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I N P R A C T I C E

David Gordon White, Editor



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moon [either the “sun” as the means of knowledge (*pramāna*) and the “moon” as the known objective universe (*prameya*), or the two breaths and the whole world of duality that they stir] have dissolved into the great interiority of awareness that pulsates naturally with the triple vibration [either the vibration of the energies of will, knowledge, and action or the vibration of the supreme *śakti* that constantly tends toward the manifestation of the visible reality, the counterbalancing reabsorptive pulsation of consciousness, and the supreme pulsation or *ādyā-spanda* that abides beyond such polarizing movements].

Here, the yogin achieves the One reality, the domain whose nature is essentially the pure light of consciousness, devoid entirely of all externality, the supreme spirit, the true principle, the abode of the highest, the supreme essence. More than this, what is there to be said of it?

3. In that state, whatsoever words may emerge from the mouth of such a yogin are, indeed, transcendently charged mantras. The aggregate form of the body—within which the experience of pleasure and pain are constantly arising—that very bodily form [of the illuminated yogin] is indeed nevertheless the *mudrā* or seal that reveals [the experience of the Absolute].

The spontaneous and natural flow of the breath [which produces the natural mantric sound *hamsa* continuously]—that, indeed, is the extraordinary and highest yoga itself. Having directly experienced the unparalleled splendor, the illuminating glory of the divine *śakti*, in truth, what will then not reveal itself to me?

4. The [true and highest] mantra that then reveals itself in that state has no distinguishable arrangement of syllables or phonemes to be seen within it [for it is of the nature of the potency of the ultimate consciousness *aham* itself.] When the entirety of the [separative or contractive] bodily activities have dropped away or when the practice of all bodily techniques [engaged strategically by the yogin] has stopped, then the [true and highest] *mudrā* or seal of the absolute rises up to reveal itself. As soon as the [separative and dualizing] flow of the breath has ceased or when the [practice of the] flow of the breath [that is, *prāṇāyāma* techniques of yoga] have stopped being performed, that, indeed, is [the true] yoga which then appears.

In the magnificent festival of mystical illumination that leads to the attaining of your splendor, what, indeed, does not then reveal itself to the enlightened wise ones as completely extraordinary?

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Vajrayoga in the Kālacakra Tantra

John Newman

The Vajrayāna tradition of Buddhism is the second of two modes of Mahāyāna Buddhist practice. In the first of these—the “system of the Perfections” (*pāramitā-naya*)—the bodhisattva strives to attain the supreme awakening of buddhahood by means of a lengthy and gradual training in generosity, morality, forbearance, perseverance, meditative concentration, and wisdom. In the “Mantra system” (*mantra-naya*), a synonym for Vajrayāna, the bodhisattva develops the same virtues and knowledge, but uses special magical ritual meditative techniques that greatly accelerate the process. Because the Vajrayāna is primarily a type of mystical praxis, its sacred scriptures and exegetical literature are mostly devoted to practical matters rather than to philosophical doctrine. This has sometimes led to the misconception that the Vajrayāna is merely a body of techniques, and that philosophy is marginal or irrelevant to its central concerns. In fact the opposite is true. Vajrayāna can only be correctly understood as a ritual-meditative implementation of insights developed within the common Mahāyāna philosophical tradition.

The principal philosophical view underlying Vajrayāna mysticism is Madhyamaka (“the Middle”), which was originally taught by the Buddha in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* and later elucidated by Nāgārjuna (ca. second century C.E.) in his *Madhyamaka-śāstra* (“Treatise on the Middle”). Madhyamaka steers a middle course between the two ontological extremes of a realism that ascribes inherent existence to phenomena and a nihilism that denies phenomena’s causal efficacy. It does this by asserting that although phenomena are utterly devoid of inherent existence, they nevertheless originate in dependence on causes and conditions, and function in an entirely regular and predictable fashion. Thus any given phenomenon can be viewed from two perspectives. When one scrutinizes a phenomenon in search of its intrinsic, independent identity, no such identity is found. This absence of inherent existence, or “own-being” (*svabhāva*), is its “emptiness” (*śūnyatā*). On the other hand, when one observes a phenomenon as it ordinarily

appears, without engaging in an investigation of its ultimate status, it is seen to arise within a specific matrix of causes, and it in turn serves to produce specific effects. This causal regularity of phenomena is called "dependent origination" (*pratītya-samutpāda*). According to the Madhyamaka view, emptiness and dependent origination mutually entail one another: things are empty of inherent existence because they originate in dependence on extrinsic factors, and things are able to originate and function in causal relationships because they are devoid of an absolute nature that would preclude such relationships.

The Madhyamaka ontology of emptiness and dependent origination is closely related to its epistemology of two truths, "conventional truth" (*samvrti-satya*) and "ultimate truth" (*paramārtha-satya*). Conventional truth is the world of appearance. For ordinary people—that is, those who have not gained insight into emptiness and dependent origination—phenomena appear to possess inherent existence, and such people hold these appearances to be real, to exist as they appear. Buddhist adepts who have realized emptiness alternate between two modes of cognition: while absorbed in meditative concentration on emptiness they perceive only emptiness, and conventional appearances do not appear to them at all; when they arise from meditation conventional phenomena reappear and appear to exist inherently, but adepts understand that these appearances are illusory, and thus do not cling to them as real. Buddhas, finally, see conventional truth (appearance) and ultimate truth (emptiness), simultaneously.

In Vajrayāna practice, Madhyamaka doctrine is realized through yogic control of the mind. Whereas mind in its samsaric state generates and is infatuated by mundane illusory appearances, the first phase of the Vajrayāna path, the "generation stage" (*utpatti-krama*), harnesses the creative power of mind to produce a new divine vision of reality. This imaginative vision, called a maṇḍala, is a transformation of the practitioner's perception, so that ordinary appearances of self and environment are replaced by an ideal universe inhabited by deities. The elaborate symbolism of the maṇḍala is a divinization of basic Buddhist psychological and metaphysical categories: the deities of the maṇḍala are the phenomena that make up the practitioner's personality purified through recognition of their emptiness. During the generation stage, the practitioner first dissolves ordinary perception into perception of emptiness. Then within this perception of emptiness, the practitioner's mind manifests in the form of the maṇḍala. By conditioning him- or herself through the maṇḍala practice of the generation stage, the Vajrayāna practitioner gains a deeper understanding that phenomena are devoid of independent inherent existence, that they are instead the products of mental fabrication.

Whereas the generation stage uses imagination to produce an alternative vision of conventional reality, the second phase of the Vajrayāna path, the "completion stage" (*utpanna-krama*), cognizes the ultimate nature of mind itself. The Tantric yoga of the completion stage ceases sensory perception and ideation. When these coarse forms of mental activity have been shut down, the "connate luminosity" (*sahaja prabhāsvara*) of mind appears. Through yogic conditioning, this most subtle form of mind can be awakened so that it becomes aware of its own emptiness.

This special kind of direct realization of emptiness, unique to Vajrayāna, is called the "transcendental mahāmudrā siddhi." *Mahāmudrā* can be roughly glossed as the "Great Seal." It is gnosis realizing the mind's own emptiness in a nondual, nonconceptual fashion: mind is "sealed" by emptiness, and emptiness is "sealed" by mind. Mahāmudrā is likened to a divination in which a maiden perceives a hidden object in a mirror. The appearing object is a manifestation of the maiden's own mind; the maiden does not "think" of the object, yet she directly perceives it. Similarly, for the yogin or yoginī practicing mahāmudrā, the subjective aspect of mind (gnosis) and the objective aspect of mind (the appearance of the mind's own emptiness) are blended in a single essence so that it is impossible to distinguish knowledge from object of knowledge. This gnosis is called "the gnostic mind of imperishable bliss" (*akṣara-sukha jñāna-citta*).

The perfect integration of the conventional truth of the mentally fabricated maṇḍala and the ultimate truth of the connate luminosity realizing emptiness is called vajrayoga, "adamantine union," in the text translated below. Vajrayoga is the inseparable fusion of wisdom realizing emptiness and compassion spontaneously manifesting appearances in order to guide living beings to freedom from samsāra. Personal names for this transcendent reality include Ādibuddha (Primal Awakened One), Bhagavān Kālacakra (Lord Wheel of Time), and Vajrasattva (Adamantine Sentient Being). Because vajrayoga surpasses the limitations of dichotomizing, dualistic thought, language cannot fully encompass its true nature. Nevertheless, language can point toward the transcendent, and the second half of our text describes vajrayoga in terms designed to undermine reification of the categories that define ordinary conceptions of reality.

The transcendent vajrayoga is heterogeneous because it is the integration of purified conventional appearance and emptiness. Whereas appearance is a positive phenomenon that functions in accordance with the causal law of dependent origination, emptiness is a mere negation, the simple absence of inherent existence. Ordinary thought cannot grasp both aspects of reality simultaneously, yet "the conventional is embodied in emptiness, and emptiness is embodied in the conventional" vajrayoga confounds conceptual thought, which is based on the dichotomy existence/nonexistence. Our text quotes the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* ("Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra in Eight Thousand Lines") to illustrate this point: "Mind that is non-mind exists." The perfection of wisdom—the compassionate wisdom realizing emptiness—is "non-mind" because it is free from conceptual elaboration and is fused with spacelike emptiness, mind's mere lack of intrinsic existence. Yet this non-mind "exists" because it is directly perceived by the awakened person, and it displays myriad forms that serve to awaken others.

Vajrayoga is "without relation" (*niravaya*) because it pervades everything. It cannot be localized within mundane existence (the "desire," "form," and "formless" existences of Buddhist cosmology) or nirvāna (the cessation of the three realms of existence) because thought defines mundane existence and nirvāna as contraries, and vajrayoga transcends such reifying, dualistic thinking. Similarly, when fire is generated by spinning a fire-drill on its base, the fire is inseparable

from the totality of the causes that produce it; it cannot be localized in any particular cause. Like that, vajrayoga pervades the entire universe of the outer world (*bāhya*), the self (*adhyātma*), and the transcendent (*para*).

As initial realization, vajrayoga is called “supreme, perfect awakening in one moment” (*ekaksanābhisambodhi*). When the Vajrayāna practitioner first realizes vajrayoga he or she experiences a moment of “supreme imperishable great bliss” (*paramāksara-mahāsukha*): blissful connate luminosity embraces its own naked emptiness. In the Vajrayāna system treated here, supreme imperishable great bliss is repeatedly developed in order to produce 21,600 moments of gnosis. This number—a conventional designation for the number of human respirations in a day and the number of years in a cosmic cycle—is a symbol of temporal totality, the embodiment and transcendence of time. Cultivation of supreme imperishable great bliss serves as a path that purifies the mind of contaminating stains, eventually culminating in the achievement of perfect buddhahood. From the point of view of perfect buddhahood, we cannot speak of the conventional momentary origination, duration, and disintegration of phenomena because awakened mind is free from erroneous discrimination that reifies cause and effect, one and many, being and nonbeing, and so forth. Such mind is said to be “devoid of own-being” (*niḥsvabhāva*) because it knows dependent origination and emptiness in a totally integrated, nondualistic way. This gnosis is also called “reality” (*tattva*).

The following translation is a dewdrop lifted from the ocean of the *Vimalaprabhā* (Stainless Light), the great commentary on the *Srī Kālacakra* (Splendid Wheel of Time), the primary Tantra of the Kālacakra (Wheel of Time) system of Vajrayāna mysticism. The Kālacakra was the last major Tantra produced by the Indian Vajrayāna tradition, and the *Srī Kālacakra* and *Vimalaprabhā* contain a date that enables us to determine that these texts were completed between 1025 and ca. 1040 C.E. The earliest masters of the Kālacakra included Piṇḍo, a brahman Buddhist monk born in Java, and Nāropā, the famous Vajrayāna guru of Naalanda monastic university. During the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, the Kālacakra flourished among the Buddhist elite of northeastern India, whence it was transmitted to Tibet. In Tibet, the Kālacakra became an important item in the spiritual repertoire of most Buddhist lineages, and it continues to be studied and practiced today.

The translation, “A Summary of the Vajrayoga” (*Vimalaprabhā* 1.3.1 [commentary on *Srī Kālacakra* 1.1d]), is based on my unpublished edition of this passage, which relies on Asiatic Society of Bengal manuscript G.10766 and on the printed edition of the *Vimalaprabhā*, which was edited by Jagannatha Upadhyaya and published in the Bibliotheca Indo-Tibetica Series, no. 11 (Sarnath, Varanasi: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1986), pp. 42.15–45.3. In the course of his discussion, the author of the *Vimalaprabhā* cites the following works, in some cases anonymously: the *Srī Kālacakra*, which was edited and published together with the *Vimalaprabhā*, as cited above; the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, which was edited by P. L. Vaidya and published in the Buddhist Sanskrit Texts Series,

no. 4 (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1960); the *Abhisamayāntakārikā* of Maitreya, which was published in the volume just cited; the *Nāmasaṅgīti*, which was edited by Ronald M. Davidson and published in *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques*, vol. 20 (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1981); and the *Paramādibuddha*, the Kālacakra mūlatantra (“basic Tantra”), which has come down to us only in fragmentary form.

Further Reading

Study of the Vajrayāna tradition is still in its infancy, and little has been written about the relationship between common Mahāyāna philosophical doctrine and Vajrayāna practice. For an overview of the Kālacakra system, see Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Roger Jackson, and John Newman, *The Wheel of Time* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1991). For a technical note on Buddhist philosophy in the *Vimalaprabhā* see John Newman, “Buddhist Siddhānta in the Kālacakra Tantra,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Sudasiens* 36 (1992): 227–34.

A Summary of the Vajrayoga

Now “yoga in the *Srī Kālacakra*” [in *Srī Kālacakra* 1.1d] summarizes the vajrayoga.

In the Mantra system, the Bhagavān Buddha, depending on worldly and transcendental truth, indicated two types of meaning in this and other Tantras: one with worldly convention, the second in accordance with the ultimate. Provisional meaning is indicated with worldly convention. Definitive meaning is indicated in accordance with the ultimate. Disciples should understand these two meanings from a guru's instructions.

Likewise, in all the other Tantras the subject matter is of two types: one in accordance with worldly convention, the second in accordance with the ultimate. That which is in accordance with worldly convention is characterized by the colors, arms, symbols, and shapes [of the deities in the maṇḍala]. That which is in accordance with ultimate truth is devoid of the colors, arms, symbols, and shapes [of the deities in the maṇḍala].

Of these two, that which is taught in accordance with worldly convention is [the maṇḍala of deities], a phenomenon of one's own mental fabrication that produces the worldly siddhis in order to achieve the worldly siddhis in the outer world and in the self. That which is taught in accordance with ultimate truth is free from the phenomena of one's mental fabrication in order to achieve the transcendental mahāmudrā siddhi that possesses the best of all aspects. It is directly perceived: an appearance of his own mind manifests in the sky for the yogin, just as a divination appears in a mirror for a maiden. It produces

the result that is the desired aim. The result is the gnostic mind of imperishable bliss.

The unity of these two minds—the vajrayoga consisting of wisdom and method, the supreme imperishable great aim, the Ādibuddha without relation, Bhagavān Kālacakra—is renowned in all the other Tantras as Vajrasattva. That very Bhagavān is called the “Nature Body” in the Perfection of Wisdom—in the Perfection system that is designated as the cause. Thus, when determining the four functions [of buddhahood] in the *Abhisamayālaṅkārahārikā* [1.17], Maitreya says:

[The buddha bodies] are said to be fourfold: the Natural [body], Dharma body, Enjoyment [body], and Emanation [body], with Activity as well.

That very Bhagavān is called “connate joy” and the “connate body” in the Mantra system that is designated as the effect. It has abandoned object and subject; it is beyond the phenomenality of limited consciousness; it is not fixated in existence or nirvāna; it is the assembly of the buddhas and the congregation of the goddesses. The definitive meaning of this is that it has the same essence as the gnosis body.

This vajrayoga is without relation. It has abandoned eternity and annihilation. It is beyond worldly examples. It has thoroughly forsaken ideas about existence and nonexistence. Like a divination in a maiden’s mirror, it is not imagined by one’s mind—it is directly seen, an object of experience. It is all aspects; it originates from the sky. It is completely good, the total cognitive faculty. It is the connate joy that dwells in the self of everyone. It has completely abandoned logical reasons and examples.

The heterogeneity of the unity of existence and nonexistence serves as an example for this vajrayoga for yogins so that they may destroy all grasping at positions. It is like the following worldly example: “Since it is heterogeneous with ‘pot,’ ‘sky-flower’ does not exist, because it is entirely nonexistent. Likewise, since it is heterogeneous with ‘sky-flower,’ ‘pot’ exists, because it is entirely existent.” Because these two are mutually heterogeneous, they are an example.

Similarly, since it is heterogeneous with annihilation, existence exists, because it is entirely existent. Since it is heterogeneous with existence, annihilation does not exist, because it is entirely nonexistent. The word “annihilation” indicates nirvāna that is characterized by nonexistence.

Similarly, the unity of these two, pot and sky-flower, serves as an example for the transcendent because it is heterogeneous. These two, pot and sky-flower, are not unified from the point of view of worldly convention because they are mutually contradictory. For due to the nature of existence and nonexistence, that which exists does not not exist, and that which does not exist does not exist. Since it is contradictory, that which makes mind characterized by existence does not make it characterized by nonexistence; that which makes

mind characterized by nonexistence does not make it characterized by existence.

Here too, the image that consists of emptiness and compassion—the purified mind that is like a maiden’s divination—is not characterized by form because it is not made of atoms. It is not characterized by formlessness because it is present in the void.

Therefore, the conventional is embodied in emptiness, and emptiness is embodied in the conventional. Since it is beyond worldly examples, “mind that is non-mind exists” [*Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* 3]; it is free from the characteristics of eternal and annihilated phenomena, it is indivisible emptiness and compassion. Because of the heterogeneity of both minds from the point of view of ultimate truth, nondual vajrayoga is beyond “is” and “is not”, and it is the termination of existence and nonexistence, because the speech of the Tathāgata is without relation.

Here, the Bhagavān said in the *Basic Tantra* [the *Paramādibuddha*]

Nondual vajrayoga, the great bliss, is beyond “is” and “is not”. It is the termination of existence and nonexistence; it is indivisible emptiness and compassion. (1)

The vajrayoga without relation is beyond the nature of atoms and it has abandoned void phenomena. It is free from eternity and annihilation. (2)

Thus, in other Tantras the Tathāgata has said that vajrayoga accomplishes the mahāmudrā.

That pure vajrayoga, being the supreme perfect buddhahood in one moment, is the great aim, the supreme imperishable, connate joy. It does not abide in the desire existence, it does not abide in the form existence, it does not abide in the formless existence, it does not abide in the desire nirvāna, it does not abide in the form nirvāna, and it does not abide in the formless nirvāna, because it is not fixated in existence or nirvāna. It does not abide in both because they are mutually contradictory; like sun and shadow, existence and nirvāna are not identical. Just as fire does not abide in the base of the fire-drill, in the fire-drill, or in the effort of the person’s hand, a yogin should comprehend the vajrayoga everywhere in the outer world, in the self, and in the transcendent.

The so-called “supreme, perfect awakening in one moment” is a moment of supreme imperishable great bliss. That supreme buddhahood in one moment develops all the moments through to the end of the count of the breaths. Then the supreme, perfect buddhahood completed in that moment is the true, perfect buddha. After that moment of completion in which all tathāgatas obtain supreme, perfect buddhahood, all phenomena do not originate, do not abide, and do not disintegrate, because they are without relation.

During the moment all phenomena originate they do not abide and do not disintegrate. During the moment they abide they do not disintegrate and do

not originate. During the moment all phenomena disintegrate they do not originate and do not abide. Also, all phenomena do not momentarily originate, momentarily abide, and momentarily disintegrate in sequence. And this does not happen simultaneously: at a single time when all phenomena exist, the moments of origination, abiding, and disintegration are not identical.

However, you might say: In sequence, the moment of abiding arises from the moment of origination, the moment of disintegration arises from the moment of abiding, and the moment of origination arises from the moment of disintegration. But that is irrelevant from the point of view of reasoning about the ultimate: here, another moment does not arise from a prior moment that has not ceased; likewise, it does not arise from a moment that has ceased. For example, a sprout does not arise from a seed that is destroyed, and a sprout does not arise from a seed that is not destroyed. Similarly, since ultimate being does not exist, there is no one moment, because one and many are contradictory.

With regard to "the supreme, perfect buddhahood in one moment that develops all the moments" [Nāmasaṅgīti 141cb]: Being first fully awakened in a moment of supreme imperishable bliss, one develops the 21,600 moments of supreme imperishable bliss. After that, when all moments are nonexistent, the supreme nondual yoga of the buddhas—separate from one and many—is ultimate because it is separate from being and nonbeing. As long as there is worldly being, phenomena are discriminated by means of one and many because of the appearance of momentary mind. When mind is separate from momentary phenomena, it is called "devoid of own-being."

Therefore, the Bhagavān said that the position devoid of own-being is a nonposition. So-called "positions" are: existent/nonexistent, being/nonbeing, is/is not, one/many, eternity/annihilation, existence/nirvāṇa, form/nonform, sound/nonsound, moment/nonmoment, desire/nondesire, hatred/nonhatred, delusion/nondelusion. These and others are positions because they are mutually dependent. The buddhas' nonfixated nirvāṇa that is separate from this position is devoid of own-being. Gnosis that is separate from one and many moments is called "reality" by the victorious buddhas.

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Jain Tantra: Divinatory and Meditative Practices in the Twelfth-Century *Yogaśāstra* of Hemacandra

Olle Qvarnström

The study of Jain medieval Sanskrit texts reveals a Tantric influence on the two main traditions of Jainism—Digambara and Svetāmbara—both in the sense of ideas and practices and in the sense of a literary class. This influence was restricted neither geographically nor confessionally, and manifested itself within different literary genres and contexts. Its impression is also visible in iconography and art.

The questions of the precise extent to which Tantra penetrated into Jainism, the historical development of Jain Tantra, and its indebtedness to Hindu and Buddhist Tantra are at the present stage of research not entirely clear, even though their outlines have been sketched by scholars such as John Cort and Paul Dundas. Many Tantric texts are still only available in manuscript form. Few have been critically edited. For various reasons Jain Tantra has not caught the attention of Indologists. This has in its turn made it difficult to integrate Jain Tantra into a broader religious, cultural, and historical framework, as well as to define its distinctive character.

Rather than attempting to give a historical survey of Jain Tantra, the following study is, therefore, based on a single text: the *Yogaśāstra* of Hemacandra (1089–1172 C.E.). This, the most comprehensive treatise on Svetāmbara Jainism that has come down to us, was regarded as a normative account of that tradition even by non-Jains. Today it serves as a handbook for the Svetāmbara community in Gujarat as well as among their coreligionists in East Africa, Great Britain, and North America.

Even though the *Yogaśāstra* is neither a Tantric text nor an historical work that might provide us with a description of the gradual infusion of Tantra into Svetāmbara Jainism and its ideological provenance, it is the result of a historical process during which the incorporation of Tantric ideas and practices was natural