–4.

805. These correspondences are clarified at A53, 679–80 (citing the authority of mNga’-ris paṅ-chen).

806. The term Mon is applied in Tibetan texts to “all kinds of groups throughout the Himalayas with whom the Tibetans came into contact”, a non-specific designation for any “southern or western mountain-dwelling non-Indian, non-Tibetan barbarian”. M. Aris, *Bhutan*, xvi.

807. A28, 194–5.

Conclusion

Within the earlier chapters of this work it was conclusively demonstrated that all the basic doctrines and rituals of Vajrakīla had their origin in India. Sufficient Sanskrit material remains extant in that country to have facilitated charting the development of the deity from an aniconic wooden spike to the three-faced, six-armed god of great wrath exalted today. It is known that wooden spikes were employed from a very early period to 'secure the boundaries' of chosen plots of land, and that such spikes were considered in Vedic ritual to possess the power to ward off evil.

At some stage the general rite of *sīmābandha*, by means of which a sacred area is rendered ritually secure, was supplemented by (and, to a certain extent, replaced by) the specifically tantric procedure of *kīlana*, in which the boundaries of the chosen area are pegged out so as magically to render them impregnable to such hostile forces as malignant spirits or demons. By the eighth century AD, knowledge of this technique seems to have been as widespread among the Hindu *tāntrikas*⁸⁰⁸ as among the Buddhists. Buddhism, however, having been eradicated from its homeland during the thirteenth century, presents us now with a legacy of burned books from which much vital information is missing. Sufficient literature remains, nevertheless, to enable us to collect together piecemeal 'one hundred thousand' snippets of knowledge such as may once have been honoured with the epithet '*Vidyottama-tantra* in one hundred thousand sections'. Such a title I suppose to refer in a non-specific way to the entirety of accumulated magico-religious beliefs concerning the *kīla*, both documented and undocumented.

According to the chronicles of the Vajrakīla cult as propounded by Tibetan historians, it was in Nepal during the eighth century AD that this entire corpus of early and medieval Indian *kīla* lore, including affiliated ritual technique, was codified and harmonised into a single unitary system of religious philosophy and procedure. This project having been undertaken by the three Buddhist scholars, Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Śīlamañju, their approach to the task at that time was probably simply to incorporate all of the *kīla* lore they could find into the general scheme of Vajrayāna Buddhism. We have seen that, already by the eighth century, Buddhist texts contained an enormous wealth of *kīla* lore, but I suppose that the three *ācāryas* also incorporated into their definitive résumé all details of cult and practice found acceptable to them—whatever their school of origin. All such lore was then tailored by them to fit neatly into the system of a Vajrakīla *maṇḍala*.

808. Robert Svoboda, *Aghora*, 48 & *passim*.

The probable effect of this ratification was actually to create a cult of Vajrakīla where none existed before, and thus to divide all *kīla* lore into two camps: Vajrakīla cult and non-Vajrakīla cult. Subsequent to this, the cult of Vajrakīla having been propagated in Tibet by its originators, it flourished there and continued to evolve. Perhaps it also flourished in Nepal and India for some time, for Tibetan historians contend that it did so, but thus far we have seen no evidence to support this. Later Indian commentators, such as the peerless Abhayākara-gupta, and later texts such as the *Kālacakra-tantra*, describe the rite of *kīlana* without reference to the deity Vajrakīla.

Among Tibetan texts, the *Phur 'grel 'bum nag* in 115 folios presents itself as the complete explication (*bshad 'bum*, 'the hundred thousand words of elucidation') of Kīla lore, and claims to represent the thought or intention (*dgongs pa*) of the three *ācāryas*. It is said to have been transmitted by Padmasambhava to Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal who was entrusted with the dissemination of its knowledge. It is a *bka' ma* text, respected as authoritative by all Tibetan schools—both *bka' lugs* and *gter lugs*. This text, then, is held to stand at the turning point in the formation of a Vajrakīla cult from the 'one hundred thousand ideas' concerning the ritual *kīla*.

When discussing the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala*, the *Phur 'grel 'bum nag* speaks of five supreme sons: Buddhakīla, Vajrakīla, Ratnakīla, Padmakīla, and Karmakīla. The fundamental deities of the *maṇḍala* are thus fifty-one in number: Vajrakīla and Tṛptacakra in the centre, the five supreme sons, the *daśakrodharājas* and their consorts, their twenty animal-headed messengers, and the four goddesses who guard the gates. As we have seen above, however, the Byang-gter tradition presents the *maṇḍala* with an irregular number of supreme sons: often three, sometimes four or five, occasionally twenty-one. Our Byang-gter tradition thus appears to contain archaic elements, perhaps directly derived from Indic lore, representing earlier stages in the evolution of the Vajrakīla *maṇḍala*, for it is only in the later commentarial literature of this school that we meet with references to Kīlas of the five *kūlas*.

SDPT, 313, shows that within the *Yogatantra*, eight *krodharājas* are accompanied by eight animal-headed messengers: lion-, tiger-, owl-, crow-, bull-, snake-, stag- and pig-headed assistants. Thus we suppose that later Indian texts describing ten *krodharājas* may well have presented these kings together with an expanded series of animal-headed assistants. Eventually their number reached twenty. Early sources seem ambiguous with respect to the gender of these emanations. The Tibetan *bka' ma* tradition presents them in pairs; males to the right and females to the left. The Byang-gter tradition studied here presents them all as females. Such details, therefore, may well have remained still undetermined at the time of their original transmission to Tibet. Only through the continued study of Indic documents may we hope to develop a clearer picture of the evolutionary path trodden by these twenty gods.

As for the fundamental texts upon which the Northern Treasures tradition is said to be founded (especially the two root *tantras* analysed above in Chapter Five), we have seen that these contain a great deal of material in common with the VKMK, the sole root *tantra* to be included within the *bKa' 'gyur*. These texts, however, are unlikely to be known in schools other than the Byang-gter, for each of the many different Buddhist traditions of

Vajrakīla in Tibet presents itself as stemming from separate root texts. Of particular interest in this regard are those Byang-gter documents dealing with the episode of the scorpion *guru* and the aetiology of the Mahottarakīla cycle. It seems that this is one area of Kīla myth that is dealt with only marginally in the literature of other traditions. According to the *Phur 'grel 'bum nag*, the *mūlatantra* of Vajrakīla doctrines is the *rTsa thung rdo rje khros pa* (NGB 317, 17 folios).⁸⁰⁹ Elsewhere, also, a great number of other *mūlatantras* are cited, and all of them are supposed to have come from India.

Although there can be no certainty at this stage that the various *mūlatantras* of Vajrakīla were actually written in India, there can surely be no doubt that their contents are of Indic origin. This mass of Indian material, however, may have been only partially systematized as it became transferred to Tibet. In many respects, the eighth century texts of the *bka' ma* traditions appear better organized than the later *gter ma* discoveries of Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem. Since the overwhelming majority of documents in the Byang-gter school are said to have been delivered as oral instruction by the teacher Padmasambhava, it seems that we witness in these documents vital phases in the evolution of the cult of Vajrakīla.

Many of the rites of Vajrakīla, said to have been derived from these *mūlatantras*, are self-evidently modelled on paradigmatic norms of tantric Buddhist praxis. The rites of assembled offerings (*gaṇacakra*) and longevity (*āyurvidhi*)⁸¹⁰ and so on, looked at above, differ in no fundamental fashion from their counterparts in the religious cycles of other Vajrayāna deities. I suppose, therefore, that the three *ācāryas* of India and Nepal took the basic fivefold pattern of the *Anuttarayoga maṇḍala* as their starting point and carefully wove into that pattern all their combined knowledge of the *kīla*. Working this knowledge into a Buddhist framework must have involved some moral re-evaluation of the material to hand, much of which was possibly derived from village witchcraft of unsavoury character. Thus, the Buddhist *yogin* entering the *maṇḍala* of Vajrakīla takes a vow of 'wrathful compassion' and strives to master the rites of the *kīla* by means of which his vow will be fulfilled when the world is liberated from evil. Outwardly, the rites are explained for the slaying of wrath. Inwardly, for the destruction of desire. Secretly, for the destruction of ignorance. These, however, are merely rites on the level of mental construct (*prapañca*). Ultimately, the *yogin* strives for the nail of the *trikāya* which is free of any such fabrication and, piercing the *dharmadhātu*, he slays all characteristics in their own place and realizes unbounded Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings.

809. This is possibly, also, the text referred to above on page 113 ('the *mūlatantra* of *vajra* wrath'). Note, however, the caveat in footnote 420 concerning the firm identification of these texts.

810. Compare the longevity rites detailed above in Chapter Eleven with those explained by Tibetan physicians on the basis of Indian medical *tantras*. Yuri Parfionovitch *et al.*, *Tibetan Medical Paintings*, plates 52–3.

Appendix I
Three Collections of
Byang-gter Vajrakīla Literature

Contents of the Phur pa dril sgrub (Collection A)

- A1: Phur pa che mchog gi them byang rin chen gter mdzod (1)
A2: rDo rje phur pa spu gri nag po rab tu gsang ba'i rgyud (5)
A3: rDo rje phur pa thugs gsang ba sku'i rgyud (19)
A4: rDo rje phur pa'i bka' sgo (39)
A5: rDo rje phur pa'i 'dzab rig 'dzin chen po'i gter ma (45)
A6: rDo rje phur pa'i bstod pa (47)
A7: Phur bsrung gi bskul (59)
A8: Phur pa che mchog gi dbang chu (67)
A9: dKar po lam gyi sgron ma (91)
A10: bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka (99)
A11: Nag po dug gi spu gri (103)
A12: bCom ldan 'das 'phrin las phur pa'i sbyin sreg gi cho ga bskal pa'i me dpungs (113)
A13: rDo rje phur pa'i mnan bsreg 'phang gsum (117)
A14: rDo rje phur pa'i spu gri nag po'i dbang chog (123)
A15: rDo rje phur pa'i rgyun gtor gyi rim pa (139)
A16: rDo rje phur pa'i drag po'i bzlas pa (141)
A17: rDo rje phur pa'i chos nyid kyi bzlas pa (143)
A18: rDo rje phur pa'i tshe sgrub (145)
A19: rDo rje phur pa'i tshe dbang (153)
A20: rDo rje phur pa'i las thams cad kyi don bsdu pa drag sngags kyi rtsa ba (163)
A21: rDo rje phur pa'i za tshogs rgyas pa (165)
A22: rDo rje phur pa'i bza' tshogs rgyas pa (171)
A23: rDo rje phur pa zas tshogs (175)
A24: rDo rje phur pa'i tsha tsha (177)
A25: gSang ba'i rin po che'i dngos grub blang ba (179)
A26: Drag sngags kyi rdo rje phur pa'i 'di khyad par 'phags pa'i lo rgyus (181)
A27: rDo rje phur pa gong khug ma (182)
A28: Phur pa'i zur 'debs (183)
A29: Phur pa drag sngags kyi sgrub thabs rgyun khyer lha brag gter gyi yang bcud (197)

- A30: rDo rje phur pa'i lugs kyi sde brgyad bsrung bzlog (205)
A31: Phur pa me lce'i 'phreng ba'i le'u nyi shu pa khol du byung ba (211)
A32: dPal rdo rje phur pa'i rtsa ba dril sgrub kyi sgrub thabs (221)
A33: Phur pa'i rgyu tshad dbyibs sbas tshul mnga' gsol dus tshod dang bcas bstan pa (231)
A34: rDo rje phur pa'i spyod lam rgyun gyi rnal 'byor (245)
A35: rDo rje phur pa drag sngags spu gri'i sgrub thabs (247)
A36: bCom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje gzhon nu'i 'phrin las thun mong ma yin pa (253)
A37: rDo rje phur pa'i man ngag rtsa thung (279)
A38: rDo rje phur pa spu gri'i bskul (285)
A39: rDo rje phur pa'i sbyin sreg (289)
A40: rDo rje phur pa'i sbyin sreg (291)
A41: rDo rje phur pa'i rgyun 'khyer gtor bsngos (295)
A42: rDo rje phur pa'i mnan pa'i las (301)
A43: Phur pa yang gsang gi khro bo rol pa'i gtor bzlog (305)
A44: Byang gter phur pa 'bring po spu gri'i bsnyen sgrub kha 'phral ba'i lhan thabs yang yig 'dod dgu'i gter mdzod (327)
A45: Byang gter rdo rje phur pa'i thugs kyi 'phrin las (403)
A46: Byang gter phur pa spu gri las bzhi'i sbyin sreg 'phrin las kun 'grub (415)
A47: Byang gter phur pa'i brgyud 'debs (467)
A48: Khro bo bcu'i phur pa dril sgrub kyi las byang sbrul gyi chun po gnam lcags spu gri (471)
A49: Byang gter phur pa khro bo rol pa'i gtor bzlog bdud sdephyer 'thag (513)
A50: Rang bsrung zab mo (561)
A51: Byang gter phur pa'i sri gnong gyis ngag 'don chog khrigs rdo rje'i lhun po (565)
A52: Phur pa'i sri chung bcu gsum mnon pa'i lhan thabs rab gsal me long (617)
A53: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje gzhon nu 'bring po spu gri'i sgrub chen gyi chog khrigs lag lan snying po rab gsal (633)

Contents of Phur-pa Texts of the Byang-gter Tradition (Collection B)

Volume 1

- B1: Phur pa dril bu thugs kyi 'phrin las ngag 'don bklags chog tu bkod pa (1)
B2: Phur pa drag sngags kyi smad las dgra bgegs srol byed drag po zor gyi man ngag rno myur las kyi mtshon cha (29)
B3: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje gzhon nu 'bring po spu gri'i sgrub chen gyi chog khrigs lag lan snying po rab gsal (79)
B4: Byang gter phur pa'i dbang gi lo rgyus legs par bshad pa nor bu'i do shal (173)
B5: Byang gter phur pa spu gri'i dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur ba'i cho ga rin chen bum bzang (207)
B6: Byang gter phur pa lugs gsum gyi bsnyen sgrub las sbyor bya tshul bdud sde'i g.yul las mam par rgyal ba (347)
B7: Lha brag phur pa'i bsnyen yig gsal ba'i sgron me (379)
B8: 'Dod 'jo'i bum bzang gi nang dkyil sogs kyi dris lan (379)
B9: Byang gter phur pa spu gri las bzhi'i sbyin sreg 'phrin las kun 'grub (447)

- B10: rDo rje phur pa thugs gsang ba sku'i rgyud(499)
B11: rDo rje phur pa che mchog gi 'phrin las (523)
B12: Phur pa che mchog gi dbang chu gter ma (563)
B13: dPal rdo rje phur pa che mchog gi lo rgyus (591)
B14: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje phur pa smad nag po dug gi 'khor lo rab tu gsang ba (597)
B15: rNam gsum srog gi 'khor lo (607)
B16: rDo rje phur pa che mchog gi dam can gnad stabs kyi man ngag 'khor lo bri lugs dang bcas pa (615)

Volume 2

- B17: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje phur pa'i smad nag po dug gi spu gri rab tu gsang ba (1)
B18: Phur pa'i sri mnan (19)
B19: rDo rje phur pa'i sgrub chen bka' nyan lcags kyi ber ka (27)
B20: rDo rje phur pa'i mnan bsreg 'phang gsum (39)
B21: Rdo rje phur pa'i sbyin sreg gi cho ga (45)
B22: rDo rje phur pa'i tshe sgrub (53)
B23: Phur pa'i tshe dbang (61)
B24: rDo rje phur pa zas tshogs dang tshva tshva (71)
B25: rDo rje phur pa'i zur 'debs (81)
B26: Phur pa rig 'dzin gyi bskul (95)
B27: Phur pa rig 'dzin skul (101)
B28: Bse lcags dung gsum srog gi tsitta (123)
B29: Phur pa byang gter gyi brgyud 'debs dpe grangs dang bcas pa (133)
B30: rDo rje phur pa'i drag sngags zab pa'i lo rgyus (137)
B31: rDo rje phur pa spu gri nag po rab tu gsang ba'i rgyud (145)
B32: Thugs kyi snying po gsang ba phur gcig ma'i sgrub thabs rdo rje phur pa'i drag sngags spu gri'i sgrub thabs (159)
B33: Phur pa drag sngags kyi 'phrin las (173)
B34: rDo rje phur pa yang gsang spu gri phur gcig ma'i nyams len rgyun khyer (213)
B35: dPal rdo rje phur pa drag sngags spu gri nag po'i bstod bskul (221)
B36: dPal rdo rje phur pa'i srung ma'i bskul te dam can sgos bskul (235)
B37: rDzas kyi phur pa shin tu zab pa (243)
B38: Phur pa'i bstod pa chen mo (249)
B39: rDo rje phur pa'i bstod bskul (255)
B40: Phur pa rtsa ba'i sgrub thabs kyi gleng gzhi (271)
B41: dPal rdo rje phur pa'i rtsa ba dril sgrub kyi sgrub thabs (279)
B42: bCom ldan 'das dPal rdo rje gzhon n'i thugs kyi 'phrin las (299)
B43: rDo rje phur pa'i 'dzab rig 'dzin chen po'i gter ma (308)
B44: (Untitled offering ritual.) (311)
B45: rDo rje phur pa skyed la bcang ba'i man ngag (313)
B46: Lha brag phur bu'i brgyud 'debs byin rlabs gter mdzod (321)
B47: Lha brag gter byon gyi phur pa lcags khang drag sngags spu gri'i las byang 'jigs med rdo rje pha lam (327)

- B48: Phur pa spu gri las tshogs rdzas kyi mthu chen bco brgyad (377)
B49: rDo rje phur pa'i spyod lam rgyun gyi rnal 'byor gyi man ngag brgyad pa (385)
B50: Ser ba dong bzlog (389)
B51: rDo rje phur pa spu gri drag sngags lugs kyi khyad par 'phags pa'i lo rgyus (392)
B52: rDo rje phur pa spu gri lha nag srog gi spu gri'i gsal byed (393)
B53: dPal rdo rje phur pa'i rtsa ba dril sgrub kyi sgrub thabs (397)
B54: rDo rje phur pa srog gi spu gri (413)
B55: rDo rje phur pa drag sngags zab mo'i lo rgyus dang rdo rje phur pa'i rgyu dang tshad bstan pa (417)
B56: rDo rje phur pa'i man ngag rtsa thung (423)
B57: rDo rje phur pa'i drag po'i bzlas pa (427)
B58: rDo rje phur pa'i lugs kyi sde brgyad bsrung bzlog (431)
B59: dPal rdo rje gzhon nu'i nyams len rgyun 'khyer (437)
B60: rDo rje phur pa'i las thams cad kyi don bsdus pa'i rtsa ba (441)
B61: rDo rje phur pa'i chos nyid kyi bzlas pa (445)
B62: Drag sngags kyi ti ka bse sgrom ma (449)
B63: rDo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i dbang chog (453)
B64: Phur pa'i las mtha' sri chung bcu gsum mnan pa'i lhan thabs rab gsal me long (589)
B65: Byang gter phur pa drag sngags kyi gtor ma'i dpe'u ris blo thog nas bris pa (605)

Contents of the Byang gter phur pa'i skor (Collection C)

- C1: rDo rje phur pa thugs gsang ba sku'i rgyud (1)
C2: Dam can lto log gi ngan sngags (21)
C3: lCags sgrog 'khril ba'i man ngag (27)
C4: Phur pa che mchog gi 'phrin las (33)
C5: Phur pa che mchog gi dbang chu (63)
C6: dKar po lam gi sgron ma (rNam gsum srog gi 'khor lo (81)
C7: bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka (87)
C8: rDo rje phur pa'i dam can gnad rem (97)
C9: rTsa gsum zang gyi sgo 'byed (101)
C10: Nag po dug gi 'khor lo'i spu gri (107)
C11: Phur pa'i mnan bsreg zor gsum (117)
C12: rDo rje phur pa'i tshe sgrub (123)
C13: rDo rje phur pa'i che mchog (129)
C14: rDo rje phur pa'i zas tshogs dang tsha tsha (139)
C15: rDo rje phur pa'i che mchog gi dbang gi brgyud rims them byang zab mo (143)
C16: Phur pa'i zur 'debs (147)
C17: rDo rje phur pa gsum kyi rnal 'byor (155)
C18: rDo rje phur pa'i drag sngags zab pa'i lo rgyus (161)
C19: rDo rje phur pa spu gri nag po rab tu gsang ba'i rgyud (167)
C20: rDo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i dbang chog (177)

- C21: Shi ri Sing has gsang ba phur gcig ma thugs kyi snying po (189)
C22: Yang snying thugs kyi phur gcig ma (201)
C23: Phur pa thams cad kyi rtsa ba bsod pa drag po sngags kyi rtsa ba dang phur pa drag sngags kyi rtsa ba dang phur pa bsam sgral ma dang phur pa srog gi spu gri dang phur pa lus la bcangs thabs rnams (215)
C24: rDo rje phur pa drag sngags kyi 'phrin las (227)
C25: Phur pa lcags rkang nag po'i bstod pa (267)
C26: rDo rje phur pa'i spyod lam rgyun gyi rnal 'byor (279)
C27: Drag po'i 'dzab dgongs (283)
C28: Phur pa drag sngags 'dus pa (285)
C29: rDo rje phur pa gcig lugs kyi sde brgyad bsrung bzlog (305)
C30: Phur pa yang gsang spu gri'i las mtha' sdung po sri nan pa (317)
C31: bDud kyi bar chad 'dul ba'i thabs (325)
C32: rDo rje phur pa'i rgyun gyi spyod lam (335)
C33: rDo rje phur pa'i rtsa ba dril sgrub (343)
C34: rDo rje phur pa'i dril sgrub kyi 'phrin las chen mo (361)
C35: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje gzhon nu'i thugs kyi 'phrin las phur pa'i dril sgrub gyi 'phrin las (375)
C36: rDo rje phur pa'i bskul (383)
C37: Las tshogs rin chen khang bu las phya 'phrin nor bu'i mchog rgyal bla dgu (389)
C38: Phur mchod dang 'phrin brtsol sgrags pa (427)
C39: Phur pa'i snying thig yang gsang spu gri 'bar ba'i bsgrub thabs (437)
C40: sPu gri'i dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur ba'i cho ga klags chog ru brkod pa'i Vaidūrya'i bum bzang zhes bya ba (461)

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Correspondences Between the various texts

Phur pa dril sgrub (Collection A)

- A1: Phur pa che mchog gi them byang rin chen gter mdzod (2 folios. Included within the longer text C15)
A2: rDo rje phur pa spu gri nag po rab tu gsang ba'i rgyud [*Śrīvajrakīlapotrihala-tantra*] (7 folios. Found also as B31 & C19)
A3: rDo rje phur pa thugs gsang ba sku'i rgyud [*Vajrakīlacittaguhyakāya-tantra*] (10 folios. Found also as B10 & C1)
A4: rDo rje phur pa'i bka' sgo (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
A5: rDo rje phur pa'i 'dzab rig 'dzin chen po'i gter ma (Single folio. Found also as B43)
A6: rDo rje phur pa'i bstod pa (6 folios. Unique to this collection. Cf. B35 etc.)
A7: Phur bsrung gi bskul (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
A8: Phur pa che mchog gi dbang chu (12 folios. Found also as B12 & C5.)
A9: dKar po lam gyi sgron ma (4 folios. Found also as B15 & C6.)
A10: bKa' nyan lcags kyi ber ka (2 folios. This and the next text.)

- A11: Nag po dug gi spu gri (of 5 folios are both found also as B19 & C7, in which the two texts are placed together under a single title.) (Found also as C10)
- A12: bCom ldan 'das 'phrin las phur pa'i sbyin sreg gi cho ga bskal pa'i me dpungs (Single folio. Copied out by different hands twice in this one volume but not found elsewhere.)
- A13: rDo rje phur pa'i mnan bsreg 'phang gsum (3 folios. Found also as B20 & C11.)
- A14: rDo rje phur pa'i spu gri nag po'i dbang chog (8 folios. Found also as B63 & C20.)
- A15: rDo rje phur pa'i rgyun gtor gyi rim pa (Single folio. Found also as the first part of C32 which is a longer, more comprehensive text.)
- A16: rDo rje phur pa'i drag po'i bzlas pa (Single folio. Found also as B57 and included in the compendium C32.)
- A17: rDo rje phur pa'i chos nyid kyi bzlas pa (Single folio. Found also as B61.)
- A18: rDo rje phur pa'i tshe sgrub (4 folios. Found also as B22 & C12.)
- A19: rDo rje phur pa'i tshe dbang (5 folios. Found also as B23.)
- A20: rDo rje phur pa'i las thams cad kyi don bsdus pa drag sngags kyi rtsa ba (Single folio. Found also as B60 and included within the "compendium of *mantras*" listed as C23.)
- A21: rDo rje phur pa'i za tshogs rgyas pa (3 pages only. Written out twice in this volume but not found elsewhere.)
- A22: =A21
- A23: rDo rje phur pa zas tshogs (Single folio. Found also as B24 & C14.)
- A24: rDo rje phur pa'i tsha tsha (Single folio. Found also as B24 & C14.)
- A25: gSang ba'i rin po che'i dngos grub blang ba (Single folio. Found also as C15 and included as a preface to C1.)
- A26: Drag sngags kyi rdo rje phur pa'i 'di khyad par 'phags pa'i lo rgyus (Single folio. Found also as B51.)
- A27: rDo rje phur pa gong khug ma (Single page only. Quoted in B4 and included as an appendix to C21)
- A28: Phur pa'i zur 'debs (7 folios. Found also as B25 & C16.)
- A29: Phur pa drag sngags kyi sgrub thabs rgyun khyer lha brag gter gyi yang bcud (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- A30: rDo rje phur pa'i lugs kyi sde brgyad bsrung bzlog (3 folios. Found also as B58 and included in C29.)
- A31: Phur pa me lce'i 'phreng ba'i le'u nyi shu pa khol du byung ba (5 folios. A solitary chapter from a lost *tantra*. Found also as C13.)
- A32: dPal rdo rje phur pa'i rtsa ba dril sgrub kyi sgrub thabs (5 folios. A *sādhana* taught to Padmasambhava by the early *Atiyoga* master Śrīsiṃha. Found also as B41, B53 & C33)
- A33: Phur pa'i rgyu tshad dbyibs sbas tshul mnga' gsol dus tshod dang bcas bstan pa (7 folios. Unique to this collection but extensively quoted in B4. Cf. B30 & 55.)
- A34: rDo rje phur pa'i spyod lam rgyun gyi rnal 'byor (Single folio. Found also as C26.)

- A35: rDo rje phur pa drag sngags spu gri'i sgrub thabs (3 folios. A *sādhana* taught to Padmasambhava by the early *Atiyoga* master Śrīsimha. Found as the first of several texts in the compendium B32, etc.)
- A36: bCom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje gzhon nu'i 'phrin las thun mong ma yin pa (13 folios. Found also as A48.)
- A37: rDo rje phur pa'i man ngag rtsa thung (3 folios. Found also as B56.)
- A38: rDo rje phur pa spu gri'i bskul (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- A39: rDo rje phur pa'i sbyin sreg (Single folio. Copied out twice in this collection. Found also as A40 and included in the 3-fold rite at A13, etc.)
- A40: =A39
- A41: rDo rje phur pa'i rgyun 'khyer gtor bsngos (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- A42: rDo rje phur pa'i mnan pa'i las (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- A43: Phur pa yang gsang gi khro bo rol pa'i gtor bzlog (11 folios. Found as A49.)
- A44: Byang gter phur pa 'bring po spu gri'i bsnyen sgrub kha 'phral ba'i lhan thabs yang yig 'dod dgu'i gter mdzod (A long liturgical arrangement in 38 folios by Padma bun-bde. Unique to this collection)
- A45: Byang gter rdo rje phur pa'i thugs kyi 'phrin las (6 folios. A xylograph found also as mss at B42 & C35.)
- A46: Byang gter phur pa spu gri las bzhi'i sbyin sreg 'phrin las kun 'grub (Written by Padma 'phrin-las in 1695. 26 folios. Found also as B9.)
- A47: Byang gter phur pa'i brgyud 'debs (Written by Padma 'phrin-las. 3 folios. Found also as B29 & B46.)
- A48: =A36 (with added prayers by Blo-bzang mthu-stobs).
- A49: =A43 (with extra liturgy by Padma 'phrin-las).
- A50: Rang bsrung zab mo (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- A51: Byang gter phur pa'i sri gnon gyis ngag 'don chog khrigs rdo rje'i lhun po (26 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- A52: Phur pa'i sri chung bcu gsum mnon pa'i lhan thabs rab gsal me long (Written by Padma 'phrin-las in 1701. 8 folios. Found also as B64.)
- A53: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje gzhon nu 'bring po spu gri'i sgrub chen gyi chog khrigs lag lan snying po rab gsal (This is a long work in 48 folios, written by Padma 'phrin las in 1686. Found also as B3.)

Phur pa Texts of the Byang-gter Tradition (Collection B)

Volume 1

- B1: Phur pa dril sgrub thugs kyi 'phrin las ngag 'don bklags chog tu bkod pa. (Written by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. 14 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B2: Phur pa drag sngags kyi smad las dgra bgegs sgröl byed drag po zor gyi man ngag rno myur las kyi mtshon cha. (Written by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. 19 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B3: = A53.
- B4: Byang gter phur pa'i dbang gi lo rgyus legs par bshad pa nor bu'i do shal. (Written by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. 16 folios. Unique to this collection.)

- B5: Byang gter phur pa spu gri'i dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur ba'i cho ga rin chen bum bzang. (Written by Padma 'phrin-las. 70 folios. Unique to this collection. cf. C40.)
- B6: Byang gter phur pa lugs gsum gyi bsnyen sgrub las sbyor bya tshul bdud sde'i gYul las rnam par rgyal ba. (Written by Dalai Lama V in 1660. 10 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B7: Lha brag phur pa'i bsnyen yig gsal ba'i sgron me. (Written by sTobs-ldan dpa'-bo. 6 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B8: 'Dod 'jo'i bum bzang gi nang dkyil sogs kyī dris lan. (A text unrelated to the Vajrakīla cycle. Written by sMin-gling lo-chen Dharmaśrī. 34 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B9: = A46.
- B10: = A3 = C1.
- B11: rDo rje phur pa che mchog gi 'phrin las. (20 folios. Found also as C4.)
- B12: = A8 = C5.
- B13: dPal rdo rje phur pa che mchog gi lo rgyus. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B14: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje phur pa smad nag po dug gi 'khor lo rab tu gsang ba. (5 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B15: = A9 = C6.
- B16: rDo rje phur pa che mchog gi dam can gnad stabs kyī man ngag 'khor lo bri lugs dang bcas pa. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)

Volume 2

- B17: bCom ldan 'das rdo rje phur pa'i smad nag po dug gi spu gri rab tu gsang ba. (9 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B18: Phur pa'i sri mnan. (4 folios. Unique to this collection. Commented upon by A51 & B64 and expanded into the long ritual found at A50.)
- B19: = A10 + 11 (= C10), = C7.
- B20: = A13 = C11.
- B21: rDo rje phur pa'i sbyin sreg gi cho ga. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B22: = A18 = C12.
- B23: = A19.
- B24: = A23 + 24, = C14.
- B25: = A28 = C16.
- B26: Phur pa rig 'dzin gyi bskul. (3 folios. Found also as C36.)
- B27: Phur pa rig 'dzin skul. (11 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B28: bSe lcags dung gsum srog gi tsitta. (5 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B29: Phur pa byang gter gyi brgyud 'debs dpe grangs dang bcas pa. (2 folios. Related to texts A47 & B46 but not identical.)
- B30: rDo rje phur pa'i drag sngags zab mo'i lo rgyus dang rdo rje phur pa'i rgyu dang tshad bstan pa. (4 folios. Found also as B55 & C18.)
- B31: = A2 = C19.
- B32: Thugs kyī snying po gsang ba phur gcig ma'i sgrub thabs rdo rje phur pa'i drag sngags spu gri'i sgrub thabs. (7 folios. Includes A35 as the first of 7 short but seemingly unrelated texts. Found also as C21 & 22.)

- B33: Phur pa drag sngags kyi 'phrin las. (The longest of the *gter ma* texts. 20 folios. Found also as C24.)
- B34: rDo rje phur pa yang gsang spu gri phur gcig ma'i nyams len rgyun khyer. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B35: dPal rdo rje phur pa drag sngags spu gri nag po'i bstod bskul. (5 folios. Found also as B39 & C25.)
- B36: dPal rdo rje phur pa'i srung ma'i bskul te dam can sgos bskul. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B37: rDzas kyi phur pa shin tu zab pa. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B38: Phur pa'i bstod pa chen mo. (3 folios. Unique to this collection. cf. B35, etc.)
- B39: = B35 = C25.
- B40: Phur pa rtsa ba'i sgrub thabs kyi gleng gzhi. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B41: = A32 = B53 = C33.
- B42: = A45 = C35.
- B43: rDo rje phur pa'i 'dzab rig 'dzin chen po'i gter ma. (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B44: (Untitled offering ritual.) (Single folio. Unique to this collection.)
- B45: rDo rje phur pa skyed la bcang ba'i man ngag. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B46: Lha brag phur bu'i brgyud 'debs byin rlabs gter mdzod. (Written by Padma 'phrin-las. 3 folios. Unique to this collection but cf. A47 & B29.)
- B47: Lha brag gter byon gyi phur pa lcags khang drag sngags spu gri'i las byang 'jigs med rdo rje pha lam. (Written by Dalai Lama V in 1643. 25 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B48: Phur pa spu gri las tshogs rdzas kyi mthu chen bco brgyad. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B49: rDo rje phur pa'i spyod lam rgyun gyi rnal 'byor gyi man ngag brgyad pa. (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B50: Ser ba dong bzlog. (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B51: = A26.
- B52: rDo rje phur pa spu gri lha nag srog gi spu gri'i gsal byed. (2 folios. Found also as B54.)
- B53: = A32 = B41 = C33.
- B54: = B52.
- B55: = B30 = C18.
- B56: = A37.
- B57: = A16.
- B58: = A30, included in C29.
- B59: dPal rdo rje gzhon nu'i nyams len rgyun 'khyer. (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B60: = A20. Related to C23.
- B61: = A17.
- B62: Drag sngags kyi ti ka bse sgrom ma. (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- B63: = A14 = C20.

- B64: = A52.
 B65: Byang gter phur pa drag sngags kyi gtor ma'i dpe'u ris blo thog nas bris pa. (4 pages that must be placed side by side in order to complete the drawings thereon. Unique to this collection.)

Byang gter phur pa'i skor (Collection C)

- C1: = A3 = B10.
 C2: Dam can lto log gi ngan sngags. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C3: lCags sgrog 'khril ba'i man ngag. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C4: = B11.
 C5: = A8 = B12.
 C6: = A9 = B15.
 C7: = A10 + 11, = B19.
 C8: rDo rje phur pa'i dam can gnad rem. (2 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C9: rTsa gsum zang gyi sgo 'byed. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C10: = A11 (included in B19 & C7.)
 C11: = A13 = B20.
 C12: = A18 = B22.
 C13: = A31.
 C14: = A23 + 24, = B24.
 C15: rDo rje phur pa'i che mchog gi dbang gi brgyud rims them byang zab mo. (2 folios. Unique to this collection but incorporating A1.)
 C16: = A28 = B25.
 C17: rDo rje phur pa gsum kyi rnal 'byor. (3 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C18: = B30 = B55.
 C19: = A2 = B31.
 C20: = A14 = B63.
 C21: = B32 = C22. Includes A27 as an appendix.
 C22: = B32 = C21.
 C23: Phur pa thams cad kyi rtsa ba bsdu pa drag po sngags kyi rtsa ba la sogs pa. (A compendium of *mantras* including A20 & B60. 6 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C24: = B33.
 C25: = B35 = B39. cf. A6.
 C26: = A34.
 C27: Drag po'i 'dzab dgongs. (Single page only. Unique to this collection.)
 C28: Phur pa drag sngags 'dus pa. (10 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C29: Bears the same title as A30 & B58 but lengthened by the addition of many supplementary *mantras*, etc., 6 folios.
 C30: Phur pa yang gsang spu gri'i las mtha' sdung po sri nan pa. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C31: bDud kyi bar chad 'dul ba'i thabs. (5 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C32: rDo rje phur pa'i rgyun gyi spyod lam. (4 folios. Unique to this collection.)
 C33: = A32 = B41 = B53.

- C34: rDo rje phur pa'i dril sgrub kyi 'phrin las chen mo. (7 folios. Unique to this collection but clearly related to A32, B41, B53 & C33.)
- C35: = A45 = B42.
- C36: = B26.
- C37: Las tshogs rin chen khang bu las phya 'phrin nor bu'i mchog rgyal bla dgu. (19 folios. A Byang-gter *tantra* unique to this collection. Unrelated to the Vajrakīla cycle, this text describes a conversation between the gods Indra and Brahmā.)
- C38: Phur mchod dang 'phrin brtsol sgrags pa. (5 folios. Unique to this collection.)
- C39: Phur pa'i snying thig yang gsang spu gri 'bar ba'i bsgrub thabs. (8 folios. Followed by a commentary in 4 folios by Bla-ma mgon-po. Unique to this collection.)
- C40: sPu gri'i dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur ba'i cho ga klags chog ru brkod pa'i Vaidūrya'i bum bzang zhes bya ba. (58 folios. Unique to this collection. Written in 1766 by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. Modelled on B5, the previous ritual by Padma 'phrin-las called *Rin chen bum bzang*.)

Appendix II

The Black Razor Tantra (A2, B31, C19)

dpal¹ rdo rje² phur ba spu gri³ nag po rab tu gsang ba'i rgyud bzhugs⁴ so⁵ |
rgya gar skad du | shri⁶ ba dzra kī la⁷ po tri⁸ ha la tan tra nā ma⁹ |
bod skad du | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud ces bya ba |
bcom ldan 'das¹⁰ dpal rdo rje gzhon nu¹¹ la phyag 'tshal lo¹² |

'og min gyi gnas mtha' dbus med pa na | de bzhin gshegs¹³ pa thams cad¹⁴ til gyi gang bu
bzhin¹⁵ bzhugs ste¹⁶ | bcom ldan 'das dpal¹⁷ chen rdo rje gzhon nu yab yum¹⁸ dang¹⁹ |
khro²⁰ bcu yab yum dang²¹ | sprul pa'i khra²² thabs nyi shu²³ dang | sras mchog 'phrin las²⁴
grub²⁵ pa dang²⁶ | yang sprul dang | gsum²⁷ sprul dpag tu med pa'i 'khor dang bcas nas

-
1. A syllable omitted.
 2. All mss rdoe, throughout.
 3. C gri'i.
 4. B bzhudto, Final gs written as reversed da in all texts.
 5. B inserts an indecipherable line in "the language of the *dākinīs*", a *gter ma* code in "the script of the *dākinīs*" which is supposed to contain the condensed essence of the entire *tantra*.
 6. All mss shri.
 7. A kī lā ya, B ki la ya, C ki la yā.
 8. B ti, C ri.
 9. All mss na ma.
 10. B bcdomn 'das, A & C bcdoms, throughout.
 11. All mss gzhonu, throughout, B gzhon.
 12. A phyalo.
 13. B bshegs.
 14. All mss thamd, throughout.
 15. A bzhin du, B zhin.
 16. A & B te.
 17. A syllable missing.
 18. All mss yunib, throughout.
 19. B syllable missing.
 20. A khrau = khro bo.
 21. A & C syllable missing.
 22. B khro.
 23. A & C nyiu, throughout.
 24. All mss 'phris, throughout.
 25. A & B sgrub.
 26. C syllable missing.
 27. B sum.

rang bzhin²⁸ gyis²⁹ bzhugs so³⁰ | de nas bcom ldan 'das³¹ dpal chen³² po rdo rje gzhon nus³³
'di skad ces gsungs³⁴ so | kyai³⁵ 'khor tshogs thams cad tshur nyon cig | rang bzhin³⁶ dur
khrod³⁷ chen po nas³⁸ | me long³⁹ gzugs brnyan⁴⁰ chu zla 'dra | nyon mongs⁴¹ dri mas gos⁴²
pa med | rang bzhin⁴³ don gyi dbyings na bzhugs | nam mkha'i⁴⁴ cho 'phrul⁴⁵ ston pa ltar |
rang bzhin dur khrod dam pa ru | drag po sngags kyi⁴⁶ chos ston 'gyur | ces⁴⁷ gsungs so⁴⁸ |
dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | gleng gzhi'i⁴⁹ le'u ste⁵⁰ dang po'o |

de nas dpal chen gtso bo⁵¹ des⁵² | 'og min dbyings nas sku bzhengs te⁵³ | 'khor tshogs
rnams la 'di skad gsungs | kye kye⁵⁴ | dag pa dri ma med pa'i mchog | bla med⁵⁵ byang
chub⁵⁶ sgrub pa'i thabs | 'khor ba'i rnam⁵⁷ rtogs⁵⁸ sbyangs⁵⁹ pa⁶⁰ dang | drag po'i⁶¹ 'gro ba
sbyang⁶² pa'i⁶³ phyir⁶⁴ | mnyam⁶⁵ pa chen po'i don bstan nas⁶⁶ | gang la gang 'dul bstan⁶⁷

28. B gzhin.

29. B gyi.

30. B bzhugso.

31. All mss bcdomns, hereafter.

32. A syllable omitted, all mss cheno, throughout.

33. C gzhon nu'i.

34. All mss gsungso.

35. A kye.

36. B nga ni.

37. B dud, all mss druod, throughout.

38. B chenos.

39. B meong.

40. B snyan.

41. A nyongs.

42. A dgos.

43. A & B rangin, throughout.

44. All mss namkha'(i), throughout.

45. A & B chroul, throughout.

46. B kyis.

47. A zhes, throughout.

48. B cyeso,

49. C bzhi'i.

50. B de.

51. A & B gtsau, throughout.

52. C de.

53. C ste.

54. A & B one kye only.

55. B bledm.

56. A & B byub, throughout.

57. B rnams.

58. A & B rtog.

59. A & B sbyang.

60. A ba.

61. A po, B pos.

62. B bsgral.

63. A ba'i.

64. B ba'ir (see below, n. 68).

pa'i phyir⁶⁸ | 'bar ba chen po'i klong nas bzhengs | rigs ni⁶⁹ rdo rje'i⁷⁰ rigs kyi gtso | mun
pa 'joms⁷¹ pa'i shes rab⁷² 'od | 'khor ba'i nyon mongs⁷³ 'joms mdzad pa | 'gro ba yongs
kyi⁷⁴ gnyen gcig⁷⁵ po | rgyal⁷⁶ ba'i⁷⁷ 'gro ba'i don gyi phyir | ston pa'i bstan⁷⁸ pa rgyas par
bstan⁷⁹ | ces gsungs so⁸⁰ | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | gleng bslangs⁸¹
pa'i⁸² le'u ste gnyis pa'o⁸³ |

'og min chos dbyings pho brang⁸⁴ nas | dpal chen gtso bo sku bzhengs⁸⁵ pa | dbu gsum
phyag drug zhabs bzhi bsgrad⁸⁶ | g.yas dkar g.yon dmar dbus mthing zhal | rdo rje rtse dgu
rtse lnga g.yas | me dpung 'bar ba kha twang⁸⁷ g.yon | tha ma'i phyag gnyis phur pa 'dril⁸⁸
| rdo rje khyung shog⁸⁹ bar snang 'khyengs⁹⁰ | dur khrod chas rnam⁹¹ sku la brgyan | yab
yum gnyis med⁹² rol par bzhugs | hūṃ | rdo rje khros⁹³ pas⁹⁴ zhe⁹⁵ sdang gcod⁹⁶ | mtshon
chen sngon po 'bar ba yis⁹⁷ | nam mkha'i dkyil nas thigs⁹⁸ pa shar | srog gi⁹⁹ sgo ru shar ba

65. B mnyan, C snyam.

66. B stans.

67. B stan.

68. All mss pa'ir, throughout.

69. A 'dzin, C kyi.

70. A & C rje.

71. B 'jom.

72. All mss sheb, throughout.

73. All mss nyaungs, throughout.

74. B gyi.

75. All mss single digit numbers written as numerals throughout.

76. All mss dyal, (dya = rgya, throughout.).

77. A & B ba.

78. B & C stan.

79. B mdzad.

80. B cesyo, throughout.

81. A & B blang, C slang.

82. All mss ba'i.

83. B po.

84. All mss phrong, throughout.

85. A gzhengs.

86. B sgrad.

87. A ṭvām, C ṭam.

88. B sgril.

89. A gshog.

90. A & B khengs, C khyengs.

91. B brgyad.

92. A & B 2ed, throughout.

93. B phros.

94. C pa.

95. B bzhe.

96. B bcod, C gtso.

97. B yi.

98. C thig.

99. All mss srogi, throughout.

dang | snying gi¹⁰⁰ dkyil du bsgom¹⁰¹ par bya | ces gsungs te¹⁰² | yab yum gnyis med rol pa'i¹⁰³ sras | ye shes¹⁰⁴ khro bcu yab yum dang | khra thabs mgo¹⁰⁵ gnyan¹⁰⁶ nyi shu dang | sras mchog 'phrin las¹⁰⁷ grub¹⁰⁸ pa dang | sgo skyong khro mo bzhi rnams¹⁰⁹ sprul | bde gshegs¹¹⁰ kun gyi sras mchog ni | sras ni chos nyid¹¹¹ skye med las | mchog ni¹¹² 'phrin las lhun gyis¹¹³ grub | ru dra¹¹⁴ sgral¹¹⁵ phyir kun¹¹⁶ gyi¹¹⁷ sras | sras ni skye med rdo rje'i sras | khro bcu yab yum khra thabs rnams | kun kyang sku mdog¹¹⁸ mthing¹¹⁹ nag rngam | zhal gcig phyag gnyis¹²⁰ phur pa sgril¹²¹ | sku smad¹²² zur gsum phur bu'i¹²³ dbal | rdo rje khyung shog¹²⁴ dur khrod chas | hūm phaṭ sgra sgrogs¹²⁵ 'khor ba 'jigs | gdug pa ma lus¹²⁶ 'dul byar¹²⁷ byos | hūm | snying rjes¹²⁸ bsgral¹²⁹ ba'i dam tshig¹³⁰ ni | bsad¹³¹ cing mnan pa ma yin te¹³² | phung po¹³³ rdo rjer¹³⁴ gtam¹³⁵ byas nas | mnam par¹³⁶ shes pa rdo rjer bsgom¹³⁷

100. B kha'i.

101. B sgom.

102. B so, C ste.

103. B ba'i.

104. All mss yais, throughout.

105. C sgo.

106. A brnyan, B myan.

107. All mss phris, throughout.

108. B sgrub.

109. B snams.

110. A & B bdaid, throughout.

111. A nyi (faint, in margin).

112. A gi.

113. B gyi.

114. A & B tra, C ṭa.

115. A & C bsgral.

116. B kunyis.

117. C gyis.

118. A skuog.

119. B 'thing.

120. A & B phyagnyis.

121. A 'dril, B & C 'gril.

122. B dmad.

123. A & B pa'i.

124. B gshog.

125. A sgrog.

126. A & B mus, throughout.

127. A 'dulyr, B gdul byar.

128. A snyinges, C rje'i.

129. B sgral.

130. B damg with characteristic hook of the letter tsha above the ga, throughout.

131. B gsad.

132. A stams, C ste.

133. B pos.

134. B & C rjes.

135. C bstams.

136. A & B mar, throughout.

137. B sgom.

| hūṃ | sangs rgyas¹³⁸ kun gyi¹³⁹ ye shes sku | ngang nyid rdo rje chos dbyings las | 'bar
 ba'i khro bo¹⁴⁰ mi zad pa¹⁴¹ | sku'i¹⁴² dbyig tu¹⁴³ bdag skyed¹⁴⁴ cig | hūṃ | rdo rje gzhon
 nu'i rig¹⁴⁵ 'dzin rnam¹⁴⁶ | srid pa'i rdo rje bsgrub¹⁴⁷ mdzod¹⁴⁸ cig¹⁴⁹ | srid pa rdo rje phur
 pa'i lha | ye shes khro bo grub par mdzod | hūṃ | thabs kyi spyod pas 'gro don du | byams
 dang snying rjes gang 'dul ba | sangs rgyas 'phrin las rdzogs¹⁵⁰ mdzad nas¹⁵¹ | dbang dang
 byin brlabs¹⁵² 'dir stsol¹⁵³ cig | hūṃ | srid pa'i phur bu bsgrub¹⁵⁴ pa dang | dbang dang
 dngos grub blang ba'i¹⁵⁵ phyir | ye shes khro bo gshegs su gsol¹⁵⁶ | khro bo chen po gshegs
 nas kyang | rtags dang mtshan ma bstan pa dang¹⁵⁷ | ki¹⁵⁸ la ya yi¹⁵⁹ dngos grub stsol¹⁶⁰ | ces
 gsungs te¹⁶¹ | dur khrod kyi klong nas rab tu khros¹⁶² te | phyogs bcu'i dgra bgegs¹⁶³ thams
 cad brdul¹⁶⁴ lo | dpal¹⁶⁵ rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | lha tshogs¹⁶⁶ thams cad
 drag po'i las la chas pa'i le'u ste gsum pa'o |

de nas 'jig rten¹⁶⁷ pa'i dregs pa can rnam¹⁶⁸ dang | ye shes las grub pa'i ma mo rnam kyis
 | dpal chen¹⁶⁹ 'khor dang bcas pa la | bdag cag rnam kyis¹⁷⁰ srog snying 'bul | ding nas

138. A & B sadys, throughout.

139. B kunyi.

140. B grau.

141. A bzad.

142. A sku yi, B sku yis.

143. A dbyig du, B dbyingsu.

144. A bskyed.

145. A & B riḍ (= rigs).

146. B snams.

147. A & B sgrubs.

148. B mod, with vestigial hook after ma.

149. B gcig.

150. A & C sjogs, sja for rdza, throughout.

151. B pas.

152. A rlabs.

153. B brtsol, C bstsol.

154. B sgrubs.

155. C pa'i.

156. All mss gshegsuol, throughout.

157. B bstans kyang.

158. B & C ki.

159. A yis, B yi'i, C ya'i.

160. C rtsol.

161. B cesye, C ces gsungs ste.

162. C 'khros.

163. All mss dgred, throughout.

164. A btul, B gtul.

165. syllable omitted from all mss until final chapters.

166. A & B lhoḍ, throughout.

167. A & B 'jtien, throughout.

168. B thams cad.

169. A & B chen po.

170. A & B kyi.

dpal gyi¹⁷¹ 'bangs su¹⁷² mchis¹⁷³ | dpal chen khyod¹⁷⁴ kyis¹⁷⁵ bzhes su gsol¹⁷⁶ | ka ṭang ka
 te¹⁷⁷ | dza ye vi dza ye | A tsi tte a pa ra tsi tte¹⁷⁸ | mā ra se na¹⁷⁹ | pra ma rda nī ye¹⁸⁰ hūṃ
 phaṭ | hūṃ | rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' las ni | sdig can gang zhig¹⁸¹ 'da' byed pa | stobs chen
 khro bo chen po yis¹⁸² | klad pa tshal pa brgya¹⁸³ ru 'khos¹⁸⁴ | nyon cig¹⁸⁵ bgegs dang log
 'dren tshogs¹⁸⁶ | nga'i¹⁸⁷ bka' las 'da' ma byed | kyai¹⁸⁸ | dpal chen thugs kyī dkyil 'khor du
 | bdag cag srog snying 'bul bar bgyi | bka'i¹⁸⁹ pham¹⁹⁰ 'babs¹⁹¹ stsal¹⁹² du gsol | hūṃ | ma
 ma ba shaṃ¹⁹³ ku ru | ma trang ga ra¹⁹⁴ | I mān¹⁹⁵ dha ddi¹⁹⁶ ma ma ka rma | shri kra ma kā
 ra ye¹⁹⁷ | hūṃ phaṭ | dpal chen po'i spyān mnga'¹⁹⁸ ru | srog gi snying po 'di 'bul gyi¹⁹⁹ |
 thugs rje²⁰⁰ can²⁰¹ gyis²⁰² gzigs su gsol²⁰³ | 'jig rten 'das dang 'jig rten pa'i | 'khor dang
 bcas pa ma lus kun | dam tshig 'di la bstan pa yis | las rnams ma lus grub par gyis²⁰⁴ | dpal
 rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | dam can rnams kyis²⁰⁵ srog snying phul ba'i
 le'u ste bzhi pa'o |

171. B dpalyi.

172. A & B 'bangsu.

173. A mchi, B 'chi, C 'chis.

174. C khyed.

175. B kyī.

176. A & B bzhesuol, C bzhes suol, throughout.

177. All mss kha ṭam kha te (A ye).

178. A a tsitta a pa ra tsitte, B a tsi te a pa ra tsi te, C a tsi te a pa ra tsi ta.

179. All mss ma ra sa nī.

180. A pra mar rda ni, B & C pra mar rda ni ye.

181. B gi.

182. B yi.

183. C ḍya (= rgya).

184. A & B khos.

185. B gcig.

186. B tsho.

187. A nga yi.

188. A kye.

189. A bka' yi.

190. B pha.

191. A 'bogs, C 'bags.

192. B brtsal.

193. A & B pa shaṃ, C pa shi.

194. A & B ma tam nya ka ra, C ma tang nya ka ra.

195. A & C i nan, B ig nan.

196. A & C dha ti, B rda ri?

197. A shri ṭam kar nye ya, B shri kaṃ ṭam karnye ya, C shri kram ka re ya.

198. A snga.

199. B gyi.

200. A rje'i.

201. A spyān.

202. B canyi.

203. All mss gzigsuol, throughout.

204. B bgyi, C bgyis.

205. B kyī.

de nas gnad la²⁰⁶ bor ba 'di gsungs so | hūm | dam tshig chen po'i dus la bab²⁰⁷ | sprul²⁰⁸ pa
 chen po'i dus la bab | phyag brnyan chen po'i dus la bab | shwa²⁰⁹ na mu kha'i dus la bab |
 bdag nyid²¹⁰ chen po'i dus la bab | sa bdag chen po'i dus la bab | khyed kyi dam tshig²¹¹
 dus la bab | mthu rtsal dbyung²¹² ba'i dus la bab | hūm | dngos grub²¹³ bar chad²¹⁴ byed pa'i
 bgegs | gdug cing sdang sems ldan pa rnam | zung cing²¹⁵ rgyob cig²¹⁶ rnam par 'chings²¹⁷
 | rtogs cing²¹⁸ grogs dang bral bar gyis²¹⁹ | rings²²⁰ par khug la smyo²²¹ ru chug | phob cig
 rnam par gzir bar gyis²²² | nga'i²²³ dbang du gyur nas kyang | sgo²²⁴ ba'i bka' rnam
 mnyan²²⁵ par gyis²²⁶ | hūm | gdug cing sdang²²⁷ sems ldan pa rnam | lha 'am 'on te bdud
 kyang rung | nga la bar chod²²⁸ byed pa rnam | mthu dang rdzu 'phrul²²⁹ med par²³⁰ gyis²³¹
 | brdung²³² shig²³³ rdo rje 'bar ba'i brtun²³⁴ | bka' las 'da' byed sdig can rnam | rdo rje me
 dbal snying bsregs cig²³⁵ | lus ngag rdul²³⁶ phran²³⁷ bzhin²³⁸ du rlog²³⁹ | khro mo 'bar ba'i
 gtun²⁴⁰ khung du | rdo rje tho bas brdungs²⁴¹ byas nas | lha yang rung ste bsgral²⁴² bar

206. C syllable omitted.

207. B babs, throughout these verses.

208. A omits next seven lines.

209. B & C sho.

210. B bdid, throughout.

211. B thya dam (= thugs dam).

212. B 'byung.

213. B dngorub, throughout.

214. C chod.

215. B gcig.

216. B gcig.

217. C chings.

218. B gcig.

219. B & C bgyis.

220. B ring.

221. All mss smra (amended by C.R. Lama, oral communication).

222. A & B bgyis.

223. A nga yi.

224. A & B bsgo.

225. A & C nyan.

226. B bgyis.

227. B bsdang.

228. A gcod, B chad.

229. A & C sjrul (= rdzu 'phrul), B sju 'phrul.

230. B mer, throughout.

231. B bgyis.

232. A rdungs, B brdungs, C gdungs.

233. B cing, C cig.

234. A gtun, C btun.

235. A shig.

236. B & C brdul.

237. C 'phran.

238. B 4n (4 = bzhi).

239. A brlag, C brlog.

240. B brtun, C stun.

bya'o | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri²⁴³ nag po'i rgyud las | dam can gnad la bor ba'i le'u ste
Inga pa'o |

de nas bsnyen pa'i thabs bstan pa | dben pa'i gnas su²⁴⁴ mchod gtor²⁴⁵ bshams | bdag nyid
dpal chen skur gsal ba'i | thugs kar²⁴⁶ ye shes sems dpa'²⁴⁷ ni²⁴⁸ | rgyan med yab dang tshul
mthun²⁴⁹ pa | mtshon²⁵⁰ gang pa gcig²⁵¹ bsam²⁵² par bya | de'i²⁵³ thugs kar²⁵⁴ phyag mtshan
gyi²⁵⁵ | rdo rje rtse dgu nas 'bru tsam²⁵⁶ | de'i²⁵⁷ lte bar gsung gi rtags | hūṃ sngon spu
yis²⁵⁸ bris pa tsam | de yi²⁵⁹ mtha'²⁶⁰ mar ki²⁶¹ la ya | gser mdog skra shad tsam gyis²⁶²
bskor | de ltar thugs kar²⁶³ bsgoms²⁶⁴ nas kyang | thugs²⁶⁵ kyi sngags las 'od 'phros pas |
stong gsum thams cad 'od kyis²⁶⁶ bkang²⁶⁷ | srid gsum gdug pa can rnam btul²⁶⁸ | gsal
stong ngang nas sngags 'di bzlas | om ba dzra kī li kī la ya sarba bigh nān²⁶⁹ baṃ hūṃ phaṭ
| dzaḥ hūṃ ā²⁷⁰ | grangs kyi bsnyen pa bye ba gsum | rtag²⁷¹ bsnyen²⁷² rtags 'byung bar du
bzlas | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | bsnyen pa'i le'u ste drug pa'o |

241. B bsdungs.

242. B bsgral.

243. B spu'i.

244. All mss gnasu, throughout.

245. B gtor ma.

246. B khar.

247. All mss semda', throughout.

248. A nyid.

249. B & C thun.

250. B tshon.

251. A & C cig.

252. A bsgom.

253. A de yi.

254. B khar.

255. C gyis.

256. B rtsam.

257. A de yi.

258. B yi.

259. C de'i.

260. A tha.

261. B & C ki.

262. B gyi.

263. A thyur, B thudr, (All mss subjoined ya = ugs.)

264. B sgom, C bsgom.

265. B thya.

266. B & C kyi.

267. A & B gang.

268. C brtul.

269. A kī li kī lā ya sarba bigh nan, B ki li ki la ya sarba bi ga nan, C kī li kī la yā sarba big nan.

270. A & B dza hūṃ a, C dza hūṃ ā.

271. All mss rtaḍ (= rtags).

272. B brnyen.

de nas sgrub²⁷³ pa'i thabs bstan pa | dur khrod ngam 'brog²⁷⁴ dben gnas²⁷⁵ su | maṅḍal gru
 gsum rim pa gsum | zangs²⁷⁶ lcags mkhar²⁷⁷ ba'i phye ma²⁷⁸ la | khrag snod²⁷⁹ bsres²⁸⁰ pa²⁸¹
 byug par bya | drag po'i shing la zur gsum brtsigs²⁸² | nyer²⁸³ gcig²⁸⁴ srin mo'i 'gros su
 bkod | mam shes²⁸⁵ tshad²⁸⁶ pa'i²⁸⁷ ling ga²⁸⁸ bris²⁸⁹ | sngo²⁹⁰ dmar skud²⁹¹ pas bcings la
 bzhag | bdag nyid dpal chen ting 'dzin gyis | dam can rnam²⁹² gsum las la bkol | om̄ ba
 dzra kī li kī la ya²⁹³ | dha ddi ma ma karma shrī kra ma kā ra ye²⁹⁴ | sarba bigh nān²⁹⁵ bam
 hūm phaṭ | dha ddi²⁹⁶ 'dus pa'i snying po 'di | stong phrag²⁹⁷ gsum du bzlas par²⁹⁸ bya |
 dam can dngos su 'du bar 'gyur | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | sgrub²⁹⁹
 pa'i le'u ste bdun pa'o |

de nas bsgral³⁰⁰ ba'i las byas ste³⁰¹ | e las gru gsum mthing nag tu | khro bo'i³⁰² sprul pa
 grangs med pas | dgra³⁰³ bgegs dngos su bkug³⁰⁴ par bsam | nṛ tri³⁰⁵ ba dzra ang ku³⁰⁶ sha

273. A & C bsgrub.

274. A grog, B groḍ (= grogs).

275. B syllable omitted.

276. B zang.

277. A khar.

278. C syllable omitted.

279. B & C rgod.

280. B sres.

281. A la.

282. A rtsangs, B rtsang.

283. B nyre.

284. C cig.

285. A & B mams.

286. C tshang.

287. A & B ba'i.

288. B ka, C kha.

289. A & C bri, B 'bri.

290. B & C sngon.

291. C brkud.

292. B mams.

293. A kī li kī lā ya, B ki li ki la ya, C kī li ki la ya.

294. A dha ti ma ma karma shri tram kaṃ ka kar nye ya,

B dha ti ma ma karma shi tri kaṃ ka kanya ye,

C dha dhi ma ma karma shri tram kam ka ra kar nye ya.

295. A sarba bigh nan, B & C sarba big nan.

296. A dha ti, B ha ti, C dha 'di.

297. B khrag.

298. B pa.

299. A bsgrub.

300. B sgral.

301. A byas te, B byaste.

302. A bo.

303. A ms corrupt.

304. B bkub.

305. All mss nr̄i ti.

306. B & C a gu.

dza³⁰⁷ | dpa' bo 'bru lnga'i sngags rgod 'dis³⁰⁸ | zhag gsum bzlas na khug³⁰⁹ par 'gyur³¹⁰ |
 de nas drag po³¹¹ bsgral³¹² ba'i sngags | om ba dzra kī li kī la ya³¹³ | sarba bigh nān bam
 hūm phat | dzaḥ hūm ā | ma ma rag mo yak mo³¹⁴ | kā la rū pa³¹⁵ | dgra bgegs kyi snying
 rtsa la yaṃ yaṃ | snying la khril khril | srog la chuṃ chuṃ | tsi tta³¹⁶ srog la tung tung³¹⁷
 |³¹⁸ snying khrag srog la shad shad | dza thum ri li li | dgra bgegs kyi snying tseg tseg | 'ur
 'ur | shig shig³¹⁹ | gul gul | myags myags³²⁰ | sod sod³²¹ | dha ddhi ma ma karma shri kra ma
 kā ra ye | mā ra se na | pra ma rda nī ye³²² | dgra bgegs mā³²³ ra ya hūm phat | rtsa³²⁴
 'thung³²⁵ gsang ba'i yang snying 'di | drag sngags srog gi chad pa yin³²⁶ | bsregs³²⁷ par
 byed pa'i me dpung ste | gnon par³²⁸ byed pa'i ri rab 'dra | gsal bar byed pa'i tī kā³²⁹ 'o |
 sngags 'di drag po'i rdzas³³⁰ la bstim³³¹ | ling ga'i³³² gnad la brdeg³³³ par bya³³⁴ | rtags dang
 mtshan ma 'di ltar yongs³³⁵ | 'gor dang lings³³⁶ byas sems can³³⁷ bsod³³⁸ | grong khyer³³⁹

307. B ja ja.

308. A & B 'di.

309. A khugs.

310. B gyur.

311. A pos.

312. A sgrol, B & C bsgrol.

313. A ms corrupt.

314. A & C yag mo.

315. A & C ka la ru pa, B ka la rus pa.

316. C tsi ta.

317. A & B dung dung.

318. C inserts snying khrag srag (*sic*) la tung tung.

319. B shing.

320. B nyags nyags

321. A saud.

322. A dha ti ma ma karma shri tri kar nye ya mā ra sa ni pra mar dha ni ye,
 B ha ti ma ma karma shri tram karnye ya ma ra sa ni pra mar rda ni ye,
 C dha ti ma ma karma shri tram ka re ya ma ra sa ni pra mar rda ni ye.

323. All mss ma.

324. B tsa.

325. A & C thung.

326. B 'di.

327. A sreg.

328. B gnodr.

329. All mss ti ka.

330. All mss sjas.

331. B & C stim.

332. B ka, C ka or kha, throughout.

333. B bsdeg.

334. B bya'.

335. A 'ong, B 'ongs.

336. B ling.

337. B & C semn, throughout.

338. A & C bsad.

339. B groengr.

mi³⁴⁰ yis bchom pa dang | ha ha gad mos³⁴¹ 'debs gyur na | nges par bsgral³⁴² ba'i rtags yin
pas | ling ga dum bu gsum du sgos³⁴³ | cha gcig dug shing me la bsregs³⁴⁴ | cha gcig gtor
rdeg³⁴⁵ 'og tu mnan | cha gcig klu la gtad par bya | dam can mchod pas mnyes³⁴⁶ par bya |
ces gsungs so | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | drag po'i las sbyor gyi le'u
ste brgyad pa'o |

de nas mnyam pa'i³⁴⁷ ting nge³⁴⁸ 'dzin ni | ma nor ma bcos chos nyid las | srid³⁴⁹ gsum
gdug pa 'dul ba'i phyir | tsham rngam³⁵⁰ gzi brjid glog³⁵¹ ltar 'khyug³⁵² | byang chub³⁵³
sems kyi khyad par³⁵⁴ las | kham s gsum³⁵⁵ dbang bsgyur³⁵⁶ yang dag grub | byang chub
sems kyi phur pa 'dis³⁵⁷ | kham s gsum ma lus bsgral zhes³⁵⁸ bya | phung po brdul³⁵⁹ du
bshig³⁶⁰ nas kyang | sha khrag³⁶¹ kham s gsum gang bar bsam | thugs rjes³⁶² chags pa bsgral
ba'i phyir | man ngag snying³⁶³ khu gsang ba'i rdzas | byang chub sems kyi skad cig³⁶⁴ la |
bsam pa las kyang mya ngan³⁶⁵ 'das | 'jig rten las kyang mya ngan 'das | byang chub sems
kyis 'gol³⁶⁶ sa bcad³⁶⁷ | 'di ni³⁶⁸ mi 'gyur byang chub sems | sgrib pa med pa mthar phyin
pa | rtsol ba med pa lhun gyis³⁶⁹ grub | ces gsungs so | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i
rgyud las | byang chub sems kyis³⁷⁰ bsgral ba'i le'u ste dgu pa'o |

340. A & B me.

341. C mo.

342. A grol, B sgrol, C bsgrol.

343. A & C bgos, B dgos.

344. A & B bsreg.

345. A stegs, B gted (= gtegs).

346. B gnyes.

347. C snyam po'i.

348. A & C syllable omitted.

349. B sri.

350. A mams.

351. B & C klog.

352. A & B khyug.

353. A & B byub.

354. B khyadr, throughout.

355. B khamsum, throughout.

356. A gyur, B 'dus.

357. B 'di.

358. B bzhes.

359. A rdul.

360. B gshig.

361. A shrag.

362. B thyes, throughout, C thugs rje.

363. A nying.

364. A skal, B skig.

365. B myan, throughout.

366. All mss gol.

367. B gcad.

368. B nas.

369. B lhunyis, throughout.

370. B kyi.

de nas gsang ba sngags³⁷¹ kyi ting nge 'dzin³⁷² ni | dang po gnyis med byang sems bstan | gnyis pa rig pa so sor bstan | gsum pa drag po'i 'dzab dgongs bstan | bzhi pa sku gsung³⁷³ thugs su bstan | yang dag nyid la yang dag blta³⁷⁴ | rtogs par byas³⁷⁵ ste³⁷⁶ rnam par sgom³⁷⁷ | yang dag rtogs na bde chen³⁷⁸ thob | mang po bzlas na kun kyang 'grub | dam tshig bsrung³⁷⁹ na dngos grub myur | byang chub sems kyi phur pa yis | bdag gi³⁸⁰ don du rtogs par bgyi³⁸¹ | kham s gsum sems can ma lus pa'i | rdo rje phur pas ma rig 'joms | ma rig pa yi³⁸² sems can la | zhi dang rgyas dang dbang drag dang³⁸³ | so sor³⁸⁴ bsgrub³⁸⁵ pas 'grub par 'gyur | bdag dang lha dang dgra bgegs rnam s | byang chub sems la skye 'chi³⁸⁶ med | nyon mongs srog dbugs bcad³⁸⁷ pa yang | shi rgyag³⁸⁸ tshe 'thud lta bur³⁸⁹ 'gyur³⁹⁰ | phur ni thams cad byang chub sems | pa ni thams cad kun la³⁹¹ khyab | phur ni thams cad gtso bo mchog | pa ni thams cad 'khor gyis³⁹² tshul | phur ni thams cad skye ba med | pa ni rol pa 'gags³⁹³ pa med | phur ni byang chub sems su gcig³⁹⁴ | pa ni thams cad de ru 'grub³⁹⁵ | bsnyen pa bya ba rab tu gces³⁹⁶ | ces gsungs so | dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | rdo rje phur pa'i dgongs pa bstan pa'i le'u ste bcu pa'o |

a ho³⁹⁷ | phyogs bcu dus bzhi'i bde gshegs³⁹⁸ rnam s | skye ba med pa'i chos nyid las | log lta'i sems can bsgral slad du | spu gri nag po rab³⁹⁹ 'bar ba'i⁴⁰⁰ | rgyud 'di gsang ba'i

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371. B gsngags.
 372. C syllable omitted.
 373. B gsungs.
 374. B & C lta.
 375. A & B bya.
 376. B te.
 377. A bsgom.
 378. B bdain, throughout.
 379. A bsrungs.
 380. B bdagi.
 381. B bgyis.
 382. C pa'i.
 383. A dang drag.
 384. B saur, throughout.
 385. A bsgrubs.
 386. A & C shi.
 387. A gcad.
 388. B dyags (= rgyags).
 389. A & B ltur, throughout.
 390. B gyur.
 391. A & C du.
 392. A & B gyi.
 393. A & B 'gag.
 394. B & C cig.
 395. B line duplicated, C bsgrub.
 396. B bcas.
 397. B om.
 398. B bdaiḍ (= bdeegs), throughout.
 399. B syllable omitted.
 400. B yi.

mchog du gsungs | skal ldan⁴⁰¹ yang rab blo can dang | theg chen blo ldan rtogs pa che |
rtsol⁴⁰² ba che zhing shes rab rnon⁴⁰³ | bsam pa dag par gyur pa la | rgyud 'di yongs su gtad
par bya | dam can rnam kyis⁴⁰⁴ rgyud 'di⁴⁰⁵ bsrungs⁴⁰⁶ | ces gsungs so | dpal rdo rje phur
pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud las | rgyud gtad pa'i le'u ste bcu cig⁴⁰⁷ pa'o |

dpal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po⁴⁰⁸ rab tu gsang ba'i rgyud rdzogs⁴⁰⁹ so⁴¹⁰ |⁴¹¹ sa ma
ya⁴¹² | rgya rgya rgya⁴¹³ |

byang zang zang lha brag gi nang⁴¹⁴ | brag ri dug sbrul spungs⁴¹⁵ 'dra'i skyed⁴¹⁶ byang
lcags mdzod nag po nas | me pho rta'i lo | sa ga chen po'i⁴¹⁷ zla ba'i tshes bzhi⁴¹⁸ la | rig⁴¹⁹
'dzin rgod kyi ldem 'phru⁴²⁰ can gyis | gter nas gdan drangs pa'o | bkra shis⁴²¹ |



401. A & B skaldn, throughout.

402. C brtsol.

403. A mo, B sno, C brnam?

404. B kyi.

405. B syllable omitted.

406. B & C gsungs.

407. B bcuig.

408. B po'i.

409. All mss sjoḍ.

410. B & C sho.

411. B inserts line in "dākinī script".

412. C yā.

413. C adds *maṅgalaṃ* and ends here, no colophon.

414. A syllable omitted.

415. B dpungs.

416. A sked.

417. A mo'i.

418. B & C dgu.

419. A rigs.

420. A phru, B khru.

421. B omits bkra shis, adds sa ma ya rgya rgya rgya.

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Index

- Abhayākara Gupta 51, 65ff, 224
abhedya, mi phyed pa 'unbreakable' 2
abhicāra, mngon spyod 55, 141, 146, 219
passim
abhiṣeka, dbang 144ff
 acacia wood (*khadira, seng ldeng*) 39, 43, 50, 52, 53, 61 *passim*
acchedya, mi gcad pa 'indivisible' 2
 Agni, Me-lha 89, 173, 200ff
 Akaniṣṭha heaven, 'Og-min 95, 136, 137
 American Library of Congress PL480
 acquisition scheme 8
 Amoghasiddhi, Don-yon grub-pa 206
 Amoghavajra 64
 Amṛtakundalin, bDud-rtsi 'khyil-ba 6, 48, 53, 61, 90, 110, 132, 147, 157, 165, 182, 192, 206, 210, 219 (See also, *daśakrodharājas*)
aṅgula, sor mo, inch, finger-width 50, 55, 61, 66, 91, 123, 200
 antinomian 4, 64
anuttarayogatantra, rnal 'byor bla na med pa 'i rgyud 4, 12, 51, 52ff, 59, 64, 102, 136, 225
 architecture 3, 40ff, 71
 armour (*kavaca, go cha*) 45, 152, 174, 192, 211
 astrology 40, 117
 Asura cave 5, 109
atiyoga, rdzogs chen 1, 12, 25, 100, 163, 164, 174
 Avalokiteśvara, sPyan-ras-gzigs 31, 58
 Bhairava, 'Jigs-byed 45, 55, 66, 120, 204, 211
bhavaḥkīla, srid pa 'i phur ba 40, 71, 73, 138, 145, 163, 167, 177, 202, 207, 219 *passim*
bhūmividhi, sa chog 33, 118, 204
 Bhutan 9, 21, 78, 124, 151, 156
bindu, thig le 78, 86, 145, 155, 159, 178, 219
bKa' 'gyur 11, 15, 32, 106–7, 224
bka' ma 12, 80, 102, 104, 114ff, 122, 224, 225
 bKra-shis stobs-rgyal (1550–1607) 28 note 83, 29ff, 125
 black magic, witchcraft 1, 4, 17, 39, 41ff, 47, 74, 91, 110, 116, 121, 124, 135, 140, 160, 174, 181, 188, 189 *passim*
 blood (*rakta*) 16, 18, 44, 73, 92, 129, 132, 141, 161, 165, 164, 166, 167, 169, 172, 177, 178, 216 *passim*
bodhicitta, byang chub sems 7, 18, 49, 69, 71, 72, 73, 141, 152, 155, 159, 163, 165, 212, 217, 219, 220 *passim*
 Bon-po 5
 bone 16, 44, 55, 60, 66, 79, 147, 164, 166, 167, 169, 171, 172.
 Brag-thog-dgon 33, 35
 bSam-yas monastery 23, 33, 107, 118, 123
 bsKal-bzang bdud-'dul rdo-rje 30
 bsKal-bzang padma dbang-phyug (1720–1770) 21, 30
bsTan 'gyur 11
 bsTan-'dzin nor-bu of Yol-mo 29
 Bu-ston (1290–1364) 106
 Buddha families (*kula, rigs*), three, four or five 6, 47–8, 62, 65, 79, 83, 91, 92, 137, 159, 160, 208, 212, 224
 Buddhaguhya 100
 Buddhakīla, Sangs-rgyas phur-ba 6, 65, 220
Byang gter phur pa 'i skor 9, 230ff
 C.R. Lama 10, 21, 27 note 78, 31 note 97, 81 note 305, 115 note 425, 164 note 598, 184 note 658, 189 note 675, 197 note 705
Cakrasaṃvara-tantra 53, 60, 76
 Candrakīrti 60–1, 63
 Caṇḍikā 60
 Central Asia 6, 11, 50
'Char kha nag po 33

- charnel ground (*śmaśāna, dur khrod*) 4, 16, 42, 69, 77, 78, 79, 80, 84, 90, 151, 158, 161 *passim*
- China 3, 11, 21, 29, 32, 35, 43, 45–6, 56, 58–9, 64, 68
- coitus reservatus* 88
- commentaries (*upadeśa, man ngag*) 9, 14, 26, 78, 95, 103, 109, 112, 141, 143, 184, 196, 224
- compassion (*karuṇā, snying rje*) 4, 11, 18, 72, 74, 76, 82, 87, 92, 95, 96, 120, 129, 138, 139, 141, 142, 145, 150, 151, 152, 161, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 216, 219 (See also, wrathful compassion)
- cosmic kīla, see *bhavakīla*
- daśakrodharājas, khro bo rgyal bcu* (ten wrathful kings) 7, 32, 51, 52, 56, 57, 65, 88ff, 120, 178 *passim*
- definitive meaning (*nītārtha, nges don*) 4, 71
- demoness of the soil (*sa yi srin mo*) 68
- destroyer of obstructors 6, 8, 44, 47, 49, 53, 54, 63, 66–7, 75, 80, 87, 121–2, 130, 134, 139, 140 *passim*
- dGa'-gdong-dgon 2, 34–5
- dGongs pa zang thal 2, 25, 32
- dgu gtor* 33
- Dhanasamkrta 7, 97–8, 100, 111–14
- dhāraṇī, gzungs* 3, 41, 46–7, 49, 55, 56, 57.
- dharmadhātu, chos dbyings* 73, 77, 82, 87, 94, 129, 136, 137, 138, 149, 150, 151, 161, 192, 216, 219, 220, 224
- Dharmakośa 8
- dharmakāya, chos sku* 22, 72–3, 78, 95, 146, 150, 157, 166, 180
- dharmatā, chos nyid* 71, 77, 79, 133, 138, 142, 144, 146, 150, 151, 155, 166, 172, 178, 179, 180, 218, 219
- dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan (Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem, 1337–1408) 23ff *passim*
- drag sngags (mantrabhīru)* 8, 90–1, 95, 144 *passim*
- earliest extant pegs 3
- earth and heaven 2, 39
- earth-dwelling *nāga (khu)* 40, 46
- effigy (*liṅga, ngar glud*) 6, 55, 63, 133, 134, 135, 140, 145, 154, 171, 193, 194, 196, 200, 204 (preparation of) 55, 133, 187, 202, 205
- eight *ācāryas (slob dpon brgyad)* 99
- eight articles of the charnel ground 160, 216
- eight auspicious symbols (*aṣṭamaṅgala, bkra shis rtags brgyad*) 212 note 765
- eight *dākinīs (mkha' 'gro ma)* 41, 51
- eight deities (*bka' brgyad*) 26, 33, 98, 100–116, 119
- eight great accomplishments (*aṣṭamahā-siddhi, dngos grub chen brgyad*) 41
- eight great charnel grounds (*aṣṭamahā-śmaśāna, dur khrod chen brgyad*) 77
- eight names of Padmasambhava (*guru mtshan brgyad*) 114–5
- empowerment (see, *abhiṣeka*)
- ethical precepts 4, 28, 115, 210, 221
- Evam lcog-sgar 28–9, 35
- Fifth Dalai Lama 9, 21, 29, 30, 69, 126
- five immediacies (*pañcānantariya, mtshams med pa lnga*) 4
- five qualities of desire (*'dod lnga*) 158, 160, 218
- five special knowledges (*abhijñā, mngon shes*) 4
- five-fold repository of the Northern Treasures (*mdzod lnga*) 25–6
- four magical rites (*catvāri karmāni, las bzhi*) 7, 33, 65, 73–5, 80, 91, 131, 157, 167, 172, 203, 209, 213
- Garland of Flames Tantra (Me lce'i 'phreng ba)* (A31, C13) 207ff
- garuda, bya khyung* 6, 34, 56, 70, 117, 174, 219
- gaṇacakra, tshogs kyi 'khor lo* 18, 32, 154, 161, 170, 207, 225
- Gaṇeśa 191
- gNyan-yul (the place of snake demons) 23
- golden libation (*gser skyems*) 197
- Gong khug ma* 27, 95, 124
- Gong po ar gtad* ritual for the suppression of demons 2
- Gorkha army 31
- gSar-ma traditions (see, new schools)
- Guhyasamāja-tantra* (GST) 52, 55, 58, 60–4, 103
- gter ma* 9, 12, 27, 28, 122, 225
- gTsang-rong 29
- Guhyagarbha(māyājāla)-tantra* 4, 65, 80, 99, 143
- Guru chos-dbang (1212–1270) 26
- Guṇapatala 7
- Gyang yon-po-lung 24
- Hayagrīva, rTa-mgrin 6, 56, 58, 70, 88, 89, 100, 132, 146, 147, 148, 150, 152, 157, 165, 182, 183, 192, 210, 211 (See also, *daśakrodharājas*)

- Hevajra-tantra* (HT) 16 note 53, 46 note 158, 51, 52 note 190, 64, 87 notes 311, 312
- hidden lands (*sbas yul*) 26–27
- higher activities (*stod las*) 62, 74
- Hindu 6, 49, 58, 68, 108, 191, 223
- homa, sbyin sreg* (burnt offering ritual) 14, 32, 33, 42, 154, 198–204
- Hsuan Tsang 47
- Hu thug thu* 31
- Hūṃkāra, Hūṃ-chen (See, Vajrahūṃkāra)
- Indra, dBang-po 2, 38, 46, 51, 53, 54, 67, 76, 89, 104, 152, 173
- Indrabhūti (Indrabodhi) 7, 58, 97–8, 100, 102, 103, 110, 115, 151
- indrakīla, 'khor gtan nam sgo 'i them pa* 39–40, 44, 72
- iron 26, 42, 47, 60, 65, 66, 69, 74, 75, 89, 96, 101–102, 111, 117, 120, 122–23, 134, 152–53, 168, 173–4, 183, 183–185, 186–7, 193, 195, 196, 205, 221
- Jagaddarpaṇa 51
- jñānasattva, ye shes sems dpa'* 133, 140, 149, 150, 152, 159, 164, 168, 169, 195, 201, 208, 220
- Karmakīla, 'Phrin-las phur-ba 65, 87, 123, 124, 224
- Karmendrāṇī, Las-kyi dbang-mo 15, 99–102
- Khams-gsum zil-gnon 30
- 'Khon tradition 118, 122
- Khotan, Li-yul 6, 8, 50
- Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan 22, 23, 27, 75, 105, 114, 117, 118, 121, 122
- kleśa, nyon mongs* 4, 18, 54, 72, 76, 80, 88, 112, 157, 164, 170, 171, 218
- Klong-chen-pa 4, 65
- knots 103, vast knot (*mahākanda, rgya mdud*) 7, 54, 73, 159, 167
- Kong-jo 68
- kriyātantra, bya ba 'i rgyud* 3, 6, 11, 48–51, 56, 64, 100
- Kuladatta 49, 50, 51, 69
- Kālacakra-tantra* 4, 51, 77, 224
- kāpālika* brahmin 7, 102
- La-stod-byang 1
- Ladakh 33, 35
- Lang-lab byang-chub rdo-rje 120–1, 181
- lCam tradition 119, 122
- Legs-lдан bdud-'joms rdo-rje 28, 32, 125
- lHa-mo-khang 2
- lineages of transmission (*paramparā, brgyud*), six 12–13
- lo rgyus*, 'chronicles' 7, 9, 27, 78, 95, 111, 223
- longevity ritual (*āyurvidhi, tshe sgrub*) 14, 18, 31, 32, 33, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 225
- lower acts (*smad las*) 62, 74
- lilā, rol pa* 4, 52, 71, 96
- Mahābala, sTobs-po-che 7, 47, 88, 89, 132, 157 (See also, *daśakrodharājas*)
- Mahābala-sūtra* 47
- Mahākāla, mGon-chen 2, 5–6, 70, 108, 129, 130, 135, 136, 191
- Mahāvairocana-tantra* 58, 101
- Mahāvīdyādhara (Rig 'dzin chen po)* 24, 29–31, 33
- mahāyoga* 7, 11–12, 95–101, 143, 163
- Mahottara (Che-mchog) 8, 15, 26, 80, 84, 89, 90, 91, 95, 102, 111, 114, 144, 160, 166, 168, 169, 177, 184, 193, 216, 217, 225
- male and female (deities) 7, 79, 87, 88, 92, 108, 117, 184, 190, 191, 193, 194, 218
- maṇḍala* 4, 11, 13, 16, 40, 41, 43, 44, 47–8, 50, 53, 63, 65, 66, 86, 88, 90, 91, 92, 100, 101, 109, 110, 115, 116, 118, 120, 130, 131, 133, 134, 136, 137, 138, 139, 142, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 174, 177, 178, 182, 187, 189, 191, 194, 197, 202, 203, 209, 211, 212, 216, 217, 223–4
- maṇḍala* of the moon 7
- maṇḍala* of the sun 7
- maṇḍala* of Viśvadhāka 45
- Mang-lam bzang-po grags-pa 24
- Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (MMK) 41, 43, 53, 54, 57
- mantra, sngags*, of Vajrakīla 4, 5, 7, 43, 45–7, 48, 55, 57, 60, 63, 66–67, 70, 78, 96, 97, 111, 115, 119, 121, 122, 123, 130–2, 134, 135, 137, 138, 140, 141, 144, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 159, 160, 164, 165, 166, 169, 170, 177–80, 182, 183, 187–91, 193, 194, 195, 196, 198, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 208, 210, 212, 217, 218, 219
- mantrabhīru* (see, *drag sngags*)
- mantrin, sngags pa* 4

- Māra, bDud 13, 17, 39, 40, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 84, 86, 87, 92, 96, 104, 105, 122, 129, 185, 191, 221
- masked dances 17, 27, 31, 32, 33, 80, 82, 84, 87, 173, 197–8, 204, 206
- mātr*, *ma-mo* 23, 90, 96, 100, 132, 139, 173, 182, 193, 220
- Māyājāla* 23, 58, 98, 103, 143
- mChog-sgrub-sde 27
- mental defilements (see, *kleśa*)
- mGon-khang at the base of the Potala 2
- mKhas-grub-rje 52
- mNga'-ris paṅ-chen Padma dbang-rgyal (1487–1543) 28–9
- Mongols 23, 34, 221
- Dzungar Mongols 30
- Mount bKra-bzang 24, 151, 156
- Mount Mālaya 77, 97, 151
- Mount Meru 43, 72, 73, 82, 83, 84, 85, 96, 97, 107, 129, 132, 151, 166, 167, 172, 205, 206
- Mount Mucilinda 46
- mThing-kha 27
- mudrā*, *phyag rgya* 16, 47–8, 54, 58, 63, 104, 105, 119, 149, 150, 158, 165, 166, 172, 204, 210, 215, five *mudrās* 79, 86, six *mudrās* 66
- mundane sorcery 3, 4, 17, 55, 64, 68, 188, 191
- name 'Vajrakīla' (origin of) 2, 5, 6
- Nepal, Bal-yul 5, 7, 10, 33, 44, 62, 68, 98, 104, 105, 107, 109, 110, 117, 122, 123, 183, 223
- new schools (*gsar ma*) 11, 106
- Ngag gi dbang-po (1580–1639) 29–30, 125
- nirvāna*, *mya ngan las 'das pa* (also *zhi ba*, *śānti* as synonym) 4, 32, 71, 73, 86, 87, 141, 142, 160, 216
- notched stick (*khram shing*) 185
- Nyang-rong lcags-mdud 30
- Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer (1136–1204) 26
- nāga*, *klu* 7, 39, 44, 46, 56, 66, 71, 89, 97, 105, 109, 110, 111, 117, 135, 151, 173, 182, 185, 204, 209, 211
- Nāgārjuna 59, 60, 61, 100, 101, 103
- Nālandā 10, 63
- obelisks (*rdo ring*) 24
- On-sme-thang 28
- oracle 2, 34–5
- Oḍḍiyāna, U rgyan 8, 103
- Padmakīla 6, 65, 224
- Padma 'phrin-las (1641–1718) 9, 30, 33, 125, 144, 184, 199
- Padmasambhava 1, 5, 8, 9, 15, 22, 26, 27, 70, 75, 78, 91, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 122, 124, 151, 156, 174, 181, 183, 186, 194, 196, 204 (See also, eight names of)
- palace of skulls 4, 80, 167–72
- Pañcakrama* 61
- Pañjarañātha, Gur-mgon 6
- paper scrolls 13, 24, 25, 124
- Pharping (Yang le shod) 98, 105, 106, 107, 151
- Pho-bo bka'-gnam rgyal-po 29
- Phrin-las bdud-'joms 10–11 *passim*
- Phur ba'i bsrung ma*, protectors of the Kīla doctrines 78, 90–1, 96, 100, 108, 118, 121, 129, 133, 134, 135, 142, 147, 157, 168, 178, 171, 181, 183–5, 190, 192, 194–6, 198, 209, 214, 220–1
- Phur 'grel 'bum nag* 109 note 404, 224, 225
- Phur pa dril sgrub* 8, 90, 227ff
- Phur pa'i dam can gnad rem* 6
- Phur-pa Texts of the Byang-gter Tradition* 8–9, 227
- pośadha* (*gso sbyong*) for the restoration of vows 32
- Prabhahasti 7, 103, 104, 109, 111
- protective boundary (*rakṣācakra*, *srung 'khor*) 3, 6, 40, 44, 46, 47, 48, 50, 53, 65–7, 72, 116, 117
- provisional meaning (*neyārtha*) 4
- Pure Realm (*Buddhakṣetra*) 4, 39, 43, 72, 73, 119, 167
- Ra-sgreng rinpoche, regent after Dalai Lama XIII 31
- Ratnakīla, Rin-chen phur-ba 65, 223
- rDo-rje gro-lod 116
- rDo-rje-brag Monastery 2, 21, 29, 30, 31–3, 35
- refugee (see, Tibetan refugees)
- reincarnations 1, 28–31, 34, 125
- Ṛgveda 2, 39
- Rig 'dzin gdung sgrub* 25, 32
- Rig 'dzin yongs 'dus* 28
- Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem (see, dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan)
- Rin chen gter mdzod* 21
- River Ganges 109, 151

- rLung-gseng ('Windy Hollow') 24–5
 root tantra (*mūlatantra*, *rtsa ba'i rgyud*) 98, 106, 112, 113, 129–43, 146, 223–4
 rosewood (*bse ba*) 75, 121, 123, 173, 183, 184, 185, 194, 220.
 Rudra 7, 15, 51, 75, 76–77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 96, 129, 130, 146, 167, 191, 216
 Rva lo-tsā-ba rDo-rje grags-pa 4, 120
rūpakāya, *gzugs sku* 72
sāccha, *tsha tsha* 15, 18, 215–6
sādhana, *sgrub thabs* 9, 12, 14, 16, 25, 31, 43, 74, 90, 98, 99, 100, 101, 105, 109, 111, 112, 114, 116, 118, 121, 122, 123, 124, 134, 135, 136, 137, 148, 154, 158, 161, 163, 164, 170
 Śaiva (Rudra) tantrism 7
 Śākyadevī, Sha-kya de-mo 7, 8, 104, 105
 Śākyamitra, Sha-kya bshes-gnyen 22, 103
 Samantabhadra, Kun-tu bzang-po 15, 22, 95, 100, 129, 130, 150
samatha, *shi gnas* 1
 Śaṃkarakūta stūpa, mchod-rten bde-byed 99, 100, 102
sampannakrama, *rdzogs rim* 12, 15, 17, 100, 177ff
samsāra, 'khor ba 4, 17, 72, 73, 76, 79, 82, 84, 86, 87, 137, 160, 164, 181, 184, 216, 218
Samvarodaya-tantra 4, 53 note 193, 55, 77 note 292
samyaksambuddha, *yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas* 2, 65, 78, 158
saṅgha, *dge 'dun*, monastic assembly 2, 11, 17, 28, 29–31, 31–3, 39, 51, 59, 60, 198
 Sanskrit Buddhist literature 5, 10, 11, 15, 44, 56, 62, 64, 68, 88, 106, 110, 113, 191, 223
 Śāntarakṣita 102, 103, 118
 Śānti 7
 Śāntideva 44
Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra (SDPT) 47 note 169, 51, 54, 59 note 226, 61 note 241, 132 note 477, 208 note 744, 212 note 764, 224
Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha-tantra (STTS) 4, 53–4, 57–8, 67, 103
 Sa-skyapaṇḍita 15
 scattering (see, *zor*)
 scorpion 111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 117, 138, 220
 semen 131, 165, 217 holding the semen 4, 87
 seven precious things (*saptadhanāni*, *nor bdun*) 44, 212
sGrub thabs rgyun khyer 7
 shadow 60, 87, 182, 209
 Shes-rab me-'bar 27
 Shes-rab 'od-zer 28
 Shing-bya-can 34
 Shingon Buddhism 44, 47ff, 51, 59, 64, 101
siddha, *grub thob* 1, 27, 41, 52, 59–60, 101, 105 *passim*
siddhi, *ngos grub* 13, 14, 32, 41, 42, 60, 75, 101, 105, 114, 120, 122, 124, 133, 134, 135, 138, 139, 144, 153, 154, 157, 159, 164, 165, 166, 169, 170, 172, 179, 194, 202, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 214, 217
 signs of success 78, 110, 125, 132, 133, 134, 140, 148, 182
 Sikkim 27, 33, 34
 Śīlamañju 7, 98, 103, 109, 111, 151, 220, 223
śīmābandha, *mtshams bcad* 46, 47–53, 116 note 429, 132 note 477, 163, 196, 223
 'single taste' (*ekarasa*, *ro gcig pa*) of *yoga* 17, of the natural condition (*tathataikarasam*) 67
 single-faced, two-armed god 7, 70, 168
 Sir Marc Aurel Stein 3, 6, 50, 55
 Śitavana charnel ground, bSil-ba'i-tshal 99, 100, 104, 111–12, 138
 Śiva 41, 51, 108, 191 (See also, Rudra)
 skilful means (*upāya*, *thabs*) 4, 7, 12, 58, 72, 87, 122, 133, 138, 141, 148, 150, 152, 160, 178, 201, 219
 sKu-Inga shrine in the Jo-khang 2
 sKyi-nag gyang-'gyel 121ff
 sLob-dpon bdud-'dul 23
 Smṛtijñāna 11
 sNa-nam rdo-rje bdud-'joms 1, 15, 23, 105, 114, 116, 118, 119, 151
 snakes 23, 25, 34, 45–6, 56, 79, 80, 110, 161, 167–8, 224 *passim*
 solitary *bindu* 78, 85, 145, 155, 159, 178, 179, 219
 solitary hero Kīla (*ekalavīra*, *dpa' bo gcig po*) 199
 Somapurī 60
 Southern Treasures (*lho gter*) 26
 sPu-gri (*Kṣura) 8, 158
 Śrīdevī 56, 185
 Śrīmitra (circa 340 AD) 47
 Śrīsimha 7, 12, 74, 174

- Srong-btsan sgam-po 11, 68
 stabilizing the earth 2, 3, 39, 45, 51, 53, 54, 72
 sTag-lung-tse-sprul rinpoche 8, 21, 35, 197
stūpa, *mchod rten* 3, 39, 50, 68, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 111, 216 (See also, Śaṃkarakūṭa *stūpa*)
 Śubhakarasiṃha 4
 subjugation of Rudra 7, 58, 68, 81, 96, 129, 146 *passim*
 Sumbha (and Nisumbha) 61, 62, 63, 67, 204
 summer season rains retreat (*varṣika*, *dbyar gnas*) 32, 39
 supreme son(s) (*sras mchog*) 65, 78, 79, 90, 96, 113, 130, 132, 136, 138, 157, 168, 170, 178, 192, 194, 202, 217, 220
Susiddhi-tantra 47, 59
 Śvanmukhā 90, 108, 117, 139, 183, 184, 190, 193, 194, 202, 220 (See also, *phur bsrung*)
 symbol of absolute stability 4
 Tāranātha 43, 70, 100, 181
tathatā, *de kho na nyid*, the real state of things 4, 67, 151, 166, 182, 200
 ten supremacies (*vaśitā*, *dbang ba*) 153, 161
 ten wrathful kings (see, *daśakrodharājas*)
 tent pegs 3, 6, 69
them byang 14–15, 27, 178, 181, 185, 192, 197, 216
 Tho-yor nag-po (country of the black stone cairn) 23
 thread cross (*mdos*) 26, 31
 three lineages known as the Mother, Son and Disciple lines 28, 30
 three *samādhis* 151, 164, 166
 Thub-bstan gser-mdog can 29
 Thub-bstan 'jig-med rnam-grol rgya-mtsho 31
 Thub-bstan chos-dbang mnyam-nyid rdo-rje 31
 thunderbolt, as a weapon of Indra 2, 54
 Tibetan refugees 2, 10, 35
 traditions of Vajrakīla practice 14, 102, 104, 118, 119ff, 144
traidhātuka, *kham s gsum* 7, 60, 71, 82, 141, 151, 152, 162, 165, 184, 218
 Trailokyavijaya, Khams-gsum rnam-rgyal 66, 88, 89, 110, 157 (See also, *daśakrodharājas*)
 Tṛptacakra (Dīptacakra) 63, 64, 86–7, 90, 107, 129, 136, 160, 194, 209, 216 *passim*
 Tsong-kha-pa 48
 Tun-huang 3, 5, 55, 104, 105, 108, 109, 110, 118
 ultimate goal (*abhiprāya*, *dgongs pa*) of the body 178, of speech 179, of the mind 179
 union (*maithuna*, *sbyor ba*) 118, 155
 universal nail (see, *bhavakīla*)
utpattikrama, *bskyed rim* 12, 16, 17, 100, 163–74, 166
Uḍḍiśa-tantra 6
 Vairocana, rNam-par snang-mdzad 61, 63
 Vaiśnavite tantric meditation 40
Vajrabhairava-tantra 55
 Vajrabodhi 64
 Vajradhara, rDo-rje-'chang 2, 52, 60, 62, 65, 115, 135, 143, 158
 Vajragarbha, rDo-rje snying-po 22
Vajrahṛdayālankāra-tantra 52
 Vajrahūmkāra, rDo-rje hūm-chen 7, 50, 66, 88, 148, 153, 156, 209, 220 (See also, *daśakrodharāja*)
Vajrakīla-mūlatantrakhaṇḍa (VKMK) 106, 107, 113, 138–40, 144, 148, 149, 150, 152, 169, 212
 Vajrakumāra, rDo-rje gzhon-nu 77–8, 86, 96, 107, 111, 112, 113, 116, 120, 123, 129, 130, 135, 136, 138, 151, 160
Vajrakumāra-tantra 44, 59, 64
Vajramālā-tantra 61
Vajramantrabhīrusandhi-mūlatantra 5
 Vajrapāṇi, Phyag-na rdo-rje 15, 16, 46, 54, 57, 78, 97, 98, 100, 101, 130, 132, 133, 135, 136, 149, 151, 160
 Vajrasattva, rDo-rje sems-dpa' 15, 22, 63, 66, 78, 96, 101, 129, 148, 149, 156, 158, 160
 Vajravarman 55
 vehicles (*yāna*, *theg pa*), nine 11–12, 83, 112
vetāla, *ro langs* 41–3, 117, 172
vetālavidhi, *ro langs kyi cho ga* 41–2
Vidyottama-tantra 5, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 110, 113, 193, 204
vihāra, *gtsug lag khang* (monastery or temple) 3, 49–50, 104
 Vimalamitra 8, 98, 100, 103, 109, 111, 119, 151, 220
Vimalaprabhā 42, 52
vipaśyanā, *lhag mthong* 1
 Virūpa 60
 Vṛtra 2, 39, 76, 104, 117

- vultures 24, 27, 88, 125, 134
 weather control 34, 46, 56, 72
 wrathful compassion 4, 76, 82, 92, 129, 138,
 139, 141, 142, 170, 174, 221
 Wu-hsing 58
 Yakṣa me-dbal 117
 Yama, gShin-rje 55, 89, 117, 173, 204–5,
 209, 211, 220, 222
 Yamāntaka, gShin-rje-gshed 6, 31, 33, 41,
 60, 61, 88, 89, 100, 120, 121, 123, 156,
 182, 183, 192, 205 (See also, *daśa-
 krodharājas*)
 Yang-le-shod (see, Pharping)
 Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal 27, 78, 105, 116, 118,
 119, 124, 151, 156, 177, 181, 186, 224
yogatantra, *rnal 'byor gyi rgyud* 3, 4, 11, 51,
 57–8, 65, 224
 Yol-mo 9, 10, 29, 30, 33
 Zang-zang lha-brag 9, 24, 27, 124, 192
 zor 14, 17, 33, 196, 197–8