

The Broader Theoretical Framework of the Kālacakratantra

The Kālacakratantra belongs to the class of the unexcelled *yoga-tantras* (*anuttara-yoga-tantra*); and together with its most authoritative Indian commentary, the *Vimalaprabhā*, it stands as the most comprehensive and informative *tantra* of its class. According to the Kālacakra tradition itself, the Kālacakratantra is the most explicit *tantra*, which imparts its teaching by revealing the actual meanings; whereas the other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*, which are regarded as secret, or concealed, *tantras*, convey their meanings in an implicit manner.

Accordingly, the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that in every king of *tantras* (*rāja-tantra*)—specifically, in the method *tantras* such as the *Guhyasamājatantra*, and in the wisdom *tantras* such as the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*—the Buddha taught the blissful state that arises from sexual union, but concealed it out of his great compassion for the sake of the spiritual maturation of simple-minded people. For those who seek understanding of other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*, the Kālacakratantra is of inestimable value for it explains the meanings in detail.¹ In the instances in which other systems of the *anuttara-yoga-tantras* offer only scant information, the Kālacakratantra system explicates in detail. For example, the *Vimalaprabhā* points out that unlike the other *tantras* of its class, which only suggest that the fourth initiation is like the third, the Kālacakra tradition reveals in full its content and implications.² The Kālacakra tradition also gives the most elaborate presentation of the human psycho-physiology and the individual's natural and social environments and their relevance to tantric practices.

With regard to the Kālacakratantra's explicit and elaborate manner of presenting its topics, the *Vimalaprabhā*, just like the *Sekoddeśa*, asserts that in the *Ādibuddhatantra*, the Buddha illuminated the *vajra*-word by means of general expositions (*uddeśa*), detailed descriptions (*nirdeśa*), and repeated references (*pratīrdeśa*).³

In light of its explicitness, the Kālacakratantra claims superiority over all other *tantras* in the following manner:

In every king of *tantras*, the Vajrī concealed the *vajra*-word, and in the *Ādibuddha*, he taught it explicitly and in full for the sake of the liberation of living beings. Therefore, Sucandra, the splendid *Ādibuddhatantra*, a discourse of the supreme lord of Ji-

nas, is the higher, more comprehensive and complete *tantra* than the mundane and supramundane [*tantras*].⁴

According to the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on this verse, the Buddha Śākya-muni, who abides in the *vajra* of indivisible gnosis, the inconceivable mind-*vajra*, concealed the supreme, imperishable bliss (*paramākṣara-sukha*) in those *yoginī* and *yoga tantras*, because otherwise the conceited Buddhist *pañḍitas* in the land of the Āryas, who did not wish to listen to the spiritual mentor (*guru*), would read the book and claim that they understood the *vajra*-word. Thus, they would not receive the initiation and would go to hell, due to their self-grasping (*ahaṃ-kāra*). In contrast, he taught it explicitly in the *Ādibuddhatantra* in order to mature those who were born in the land of Sambhala and whose minds were free of self-grasping. On these grounds, the *Vimalaprabhā* affirms that the *Ādibuddhatantra*, which is the discourse of the innate Sahajakāya, is more comprehensive and higher than the *kriyā* and *yoga tantras*.

This is one way in which the Kālacakratantra system substantiates its self-designation as unexcelled (*anuttara*). Likewise, interpreting *yoga* as the union, or absorption, of bliss and emptiness, or of method and wisdom, this tantric tradition presents itself as a nondual (*advaya*) *yoga-tantra*, which is ultimately neither a wisdom *tantra* nor a method *tantra*. It views its nonduality of wisdom and method as an expression of nondual gnosis, without which Buddhahood could never occur.⁵

The Kālacakra tradition also affirms its unexcelled status by claiming that the *Ādibuddhatantra* does not come from a succession of transmissions of spiritual mentors, nor is it established by means of the spiritual mentor's authority (*ājñā*).⁶ The *Vimalaprabhā* states that one cannot achieve omniscient Buddhahood and lordship over the three worlds by the mere blessing and authority of a spiritual mentor.⁷ The *Ādibuddhatantra* asserts the same in this manner:

The perishable mind, which is stained by attachment and other mental afflictions, is the cause of transmigratory existence. It is pure due to its separation from these [impurities]. It is pure and stainless by nature.

None [of the impurities] can be taken out nor thrown into [the mind] by the authority of a spiritual mentor. The sublime, imperishable, pure reality (*tattva*) cannot be given or taken away.

A spiritual mentor is neither a giver nor a remover of the pure reality. In the case of those who are devoid of the accumulation of merit, the omniscient lord himself [cannot give or remove the pure reality].⁸

In light of this, the *Vimalaprabhā* disparages the Śaiva tantric tradition, which claims that its teaching regarding the supreme Īśvara who brings forth pleasure (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*) is handed down by a succession of teachers and through the blessing of the spiritual mentor. It warns against the dangers of following teachings that come in this way by deprecating the Śaiva tantric teachers on the basis that they have trifling knowledge but have become the spiritual mentors of the childish due to showing a few limited *siddhis*. They require trust from their deluded followers, who, thinking that their spiritual mentor is liberated, do everything that he commands. They kill, speak falsehood, steal, drink liquor, and so on. In this way,

they perform the deeds of Māras and do not obtain the bodily *siddhis* by the blessing and authority of the supreme Īśvara. At death, their bodies are either incinerated by fire or eaten by dogs and birds, and their consciousness does not become Śiva.⁹

According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, one cannot teach the *tantra* without knowing first the list of the principles of the Buddha Dharma (*dharma-saṃgraha*) for one who does not know it teaches the evil path. One becomes a knower of the *dharma-saṃgraha* and a teacher of the three Vehicles—the Vehicles of the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Samyaksambuddhas—only by accomplishing these two: (1) gnosis (*jñāna*), which is the apprehending mind (*grāhaka-citta*) and wisdom (*prajñā*), and (2) space (*ākāśa*), or the empty form (*śūnya-bimba*), which is the apprehended object (*grāhya*) and method (*upāya*).¹⁰

The *Vimalaprabhā* entreats those who desire to enter the Vajrayāna to completely investigate a potential tantric teacher, and it points to the danger of practicing a distorted Dharma and going to hell due to honoring a spiritual mentor who lacks the necessary qualifications.¹¹ The *Kālacakratāntra* provides a list of the qualifications of a *vajrācārya*, who must have tantric pledges (*saṃaya*). These qualifications, according to the *Vimalaprabhā*, are of two kinds—external and internal—and must be understood in terms of their definitive and provisional meanings. Likewise, the tantric teacher is expected to practice meditation on reality, and that meditation is also of two kinds—one which accomplishes mundane *siddhis* and the other which accomplishes full and perfect awakening (*samyaksambodhi*). He must be free of greed, not grasping onto his sons, wife, his own body, or anything else. He must be devoid of all mental afflictions (*kleśa*). He is to be patient, not having any expectations, and he must follow the path of full and perfect awakening. The *Kālacakratāntra* asserts that a spiritual mentor who has these qualifications is able to provide his disciples with the path and to remove their fear of death, because as a “celibate” (*brahmācārī*), meaning, as one who has attained supreme, imperishable bliss (*paramākṣara-sukha*), he is like a *vajra*-rod to the four classes of Māras.¹² In contrast to the qualified tantric teacher, a corrupt spiritual mentor is said to be full of conceit, which is of many kinds: conceit in one’s own learning, in one’s own wealth, seeing others as beneath oneself, and so on. His absence of humility is seen as an indication of his lack of compassion. Likewise, one is advised to shun a tantric teacher who is overcome by anger, who is devoid of tantric pledges, and who publicly practices the secret pledges that disgust the world.¹³ Similarly, a *vajrācārya* who is greedy and attached to mundane pleasures, or who is an uneducated fool, ignorant of the true path and not initiated into the *tantra*, or who is fond of liquor or sex, is to be avoided, for he leads his disciples to hell.¹⁴ In light of this, the *Vimalaprabhā* points out that the well-known saying that one should look for the *ācārya*’s good qualities and never for his faults has been misunderstood in the past and will be in the future by foolish people who have lost the true path. It suggests that sayings like this should be understood in terms of both ultimate and conventional truths, that is to say, in terms of their definitive and provisional meanings. In terms of the ultimate truth, an *ācārya* refers to the Buddha Śākyamuni, to “the omnipresent and omniscient *vajrācārya*, who practices (*ācarati*) the *vajra*-word in order to benefit sentient beings within the three realms.” Thus, the aforementioned saying is to be understood literally only when examined from this point of view. Supporting the *Kālacakratāntra*’s position that before honoring a spir-

itual mentor one should investigate his faults and his good qualities, the *Vimalaprabhā* cites the following verses from the *Gurupañcāśikā*, which support the Kālacakra tradition’s stand on this issue.

An intelligent disciple should not make him who is devoid of compassion, who is angry, cruel, stubborn, unrestrained, and self-aggrandizing his spiritual mentor.

[A qualified spiritual mentor] is steadfast, disciplined, intelligent, patient, sincere, honest, versed in the tantric practices of *mantras*, compassionate, a knower of the *sāstras*,

Fully acquainted with the ten principles,¹⁵ a knower of the art of drawing *maṇḍalas*, an *ācārya* who explains *mantras*, who is propitious and has subdued his senses.¹⁶

With regard to the hierarchy of the *vajrācāryas*, the Kālacakra tradition distinguishes the *vajrācārya* who is an ordained monk as the highest type of a *vajrācārya*.¹⁷ It states that ordained monks should only mentally revere the *vajrācārya* who is a householder in order that they may be free of sloth and pride; but when there is a *vajra*-holder who is an ordained monk, then neither the monks nor the king should honor a spiritual mentor who is a householder. The reason for this injunction is based on the association of the white garment, which is generally worn by householders, with the Barbarian Dharma. The *Vimalaprabhā* explicitly states that the Buddhist system (*bauddha-darśana*) is never associated with the white robe. It asserts that in the land of Mañjuśrī, when a monk or a wandering ascetic is expelled from a Buddhist monastery due to committing a sin of immediate retribution, he is allowed to leave the monastery only after he gives back his red robe and puts on a white robe. In light of this, the author of the *Vimalaprabhā* abhors the possibility of a householder who wears a white robe being a spiritual mentor to those who wear the red robe or of a householder dwelling in a Buddhist monastery. He sees it as an insult to the Buddhist monastic community and as a great defect in Buddhists’ judgment.¹⁸

Likewise, it asserts that among men who are worthy of veneration, the *vajrācārya* who is endowed with extrasensory perceptions (*abhijñā*) and has attained at least the first *bodhisattva-bhūmi* is to be venerated for his knowledge. Such a man, be he an ordained monk or a householder, is said to be equal to ten respectable monks. In the absence of this kind of *vajrācārya*, a monk who is an elder should be venerated for his asceticism by the monks whose ordination was later than his; and he should be venerated by tantric householders, since his initiation was prior to theirs. The third kind of venerable man is said to be a learned *paṇḍita* who can illuminate the doctrine and tame the Māras who propound contrary doctrines.¹⁹ In contrast, a householder who is devoid of extrasensory perception is not considered worthy of veneration.²⁰ Statements such as these reveal the strong monastic orientation of the Kālacakra tradition.

With regard to tantric disciples, the Kālacakra tradition distinguishes three kinds of tantric trainees—the superior, the middling, and the inferior. The superior disciple is one who has his mind set on the deep and profound Dharma that consists of wisdom and compassion, who delights in the ten virtues and has not violated the tantric precepts, who is free of attachment, who does not care about the mundane

siddhis but desires a *sādhana* on the *mahāmudrā-siddhi*, and who does not associate with evil people such as *ācāryas* who are greedy householders and ascetics who live off the temples and monasteries. Such a disciple is considered to be qualified to receive the first seven and the other four higher initiations in order to meditate on the path of emptiness. The middling disciple is one who is endowed with mediocre qualities and who seeks a *sādhana* on the mundane *siddhis*, and he is qualified to receive only the first seven initiations in order to meditate on the *maṇḍala*, *mantras*, *mudrās*, and the like. Lastly, the disciple of inferior qualities who respects the spiritual mentor is said to be qualified to be a lay practitioner, and he may receive the five Buddhist precepts but not the initiations.²¹

In light of this, the *Kālacakratantra* classifies the Buddhist community at large into two groups—Śrāvakas and Anuttaras—each consisting of four types of Buddhist practitioners. The four categories of Śrāvakas are the Buddhist nuns (*bhikṣuṇī*) and monks (*bhikṣu*) and the great female (*mahopāsikā*) and male (*mahopāsaka*) lay disciples. The group of Anuttaras includes the *yoginīs* and *yogīs* who delight in innate bliss—that is to say, those who have received the higher initiations and who practice the stage of completion—and the female (*upāsikā*) and male (*upāsaka*) lay tantric practitioners, who have received the first seven initiations and who practice the stage of generation.²² The *Kālacakratantra* asserts the superior quality of the Anuttaras on the ground that there is no monk or celibate who can equal one who has taken the tantric vows and precepts and who is self-empowered by means of *mantras*.²³

The theoretical principles of the *Kālacakratantra* are imbedded in the conceptual context of Vajrayāna as a whole. Therefore, in order to understand the conceptual framework of the Kālacakra tradition in India, one needs to examine its own interpretation of Vajrayāna. According to the Kālacakra tradition's explanation of the term Vajrayāna, the word *vajra* signifies liberation (*mokṣa*), or the indivisible omniscience that cannot be destroyed by conceptualization;²⁴ and the word *yāna* is understood as a vehicle that is of a dual nature. It is the means by which the tantric adept advances toward liberation and the aim toward which the tantric adept progresses.²⁵ The *Vimalaprabhā* also identifies Vajrayāna as Samyaksambuddhayāna (the "Vehicle of a Fully Awakened One"), since it cannot be damaged by the vehicles of heterodox groups (*tīrthika*), Śrāvakas, or Pratyekabuddhas.²⁶

The Kālacakra tradition also interprets Vajrayāna as the system of *mantras* (*mantra-naya*) and the system of perfections (*pāramitā-naya*).²⁷ As the system of *mantras*, it characterizes itself as the system that includes ideas pertaining to both mundane (*laukika*) and supramundane (*lokottara*) truths. Teachings pertaining to the mundane truth are said to be discussed from the conventional point of view, and teachings pertaining to the supramundane truth are said to be discussed from the ultimate point of view. Moreover, the ideas that are taught from the mundane, or conventional, point of view are said to have a provisional meaning (*neyārtha*); and the ideas that are taught from the ultimate point of view are said to have the definitive meaning (*nītārtha*). Likewise, the ideas that are discussed from the conventional point of view are regarded as ideations (*kalpanā*) of one's own mind, which lead to the attainment of mundane *siddhis*. They are said to be taught for mediocre Vajrayāna students who seek nothing more than the accomplishment of mundane *siddhis*.²⁸ The ideas that are imparted from the ultimate point of view are considered as clear man-

ifestations, or reflections (*pratibhāsa*), of one's own mind, which are not of the nature of ideations. As such they are believed to lead to the achievement of the supramundane *siddhi*, called the *mahāmudrā-siddhi*, or the attainment of supreme and imperishable gnosis (*paramākṣara-jñāna-siddhi*); and they are said to be taught for superior Vajrayāna students, who aspire to spiritual awakening.

Likewise, the *Vimalaprabhā* views Vajrayāna as a unified system that consists of both the cause and the result. Thus, the system of *mantras* is said to refer to compassion (*karuṇā*) and is characterized as the result.²⁹ In this tantric system, as in the related systems of the *anuttara-yoga-tantras*, in addition to the standard Mahāyāna practices of developing compassion, the cultivation of compassion also entails seminal nonemission. In this regard, compassion is here also referred to as the gnosis of sublime bliss (*mahā-sukha-jñāna*). The system of perfections, on the other hand, refers to the wisdom (*prajñā*) that cognizes the emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of inherent existence. This wisdom is viewed as the cause of the aforementioned result.

Although the Kālacakra tradition acknowledges the Mādhyamika view of emptiness as its primary theoretical foundation, it has its own unique interpretation of emptiness, not only as a mere negation of inherent existence (*svabhāva*), but also as the absence of material constituents of the individual's body and mind. Hence, this emptiness, which is also called the "aspect of emptiness" (*śūnyatākāra*), or the "form of emptiness" (*śūnyatā-bimba*), is a form that is empty of both inherent existence and physical particles. It is a form that is endowed with all the signs and symbols of the Buddha. That form of emptiness, also known as the "empty form," is also regarded as the "animate emptiness" (*ajadā-śūnyatā*). Due to being animate, this emptiness is the cause of supreme and immutable bliss (*paramācala-sukha*). The non-duality of the cause and effect is the essential teaching of this *tantra*.

From that unique view of emptiness stem the *Kālacakratantra*'s unique goal and path to that goal. The *Kālacakratantra*'s most significant goal is the transformation of one's own gross physical body into a luminous form devoid of both gross matter and the subtle body of *prāṇas*. The transformation of one's own mind into the enlightened mind of immutable bliss occurs in direct dependence upon that material transformation. The actualization of that transformation is believed to be perfect and full Buddhahood in the form of Kālacakra, the Supreme Primordial Buddha (*paramādibuddha*), who is the omniscient, innate Lord of the Jinas,³⁰ the true nature of one's own mind and body. Thus, according to this tantric system, the supreme Ādibuddha refers not only to the Buddha Śākyamuni, who is said to be the first to attain perfect awakening by means of the supreme, imperishable bliss,³¹ but also to the innate nature of the mind of every sentient being.

This points to another unique feature of the *Kālacakratantra*'s theory, namely, the assertion that all sentient beings are Buddhas, which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 7 on the "Gnostic Body". The *Kālacakratantra*'s view of the ultimate nature of sentient beings and their environment as blissful is reflected in the *Kālacakratantra*'s explicit usage of sexual tantric practices on the spiritual path. The generation of sexual bliss without emission of regenerative fluids is regarded in this *tantra* as the most direct method of generating the mental bliss that refines the mind by diminishing conceptualizations and thus makes it fit for the realization of the empty nature of phenomena. One who practices the generation of sexual bliss without emis-

sion, which is referred to as sublime, imperishable bliss, is considered to be like a young virgin. Such bliss is believed to empower one's mind, just as the mind of a young virgin, who has not experienced sexual bliss with emission, can be empowered by deities and *mantras* that enable her to see appearances in a prognostic mirror. Thus, it is thought that the empowerment of the tantric adept's mind, which enables him to perceive the three worlds as mere appearances in space, does not come from some external source such as the blessing or permission of a spiritual mentor, just as a young virgin's ability to see appearances in a prognostic mirror does not come from the blessing or permission of a spiritual mentor.

To those adherents of the Brāhmaṇic tradition who claim that many noncelibates who do not practice sexual bliss with nonemission demonstrate isolatory knowledge (*kaivalya-jñāna*) and predict the future, the Kālacakra tradition responds that their isolatory knowledge is nothing but a branch of astrology, which is common to all people and which enables one to predict the future events by means of calculations.³²

Likewise, it is believed in this tantric tradition that the five extrasensory perceptions (*abhijñā*) cannot arise without the practice of seminal nonemission. It is said that those Bodhisattvas who have the five extrasensory perceptions despite the fact that they occasionally practiced sexual bliss with seminal emission, should be considered celibate, because their seminal emission is an intentional emission, characterized by the motivation to reenter transmigratory existence for the sake of helping others. According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, there are two types of seminal emission—one that is due to the power of wholesome and unwholesome *karma*, and one that is due to the power of controlling the mind. Of these two types of emission, the first one, which is characteristic of ordinary human beings, is for the sake of wandering in transmigratory existence, and the other one, which is characteristic of Bodhisattvas, is for the sake of showing the path to those who are driven by *karma* in the cycle of transmigration.³³

The Classification of the Families in the Kālacakra Tradition

The Kālacakra tradition, like the other tantric traditions of the *anuttara-yoga* class, categorizes the family of its principal deity into three, four, five, and six families (*kula*). The Kālacakra tradition's classification and interpretation of the Kālacakra family can be summarized in the following manner.

In terms of the individual, the classification into three families corresponds to the classification of the body, speech, and mind, or the left, right, and central *nāḍīs*; and in terms of the universe, the three families are the three realms—the realms of desire, form, and formlessness. With regard to ultimate reality, however, the three families are the three bodies of the Buddha—the Nirmāṇakāya, Saṃbhogakāya, and Dharmakāya.³⁴

In terms of the individual, the classification into four families corresponds to the classification of uterine blood, semen, mind, and gnosis, or to the classification of the body, speech, mind, and gnosis, which accords with the classification of the four drops (*bindu*) and with the four states of the mind—namely, waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and the fourth state. In terms of the universe, the four families are the families of the

sun, moon, Rāhu, and Agni (Ketu), and in terms of society, they are the four castes. With regard to ultimate reality, the four families are the four bodies of the Buddha—the aforementioned three bodies and the Jñānakāya.

With regard to the individual, the five families are the five psycho-physical aggregates (*skandha*), and in terms of society, they are the four castes and the outcastes. With regard to ultimate reality, they are the five types of the Buddha's gnosis manifesting as the five Buddhas—Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi.³⁵

In terms of the individual, the six families are the five psycho-physical aggregates and their emptiness; and in terms of society, they are the four castes and the classes of Ḍombas and Caṇḍālas. With regard to ultimate reality, the six families are the five aforementioned Buddhas and the Svābhāvikakāya.³⁶

The Mādhyamika Critique of Other Philosophical Systems in the Kālacakratāntra

Although it has many unique features, as will be demonstrated in the subsequent chapters of this book, the Kālacakra tradition shares some of its fundamental ideas with other Buddhist systems. The *Kālacakratāntra* summarizes its fundamental philosophical views in this single verse:

Identitylessness, the maturation of *karma*, the three realms, the six states of existence, the origination due to the twelve-limbed dependence, the Four Truths, the eighteen unique qualities of the Buddha, the five psycho-physical aggregates, the three bodies and the Sahajakāya, and animate emptiness. The [system] in which these [tenets] are taught is the clear and definite instruction of the Vajrī.³⁷

Positioning itself in the above-mentioned philosophical views, it criticizes all other philosophical systems, including the Buddhist schools other than Madhaya-maka. Although the Kālacakra tradition's refutation of the non-Buddhist philosophical systems is based on the standard Mādhyamika arguments, at times it uses some new and interesting examples in its logical analysis of other systems. It regards its critique of certain tenets of other philosophical systems as a means of leading individuals of different mental dispositions to some understanding of emptiness, which would be the foundation of their attainment of mundane *siddhis*. The following brief summary of the Kālacakra tradition's rebuttal of the dogmas that in one way or another contradict the view of the absence of inherent existence best demonstrates the degree to which the Kālacakra tradition follows the Mādhyamika mode of investigation.

The *Kālacakratāntra* critiques Viṣṇuism for its view of the Veda as being self-existent, eternal, and similar to space. It refutes the notion of the Veda as self-existent and eternal on the basis that the word "Veda" signifies a referent that is produced by the activity of the throat, palate, and the like. It further argues that the Veda is also not identical with the referent, since a word and its referent cannot be identical. If there were such an identity, then when one utters the word "fire," it would burn one's mouth. Likewise, it repudiates the notion that the Veda is similar to space on the grounds that it is local in usage and recited by the mouth. It also objects to the no-

tion that the Veda is a standard for learned and knowledgeable men, since low castes such as Śūdras read and write.³⁸

Furthermore, the *Kālacakratāntra* critiques the Śaiva notion of Īśvara as the creator. The *Kālacakratāntra* argues that if one asserts Īśvara as the creator, one implies that Īśvara is one who experiences *karma*, since it is never the case that one person eats a salty cake and another person experiences the result and dies from thirst. An agent is never established without *karma*. And if he is not an agent of *karma*, as Śaivas claim, then it implies that he is dependent on another agent, who is his instigator. This, it says, contradicts the very term “Īśvara,” which implies independence. Thus, according to the *Kālacakratāntra*, Īśvara has never been the creator who bestows the results of virtue and sin, disregarding the *karma* of living beings. Likewise, if the creator is devoid of the atoms of the elements, then in the absence of matter, he does not create anything; and if he is devoid of the sense-objects, as Śaivas say, then that creator has neither perceptual nor inferential means of valid knowledge.³⁹

In light of its view of dependent origination, the *Kālacakratāntra* asserts that the efficacy of phenomena is not caused by anyone in the triple world but that the origination of all phenomena takes place due to the conjunction of things. Thus, due to the conjunction of a moon-stone with moon-rays, water appears from the moon-stone, and due to the conjunction of an iron-stick with a lode-stone, the iron stick is set in motion, and so on. By means of these and other examples, it tries to demonstrate that things never occur by the will of the creator.⁴⁰

From the vantage point of identitylessness, the *Kālacakratāntra* critiques the notion of the Self (*ātman*) as being omnipresent and permanent. It argues that the Self cannot be omnipresent, since it experiences suffering due to separation from relatives. If it were omnipresent, it would exist as one and would not suffer due to being separated from loved ones. Likewise, if the Self were omnipresent, then one sentient being would experience the suffering of all sentient beings. Moreover, it argues that one cannot say that there are many Selves, because that would imply that there is no omnipresence of many Selves. It refutes the notion of the permanent Self, pointing to its susceptibility to change, as in the case of falling in love.⁴¹

In light of its refutation of the Self, the *Kālacakratāntra* asserts that there is no one who departs to liberation—there is only a collection of phenomena in cessation—and yet there is a departure to liberation. Likewise, there is bondage for originated phenomena, but there is no one who is bound. The state of the Buddha is identical with existence and nonexistence, and it is without inherent existence, devoid of conceptualizations and matter, and free of momentariness. Therefore, the teachings of the Buddha, which are free of the demons of conceptualizations, cannot be destroyed by the words of gods and *nāgas*, which are accompanied by demons, just like a wrestler who is free of demons cannot be killed by a wrestler who is possessed by demons.⁴²

The *Kālacakratāntra* refutes the teachings of Rahman, or the Dharma of Tājikas, on the basis of their assertion that in this life the individual experiences the result of actions that he performed earlier in this lifetime, and that a person who dies experiences pleasure or suffering in heaven or hell through another human form. It argues that if it is as the Tājikas teach, then one could not annihilate one's own *karma* from one birth to another, and consequently, one could not escape transmigratory

existence or enter liberation even in the course of an immeasurable number of lives.⁴³

It critiques the doctrine of the Materialists (Cārvāka), which denies the existence of god and the maturation of *karma* and claims that one experiences only the amassment of atoms, arguing that this Materialist doctrine destroys the path of liberation for people. The *Kālacakratāntra* argues that if, just like the power of intoxicating drink, the witnessing mind arises due to configurations of the elements, then trees would also have consciousness due to the agglomeration of the elements. But if inanimate things lack the efficacy of living beings, then the agglomeration of the elements is inadequate for producing consciousness.⁴⁴

The Kālacakra tradition also repudiates the Jaina doctrine, specifically, the Jaina assertion of a permanent soul (*jīva*) that has the size of the body, and the Jaina view of the permanence of atoms. The *Kālacakratāntra* argues that if the soul would have the size of the body, it would perish after the removal of the arms and legs. Likewise, it argues that atoms are not permanent, since they are liable to change, as are gross and subtle bodies.

The *Vimalaprabhā* critiques the Jaina argument that the substance of the soul is permanent, as gold is permanent, whereas its modes are impermanent, just as the modes of gold such as earrings are impermanent. The *Vimalaprabhā* rejects this argument as invalid, on the basis that if the substance and its mode were identical, then there would be no difference between the two; and if they were different, there could be no mode without the substance; nor can one say that they are both identical and different, because of their mutual exclusion. Likewise, it refutes the Jaina notion that the three worlds are permanent on the basis that whatever is made of atoms never remains permanent. It also critiques the Jaina view that one soul acquires one body, such that plants and grains are also living beings. It argues against this view, stating that if a single soul is in a single body, then when one breaks the stem of a sugar cane into pieces, there would not be many pieces. But since there are many pieces, then the soul must have entered one of those pieces due to its *karma*. That does not stand up to logical analysis, because a sprout arises from each of the pieces of sugar cane that are replanted in the earth.⁴⁵

The Kālacakra tradition also critiques the Vaibhāṣikas, Sautrāntikas, and Yogācārins as simple-minded Buddhist *tīrthikas* who, grasping onto their own dogmatic positions (*pakṣa*), grasp onto the dogmatic positions of others and see the similarity or the contrariety with this or that dogmatic position of others. The *Kālacakratāntra* refutes the Vaibhāṣikas' assertion of the reality of the person (*pudgala*) endowed with a body at birth as the implication of the inherent existence of the *pudgala*. It argues that the *pudgala* cannot be one's inherent nature, because if the *pudgala* were of the nature of cognition, then it would be impermanent, for the nature of cognition is impermanent; and if the *pudgala* were of the nature of noncognition, then it would be unaware of its happiness and suffering.

It critiques the Sautrāntikas for asserting objects by means of conventional truth and claims that for this reason they consider the unknown ultimate truth that has the Jñānakāya (“Gnosis-body”) as nonexistent, like the son of a barren woman. Explaining the basis for the *Kālacakratāntra*'s critique of Sautrāntikas, the *Vimalaprabhā* cites the following verse from Āryadeva's *Jñānasārasamuccaya*:

Sautrāntikas know this: mental factors (*saṃskāras*) are not inanimate (*jaḍa*), there is nothing that proceeds through the three times, and an unimpeded (*apratigha*) form does not exist.⁴⁶

The *Vimalaprabhā* argues on the part of the *Kālacakratāntra* that if the unimpeded form, that is, the Dharmakāya, does not exist, then the omniscient one would not exist either. It asserts that *nirvāṇa* is not the same as the extinction of a lamp, that is to say, it is not the same as the cessation of all awareness. In the absence of the four bodies, there would not be Buddhahood with a localized body. Without the unimpeded body, there would be no displays of the extraordinary powers of all the forms of the Buddha.

The *Kālacakratāntra* refutes the Yogācāra's assertion of the inherent reality of consciousness and its classification of consciousness. In light of this rejection, the *Vimalaprabhā* asks the following: If there is no form of an external object other than consciousness, then why does the external form of visual consciousness as the apprehender manifest itself as being of the nature of the apprehended? It cannot be due to the power of the habitual propensities of spiritual ignorance, as the Yogācārins say, because spiritual ignorance has the characteristic of the three realms, and the three realms are mere consciousness. Thus, mere consciousness is of the nature of spiritual ignorance, therefore, spiritual ignorance is not the disappearance of consciousness; but if the three realms are not mere consciousness, then the Yogācārins' position has failed. The *Vimalaprabhā* also refutes the Yogācāra's assertion that self-knowing awareness arises and ceases in an instant, resorting to the standard Mādhyamika argument that the origination, cessation, and duration of phenomena do not occur simultaneously, for if they were to exist in a single moment, then due to the fact that time is a moment, birth, old age, and death would be identical. Moreover, if consciousness were to arise from a consciousness that has ceased, then it would be like the origination of a flame from a flame that has ceased, and this makes no sense. But if another consciousness were to arise from a consciousness that has not ceased, then it would be like the origination of a flame from a flame that has not ceased, which means that from origination to origination there would be a series of consciousness, like a series of flames. In this case, one cannot say that after the cessation of an earlier consciousness there is an origination of another consciousness, nor can one say that there is an origination of another consciousness from the earlier unceased consciousness, nor from the combination of the aforementioned two manners of origination, because of their mutual contradiction.⁴⁷

However, the *Kālacakratāntra* indicates that the Mādhyamika's negation of the inherent existence of consciousness, which inspired some to say that the Buddha's wisdom is not located anywhere, is a danger for those who, devoid of the self-aware gnosis of imperishable bliss, will grasp onto that emptiness and will thus fall into the trap of a doctrinal view and attain nothing.⁴⁸

After refuting the preceding tenets of the Indian systems of thought in the above-demonstrated ways, in order to assure one of the pure motivation behind its criticisms, the *Kālacakratāntra* states that its assertion of the absence of inherent existence is free from mundane concerns and intended to be of service to others.⁴⁹ Likewise, in order to establish one's confidence in the supremacy of the source of its teach-

ing and to bring one to final conversion, the *Kālacakratāntra* ends its critique of other philosophical systems with these words of the Buddha to the king Sucandra:

I am Indra, the spiritual mentor of thirty-three men in heaven, the universal monarch (*cakravartin*) on the earth, the king of *nāgas* in the underworld, revered by serpents. I am the highest, gnosis, the Buddha, the lord of sages, the imperishable, supreme sovereign, the *yogi's vajra-yoga*, the Veda, self-awareness, and the purifier (*pavitra*). O king, take refuge in me with all your being.⁵⁰

With regard to the criticism of one's own or other Buddhist tantric systems, the Kālacakra tradition views this as the major cause of committing the sixth of the fourteen root downfalls (*mūlāpatti*), which is specified in the *Kālacakratāntra* (Ch. 3, v. 102) and the *Vimalaprabhā* as reviling the *siddhāntas* of the system of perfections within the *mantra*-system. The *Vimalaprabhā* indicates that criticism of one's own or other Buddhist tantric systems is often an expression of one's own ignorance with regard to the relation between the subject and predicate in Buddhist *tantras*, and as such, it leads the faultfinder to hell.⁵¹

The Concept of the Ādibuddha in the Kālacakra Tantric System

One of the most important concepts in the Kālacakra system is that of the Ādibuddha. Even though the concept of the Ādibuddha is not unique to the *Kālacakratāntra*, it is most emphasized and discussed in the Kālacakra literature. To the best of our knowledge, the earliest reference to the Ādibuddha is found in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* (Ch. 9, v. 77), which refutes the notion of the Primordial Buddha on the grounds that there is no Buddhahood without the accumulations of merit (*puṇya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*). Later references to the Ādibuddha are found in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* (v. 100), in the commentarial literature of the *Guhyasamāja* corpus, and in the *yoginī-tantras*. The Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the Ādibuddha is primarily based on the *Nāmasaṃgīti's* exposition of Vajrasattva, who is Vajradhara.

According to the Kālacakra tradition, the Ādibuddha is called the Primordial Buddha because he was the first to obtain Buddhahood by means of the imperishable bliss characterized by perfect awakening in a single moment.⁵² In connection with this interpretation, the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that according to the words of the Buddha in the *Nāmasaṃgīti* (v. 85), which praises Vajradhara as one who is free of mental obscurations, a person who is devoid of merit and knowledge does not in any way become a Buddha.⁵³ Such an interpretation does not seem to contradict the *Mahāyānābhisamayālaṃkāra's* assertion that there is no Buddha who has been enlightened since beginningless time. On the other hand, the *Vimalaprabhā* interprets the word *ādi* ("primordial") as meaning "without beginning or end," meaning, without the origination and cessation.⁵⁴ This interpretation of the word *ādi* with regard to the Buddha is reiterated by Naḍapāda in his *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, which further interprets the Ādibuddha's freedom from origination and cessation as omniscience.⁵⁵ The Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the word is based on the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, v. 100, which begins with: "Without beginning or end, he is the Buddha, Ādibuddha. . . ."⁵⁶ This interpretation of the word *ādi* appears to contradict the aforementioned interpretation of the Primordial Buddha. However, analysis of the Kālacakra literature re-

veals that when the Kālacakra tradition speaks of the Ādibuddha in the sense of a beginningless and endless Buddha, it is referring to the innate gnosis that pervades the minds of all sentient beings and stands as the basis of both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. Whereas, when it speaks of the Ādibuddha as the one who first attained perfect enlightenment by means of imperishable bliss, and when it asserts the necessity of acquiring merit and knowledge in order to attain perfect Buddhahood, it is referring to the actual realization of one's own innate gnosis. Thus, one could say that in the Kālacakra tradition, Ādibuddha refers to the ultimate nature of one's own mind and to the one who has realized the innate nature of one's own mind by means of purificatory practices.

The Kālacakratra and the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti

The Kālacakra tradition views its essential topic, which is the Jñānakāya, or Vajrasattva, as indivisible from that of the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, which, according to the *Vimalaprabhā*, makes the Jñānakāya of Vajradhara evident. The *Vimalaprabhā* remarks that in every king of *tantras*, the Buddha described the *vajra*-word as the imperishable bliss of yogis; and in them he designated that *vajra*-word as the Jñānakāya, which is described by the *Nāmasaṃgīti*.⁵⁷ Accordingly, the *Kālacakratra* teaches that one should meditate every day on Kālacakra, the progenitor of all the Buddhas, only after one "has taken apart," or investigated, this *vajra*-word.⁵⁸

The *Vimalaprabhā* comments that the path of purification that brings forth the *mahāmudrā-siddhi* was written explicitly in the *Paramādibuddhatantra* only after the Buddha made the *Nāmasaṃgīti* an authoritative scripture. Knowing that in the future sentient beings will be free of doubts, the Buddha taught Vajrapāṇi the definitive meaning of all the tantric systems, in accordance with the *Nāmasaṃgīti*. In light of this, it affirms that in order to know the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, one must know the *Ādibuddhatantra*. If one does not know the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, one will be ignorant of the Jñānakāya of Vajradhara, and not knowing the Jñānakāya of Vajradhara, one will not know the Mantrayāna. Being ignorant of the Mantrayāna, one will be devoid of the path of Vajradhara and remain in transmigratory existence.⁵⁹

In verses 12–13, the *Nāmasaṃgīti* asserts its durability, claiming that the Buddhas of the past, present, and future have taught and recited the *Nāmasaṃgīti* and that innumerable Buddhas have praised it. On the basis of these verses, the *Vimalaprabhā* affirms that it is due to Vajrapāṇi requesting the Buddha to teach the *Nāmasaṃgīti* that all the Tathāgatas taught the Mantra Vehicle.⁶⁰ This statement may clarify just why it is that most Buddhist tantric traditions mention Vajrapāṇi as one who both requests the teachings and compiles the *tantras* such as the *Guhyasamāja* and the *Ādibuddha tantras*.

Similarly, according to the *Vimalaprabhā*, the *yoga* that is the imperishable bliss, the sublime goal (*mahārtha*) of the *Kālacakratra*, has already been declared in the *Nāmasaṃgīti* by fourteen verses (28–36) in praise of the *maṇḍala* of the *vajra-dhātu*. The *Vimalaprabhā* remarks that the fully awakened one, who is described by those fourteen verses, is taught in all the *tantras*, in accordance with the superior, middling, and inferior dispositions of sentient beings.⁶¹

In light of its view of the inseparability of the *Kālacakratra* and the *Nāmasaṃgīti*,

throughout its five chapters, the *Vimalaprabhā* altogether cites sixty-five verses from the *Nāmasaṃgīti* in order to explain or substantiate the *Kālacakratra*'s views of Buddhahood and the path of actualizing it. Thus, the Kālacakra tradition's view of the omniscient Buddha, who stands at the extreme limit of transmigratory existence and is superior to the Hindu gods such as Hari and Hara, who are born in the realm of gods within cyclic existence, is based on the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s statement in verse 54, which reads:

Standing at the far limit of transmigratory existence, having his task accomplished, he rests on the shore. Having rejected isolatory knowledge, he is a cleaving sword of wisdom.⁶²

Likewise, the *Kālacakratra*'s interpretation of the Jñānakāya as the fully awakened one who is imbued with *nirvāṇa* without remainder (*nirupadhi*) and transcends the reality of consciousness (*viññāna-dharmatā*) is in full accord with that of the *Nāmasaṃgīti* (vs. 87, 99), according to which, the fully awakened one, being free of all remainders, dwells in the path of space, and transcending the reality of consciousness, is a spontaneous nondual gnosis that is free of conceptualization.

Furthermore, the *Kālacakratra*'s interpretation of enlightened awareness as the mind that, though free of the habitual propensities of *karma* (*karma-vāsanā*), supports transmigratory happiness and suffering and terminates them, is based on the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 96) description of the discriminating gnosis (*pratyavekṣaṇa-jñāna*) of the Buddha as the mind that ends happiness and suffering. Likewise, the *Vimalaprabhā* suggests that the *Kālacakratra*'s interpretation of the self-awareness that knows the nature of all things has its basis in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 98) characterization of the Buddha's gnosis as omniscient, fully awake, and wide awake to itself.⁶³

The Kālacakra tradition also substantiates its exposition of Jñānakāya as devoid of form (*rūpa*) on the basis of the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 73) description of Vajrasattva as one whose hundred eyes and hair are blazing like a *vajra*; and it asserts that it is not the Rūpakāya of the Buddha that is the subject of investigation in the *Nāmasaṃgīti* but the Vajradharakāya of Vajrapāṇi.⁶⁴ Likewise, it bases its argument that the Buddha's body is not a localized (*prādeśika*) body on verses 61–63 of the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, which speak of the Buddha as a torch of gnosis that arises instantly in space, and so on.⁶⁵

At times, the Kālacakra tradition offers an interpretation of certain passages from the *Nāmasaṃgīti* that radically differs from those found in the commentarial literature on the *Nāmasaṃgīti*. For example, it interprets the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 45) depiction of the Buddha as having ten aspects (*daśākāra*) in terms of the Vajrakāya that is the existence of ten kinds of phenomena—namely, the body, gnosis, space, wind, fire, water, earth, the inanimate, the animate, and the invisible deities of the formless realm.⁶⁶ Whereas, Mañjuśrīmitra's *Nāmasaṃgītiṭīkṣā* (176. 1. 7) specifies the ten aspects as ten truths—provisional truth, conventional truth, and so on—whose words and meanings the Buddha intends to teach,⁶⁷ and Vilāsavajra's *Nāmasaṃgītiṭīkā* (196. 5. 5) interprets the ten aspects as the ten types of grasping onto the Self,⁶⁸ on the grounds that the Buddha himself should be understood as undesirable mental factors and as their antidotes. This cryptic interpretation makes sense when examined in the light of the Kālacakra tradition's view of enlightened awareness as the support of both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*.

Similarly, the Kālacakra tradition gives its own interpretation of the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 133) description of the Buddha as the referent of the truth that has twelve aspects, and as one who knows the sixteen aspects of reality and is fully awakened with twenty aspects. According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, he is the referent of the truth with twelve aspects, because he has attained the twelve *bodhisattva-bhūmis* due to the cessation of the twelve zodiacs;⁶⁹ and according to the *Nāmasaṃgītivṛtti* (182. 5. 1), he is the referent of the truth with twelve aspects, because he has the twelve sense-bases (*āyatana*), which are his aspects in terms of conventional truth. Although the Kālacakra tradition and the *Nāmasaṃgītivṛtti* agree that the sixteen aspects of reality refer to the sixteen types of emptiness—to be discussed in chapter 7 on the “Gnostic Body”—the Kālacakra tradition offers its own reason for the manifestation of the sixteen aspects: the cessation of the sixteen digits of the moon. With regard to the full awakening with twenty aspects, the Kālacakra tradition also departs from the interpretation given in the *Nāmasaṃgītivṛtti* (182. 5. 2). According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, the Buddha has spiritual awakening with twenty aspects because he fully knows the five purified psycho-physical aggregates, the five sense-faculties, the five sense-objects, and the five types of consciousness, since they were purified in the central *nāḍī* by means of the six-phased *yoga*. According to the *Nāmasaṃgītivṛtti* (182. 5. 3), on the other hand, the twenty aspects are the earlier mentioned sixteen aspects and the four types of the Buddha's gnosis.

The Kālacakra tradition also considers its exposition of Kālacakra as consisting of the four families—specifically, the four bodies of the Buddha—to accord completely with the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 108) description of the Buddha as the sublime mind (*mahā-citta*) of all the Buddhas, as the desire of the mind (*mano-gati*), as the sublime body (*mahā-kāya*) of all the Buddhas, and as the speech (*sarasvatī*) of the Buddhas.⁷⁰ Thus, it interprets the sublime mind of all the Buddhas as the *Viśuddhakāya*, the desire of the mind as the *Dharmakāya*, the sublime body of all the Buddhas as the *Nirmāṇakāya*, and the speech of all the Buddhas as the *Dharmakāya*. Likewise, the *Vimalaprabhā* suggests that the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 93) characterization of the Buddha as one who has five faces and five hair-knots is most relevant to the Kālacakra tradition's presentation of the Buddha as one who, due to the classification of the five psycho-physical aggregates and elements, consists of the five families.⁷¹ Finally, it asserts that the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 35) description of the Buddha Vajradhara as one who bears the sublime illusions is taught there in terms of the Kālacakra tradition's classifications of the six families and the hundred families.⁷²

The *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s presentation of Vajrasattva has also influenced certain forms of Kālacakratantra practice, whose goal is the actualization of Vajrasattva as he is described in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*. For example, verse 111 from the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, which states that the sublime Vajradhara of the Buddha bears all illusions, is considered to be a theoretical basis for the Kālacakratantra practice of the stage of generation, more specifically, for the practice of meditation on the universal form (*viśva-rūpa*) of the empty and blissful Buddha that has many arms, legs, colors, and shapes.⁷³ Similarly, the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (vs. 61–62) description of the self-arisen Vajrasattva as the sublime fire of wisdom and gnosis that has arisen from space and its (v. 56) characterization of the Buddha as one who has abandoned all thoughts and is free of ideation are pointed out as reasons why the Kālacakratantra practice of the stage of comple-

tion is to be practiced in the form of meditation that is free of ideation.⁷⁴ Moreover, the *Vimalaprabhā* indicates that the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 53) assertion that the Buddha is free of the sense of “I” and “mine” is the reason why at the stage of completion practice one should not practice self-identification with Vajrasattva but should resort to ultimate truth.⁷⁵

The recitation of certain verses from the *Nāmasaṃgīti* also forms an integral part of Kālacakratantra practice. Thus, at the end of the stage of generation practice, after the tantric adept has meditated on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* and on the enlightened activities of the deities in the *maṇḍala*, and after he has practiced *sādhana*s on the *yoga* of drops (*bindu-yoga*) and the subtle *yoga* (*sūkṣma-yoga*), he recites verse 158 from the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, with which he expresses his reverence for the enlightenment of the Buddha, whose essence is emptiness. By reciting this verse, he establishes the appropriate attitude with which he is able to purify his four drops within the four *cakras* by emanating the principal deities within those *cakras*.

With regard to the Kālacakratantra initiation, the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the Kālacakratantra's four higher initiations as a symbolical passage from being a lay Buddhist practitioner to being a wandering ascetic, a monk, and a Buddha is justified in the light of the *Nāmasaṃgīti* (vs. 81, 51–52, 94–95), which describes the Buddha as being a youth, an elder (*sthavira*), and an old man, as a leader of the Pratyekabuddhas, an Arhat, a monk, and the progenitor (*prajāpati*), and as one who has the great vow, great austerity, and so on. Likewise, the receiving of diadem (*paṭṭa*) and crown (*mauli*) during the four higher initiations is explained in terms of the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s (v. 93) description of the Buddha as an ascetic with a crest of hair and diadem.⁷⁶

A Brief Analysis of the Inner Kālacakratantra

The entire Kālacakratantra is divided into five main chapters—the chapters on the world system (*loka-dhātu*), the individual (*adhyātma*), initiation (*abhiṣeka*), *sādhana*, and gnosis (*jñāna*). The subjects of these five chapters delineate the Kālacakra tradition's vision of the gradual transformation from the macrocosmic and microcosmic aspects of provisional reality to ultimate reality, culminating in gnosis. They also represent a unitary reality that manifests as the universe, the individual, the path of purification, and its result.

The first chapter of the Kālacakratantra begins with the words of King Sucandra requesting the teaching on the *yoga* of the Kālacakratantra from the Buddha Śākya-muni for the sake of the liberation of human beings who live in the *kali-yuga*; and the last chapter concludes with Sucandra's homage to Kālacakra, who is the *tantra*, the presiding deity Vajrasattva, the union of wisdom and method (*prajñopaya-yoga*), and the reality (*tattva*) with sixteen aspects. Each of the other four chapters also begins with Sucandra's request for teachings on the main topic of the chapter, and the remaining verses of each chapter contain the Buddha's response to Sucandra's request.

The inner Kālacakratantra, or the “Chapter on the Individual,” begins with Sucandra's question to the Buddha: “How can the entire three worlds be within the body?” It continues with the Buddha's summary of how all phenomena in the world are the three modes of the Buddha's existence that are present in the human body,

all of which should be known by means of the classifications of emptiness. This is followed by a further exposition on the origination of the individual's body, speech, and mind by means of the agglomeration of atoms and the power of time. The detailed description of the conception and development of the fetus in the womb indicates the author's familiarity with embryology, as taught in the earlier Buddhist writings such as the *Abhidhammatasamgaha*, *Āhārasutta*, and the *Āyusmannandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśasūtra*, in tantric works such as the *Vajragarbhaṭīkā* and the *Amṛtahṛdayāṣṭāṅgaguhyaopadeśatantra*, and in the Buddhist medical treatises. For example, the *Kālacakratantra*'s description of the conditions necessary for conception, the characteristics of the fetus, and its growth correspond to that in the *Āyusmannandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśasūtra*.⁷⁷ The view of the six tastes as arising from the six elements is common to the *Kālacakratantra* and the *Vajragarbhaṭīkā*.⁷⁸ Likewise, the *Kālacakratantra*'s statement that the marrow, bones, and ligaments of the fetus arise from the father's semen, and the skin, blood, and flesh arise from the mother's uterine blood corresponds to a great degree with the *Amṛtahṛdayāṣṭāṅgaguhyaopadeśatantra*'s assertion that the bones, brain, and spinal cord of the fetus arise from the father's sperm, and the muscles, blood, and viscera arise from the mother's uterine blood.⁷⁹ Similarly, the *Kālacakratantra*'s classification of the human life into ten stages corresponds to that given in earlier works such as the *Āyuspariyantasūtra*⁸⁰ and the *Nandagarbhāvasthā*.⁸¹

Explaining the functions of each of the elements in the formation of the human being and of the conditions in the mother's womb, the author tries to demonstrate the manner in which the principles of dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*) apply to the origination of the human psycho-physiology.

This first section of the inner *Kālacakratantra* continues with an exposition of the preciousness of human birth and continues with an explanation of the ways in which the four bodies of the Buddha are present in the body of the individual. It represents the individual in the specific stages of life within and outside the womb, as the provisional manifestations of each of the four bodies of the Buddha. It identifies the individual with the four bodies of the Buddha in accordance with the degree of development of the individual's bodily, verbal, mental, and sexual capacities. It shows further the manner in which the elements, the psycho-physical aggregates, the *prāṇas*, and the mind support each other in the body of the individual; and it explains the relation among the sense-faculties and their corresponding sense-objects in terms of one type of element apprehending a different type of element. For example, the olfactory sense-faculty, which arises from the water-element, apprehends taste as its sense-object, which arises from the fire-element. Explaining their relation in this way, the author tries to demonstrate that all the constituents of the individual and all his experiences arise due to the union of opposites, often referred to in this tantric system as the "different families." He specifies the elements from which each of the psycho-physical aggregates, the *prāṇas*, and the *cakras* arise in order to demonstrate the material nature of the transmigratory body.

The second section of the inner *Kālacakratantra* (vs. 27–47) specifies the locations of the four bodies of the Buddha and of the six families within the individual's four *cakras*. It describes the manner in which mental states enter the body and the body enters mental states, and thus they become of the same taste. Likewise, it dis-

cusses the elements of the bodily constituents in terms of wisdom and method, and it suggests that everything pertaining to the body and the mind of the individual comes into existence due to the union of these two. In this way, it provides the reader with a description of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* in terms of the human being. It further depicts the ways in which the presence of time and the universe is to be recognized in one's own body and shows the correspondences between the passage of time in the world and the passage of *prāṇas* within the body. In this regard, this section also discusses the different functions and locations of the diverse types of the *prāṇas* in the body.

The third section of the inner *Kālacakratantra* (vs. 48–60) begins with a description of the current battle between the universal monarch (*cakravartin*) and the lord of the Barbarians (*mleccha*) within the body of the individual, which will take place in the land of Mecca and be between the external manifestations of good and evil. It also discusses the ways in which the *yoga* and *yoginī tantras*, such as the *Māyājāla* and the *Guhyasamāja*, and the tantric families of their deities are present within the individual and included in the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*. In this regard, it further describes the location of the male and female deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* within the body of the individual and identifies them with the *nāḍīs* and the passage of time in the body.

The fourth section of the "Chapter on the Individual" (vs. 61–81) gives a detailed description of the characteristics of the unfavorable signs of death, beginning with descriptions of the ways in which one can determine the number of the remaining days of life by examining the flow of the *prāṇas* in the *nāḍīs*. For example, if the *prāṇa* uninterruptedly flows in the left *nāḍī* for a day and a night, then one has one more year to live, and so on. It associates the unfavorable signs of untimely death with the gradual ceasing of the *prāṇas*' flow in the individual *nāḍīs* of the navel-*cakra*. It also describes the characteristics of timely death, which begins with the disintegration of the *nāḍīs* in the navel-*cakra* and progresses throughout the body through the severance of the *nāḍīs* within all the other *cakras* and bodily joints. It compares the process of death to the moon and the sun leaving their lunar and solar mansions. The gradual severance of the *nāḍīs* is said to manifest for six days in the acidity of urine and in the *prāṇas*' departure from the sense-faculties. During the other six days, it is said to manifest in the following symptoms: one perceives the tip of one's own nose as dangling down, one perceives the sun as being black and the full moon as being yellow, and the planets as the sparks of fire, and a black line appears below one's tongue, and so on.

The fifth section of the inner *Kālacakratantra* (vs. 82–106) discusses the *kālacakrī*, or the moment of seminal emission, in terms of conventional reality, as an agent of the creation and annihilation of the individual. It also points to the individual's conceptualizations and *karma* that is contained in the *guṇas* of *prakṛti* as causes of transmigratory suffering and happiness. It classifies the *karma* of human beings into three kinds: gross, subtle, and subtlest, in accordance with the classification of the body, speech, and mind. It also distinguishes a *karma* with regard to the individual's grasping onto the agent of action. When one thinks, "I am the agent," this is a distinct *karma*; when one thinks, "The supreme Īśvara is the agent," this is a *karma*; but when one thinks, "Neither I nor someone else devoid of *prakṛti* is the

agent,” this is not a *karma*. It further asserts that it is the mind of the deluded person that creates his own suffering and happiness and not the Bhagavān Kālacakra, who is devoid of the *guṇas* and conceptualizations. In light of this, it affirms that the mental state that characterizes the individual’s mind at the time of death determines the state of his next rebirth.

The sixth section of the “Chapter on the Individual” (vs. 107–160) is dedicated to the discussion of the ways of guarding the body from illness and untimely death. It first depicts various tantric yogic practices and practices of *prāṇāyāma* as methods of eliminating malignant illnesses and preventing untimely death. In addition to these practices, it also prescribes herbal medication, elixirs, and dietary regulations. It also gives guidance on storing medicinal herbs and spices and preparing their combinations, and on preparing and storing rolls of incenses, unguents, and fragrances. Additionally, it discusses ritual tantric methods of protecting pregnant women and infants from diseases caused by malevolent spirits, and it describes the symptoms of such diseases.

The last section of the inner Kālacakratantra (vs. 161–180) discusses the Kālacakratantra’s philosophical views and those of other Indian Buddhist and non-Buddhist systems of thought. After briefly expounding the fundamentals of its own philosophical tenets, the author presents the tenets of other systems, without offering any comment on them. Upon giving an overview of the other systems, he engages in a critique of those tenets that he finds contrary to the Kālacakratantra’s philosophical orientation.

A History of the *ṣaḍ- aṅga-yoga* of the Kālacakratantra and Its Relation to Other Religious Traditions of India

A close look at the Kālacakratantra’s six-phased *yoga* reveals its correlation and historical connection to earlier forms of the six-phased *yoga*, found in both Hinduism and Buddhism. Moreover, it also reveals the unique character of the practical applications and implications of the Kālacakratantra’s six-phased *yoga*. To the best of my knowledge, the earliest reference to a six-phased *yoga* is found in the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*, or *Maitrī Upaniṣad*, which belongs to the branch of the black Yajur Veda and is considered to be the last of the classical Upaniṣads. The *ṣaḍ-aṅga-yoga* of the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*, Ch. 6, v. 18, contains the following six phases: breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*), retraction (*pratyāhāra*), meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*), contemplative inquiry (*tarka*), and *samādhi*.¹ It is taught in this Upaniṣad as a method for achieving union with the supreme Self (*paramātman*). If we accept that the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad* predates Patañjali, we can assume that this six-phased *yoga* also predates the eight-phased *yoga* (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*) of the classical Yoga system. The fact that Patañjali never makes any reference to a six-phased *yoga* and that his *Yogasūtra* never mentions contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) is not sufficient evidence to regard the six-phased *yoga* as a later revision of the eight-phased *yoga*, as Günter Grönbold suggests.² Even if the sixth chapter of the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*, which incorporates a six-phased *yoga*, is a later interpolation, as Mircea Eliade speculates,³ the antecendence of the sixth-phased *yoga* to the *yoga* of Patañjali is still quite plausible. The phrase “for it is said elsewhere,” which often occurs at the beginning of the verses of the sixth chapter, indicates that the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad* draws its yogic elements from the earlier yogic sources. Even though we are unable to determine the exact sources of the yogic elements in the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*, it is obvious that different forms of its six-phased *yoga* have very early origins in India. The six-phased *yoga* was later modified into diverse forms of *yoga* with varying numbers of phases.

For example, in one of the earliest Purāṇas, the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 10, v. 76,⁴ one encounters a five-phased *yoga*, whose fifth phase is recollection (*smaraṇa*), corresponding in name to the fifth phase of the *Kālacakratantra*'s six-phased *yoga*. In this Purāṇa as in the *Kālacakratantra*, contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) is replaced by recollection. Considering that the Purāṇas underwent many revisions after the majority of their material was composed during the Gupta reign (c. 320–c. 500 CE), it is extremely difficult to establish whether the recollection phase of *yoga* was established first in the Purāṇic tradition or in the Buddhist tradition, specifically, in the *Guhyasamājatantra*, which some scholars date as early as the fourth century CE and some as late as the eighth century CE.

Within later Hindu sources, a six-phased *yoga* is also mentioned in a number of texts belonging to the Upaniṣads of the Yoga class—specifically, in the *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*—and in the Śaiva Āgamas, Śaiva *tantras*, and some Dharma Sūtras, where there is a slightly different order of phases than that found in the six-phased *yoga* in the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*. For example, in the *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*, v. 6, the six phases of *yoga* are retraction (*pratyāhāra*), meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*), breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*), contemplative inquiry (*tarka*), and *samādhi*. This particular sequence of the phases of *yoga* is almost identical to that of the *Kālacakratantra*. The difference between the two lies in the designation of the fifth phase of *yoga* as contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) instead of recollection (*anusmṛti*).⁵ Even though contemplative inquiry is not explicitly mentioned among the six phases of the *Kālacakratantra*'s six-phased *yoga* as a separate member, it is not absent from there. Rather, it is included within the phase of meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*), along with wisdom (*prajñā*), analysis (*vicāra*), joy (*rati*), and immutable bliss (*acala-sukha*).⁶ Contemplative inquiry as a constituent of the phase of meditative stabilization is explained in the *Vimalaprabhā* as the apprehension of the phenomenon of empty form that is being observed or meditated upon during this phase.⁷ As such, it is an indispensable element in the practice of the *Kālacakratantra*'s six-phased *yoga*. Nevertheless, it is not given superiority over all other phases of the six-phased *yoga* and their elements as it is in Kāśmīr Śaivism—specifically, in the Śaivāgamas and in the works of Abhinavagupta and Jayaratha. Abhinavagupta (975–1025) in his *Paratrīśikavivaraṇa* asserts that “among all the lights of the component parts of *yoga*,” contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) has already been determined in the earlier *Mālinīvijaya* “to be the brilliant sun by which one gets liberated and liberates others.”⁸ When commenting on Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka*, Jayaratha (thirteenth century) in his *Tantrāloka-viveka* mentions the six-phased *yoga* that has breath control (*prāṇāyāma*) as its first member and contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) as its fifth member and exalts it as the highest (*uttama*) phase.⁹ Moreover, just as contemplative inquiry is included in the six-phased *yoga* of the *Kālacakratantra*, even though it is not regarded as a separate phase, so too are meditative posture (*āsana*) and restraint (*niyama*) implicitly included in this *yoga*. The *vajra*-posture (*vajrāsana*) is often referred to as the posture in which an adept of the *Kālacakratantra* does his meditative practice, whereas *niyama* is included in the observance of the *Kālacakratantra*'s ethical discipline, in the form of restraint from indulging in the five objects of desire and keeping the twenty-five tantric precepts (*vrata*), which are deemed prerequisites for the successful outcome of the practice of the six-phased *yoga*.¹⁰ The *Vimalaprabhā* defines *niyama* as a Bud-

dha's command (*buddhānujñā*) with regard to the twenty-five precepts.¹¹ Since these two prerequisites to the *Kālacakratantra*'s six-phased *yoga* are present in each phase of the *yoga* as qualifying conditions, they are not considered to be separate phases.

Within later Hindu sources there are also those who speak of a six-phased *yoga* that does not include the phase of contemplative inquiry but includes meditative posture (*āsana*) as the first phase. For example, some Yoga Upaniṣads—specifically, the *Dhyānabindu Upaniṣad*, v. 41 and the *Yogacūḍāmaṇi Upaniṣad*, v. 2—several texts of the *Gorakṣa* corpus (c. twelfth century), and the *Netratantra*, cited in Kṣemarāja's *Vimarśinī* (eleventh century) commentary on the *Śiva Sūtra* 6, contain the following list of the six phases: posture (*āsana*), breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*), retraction (*pratyāhāra*), meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*), and *samādhi*. This form of the six-phased *yoga* seems to be later than that found in the *Guhyasamājatantra* and later incorporated into the *Kālacakratantra*. Thus, it is most likely that the Buddhist six-phased *yoga* chronologically succeeds the six-phased *yogas* containing contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) as the fifth phase, which continued to be in practice in later times as well. However, it is more difficult to determine with certainty whether the Buddhist six-phased *yoga* precedes the six-phased *yoga* of Kāśmīr Śaivism that contains meditative posture (*āsana*) as its first phase or whether it was contemporaneous with it. If one were to rely only on the extant Śaiva texts that refer to the sixth-phased *yoga* having meditative posture as its first member, it would seem that the Buddhist sixth-phased *yoga* preceded that particular *yoga* of Kāśmīr Śaivism. Considering the incompleteness of textual and historical information, it is impossible to reconstruct an accurate and precise history of the six-phased *yoga* in India. Therefore, I offer here only a limited comparative table of the different types of six-phased *yogas* that were cited in specific Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, and Buddhist texts. As table 2.1. indicates, not only teachers of different religious traditions but also various teachers of different schools within the same tradition taught diverse forms of the six-phased *yoga*, according to their intended goals. Even though these diverse types of the six-phased *yoga* were couched within the different theoretical and practical frameworks of disparate traditions, they all share some commonalities. The most salient point of commonality is that each form of the six-phased *yoga* is viewed within its own tradition as inductive to the accomplishment of both limited, or mundane, and supreme *siddhis*. There are also certain commonalities in the more general interpretations of some phases of the diverse types of six-phased *yoga*, despite the clear divergence in the manner in which particular phases are structured and practiced within the different traditions. For example, in both Kāśmīr Śaivism and Buddhism, the phase of breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*) involves bringing the *prāṇas* into the central *nāḍī*; the phase of retraction (*pratyāhāra*) involves the withdrawal of the senses from external objects; and meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*) implies meditation on a divine form, and so on. Their interpretations also coincide to a certain degree with Patañjali's definitions in the *Yoga Sūtras*. For the variant listings of the six members of the ṣaḍ-aṅga-*yoga* within the different schools of the Hindu and Buddhist traditions see table 2.1.

Within the Indian Buddhist tradition, teachings on the six-phased *yoga* are found within two Buddhist *tantric* systems—the *Guhyasamājatantra* and the *Kālacakratantra*. The *Hevajratantra* (Ch. 8, vs. 21–22) also mentions a six-phased *yoga*, but it does not list its members nor does it elaborate on it. Even though the six-phased

TABLE 2.1 The Variants of the Ṣaḍaṅga-yoga

The Tarka class of the Ṣaḍaṅga-yoga		Viṣṇu Saṃhitā,	Tantrālokaṣivēka, 3
Maitrāyaṇīya	Yoga Upaniṣads	30:57–58	
Upaniṣad, 16:18	Amṛtanāda, 6, etc.		
prāṇāyāma	pratyāhāra	prāṇāyāma	prāṇāyāma
pratyāhāra	dhyāna	pratyāhāra	dhyāna
dhyāna	prāṇāyāma	dhāraṇā	pratyāhāra
dhāraṇā	dhāraṇā	tarka	dhāraṇā
tarka	tarka	samādhi	tarka
samādhi	samādhi	dhyāna	samādhi
The Anusmṛti class of the Ṣaḍaṅga-yoga			
Guhyasamājatantra, 18:140		Kālacakratantra, 4:116	
pratyāhāra		pratyāhāra	
dhyāna		dhyāna	
prāṇāyāma		prāṇāyāma	
dhāraṇā		dhāraṇā	
anusmṛti		anusmṛti	
samādhi		samādhi	
The Āsana class of the Ṣaḍaṅga-yoga			
Netratantra (Mṛtyujit)		Gorakṣa Texts, Gorakṣaśataka, 7, etc.	
āsana		āsana	
prāṇāyāma		prāṇāyāma	
pratyāhāra		pratyāhāra	
dhyāna		dhāraṇā	
dhāraṇā		dhyāna	
samādhi		samādhi	

yogas of the Kālacakra and Guhyasamāja systems accord in the names and in the sequences of their phases, they differ in their content and practical implications. Among the Indian sources of these two traditions, the majority of treatises and commentaries on the six-phased yoga belong to the Kālacakra corpus. According to the *Blue Annals*, the six-phased yoga of the Kālacakratantra was initially taught by Vajradhara in the form of Avadhūtipa to Anupamarakṣita (c. eleventh–twelfth centuries), who passed it on to his friend Śrīdhara.¹² Two works on the six-phased yoga are traditionally attributed to Anupamarakṣita: the *Ṣaḍaṅgayoga* and the *Ṣaḍaṅgayoganāma*. The later Indian author Raviśrījñāna (eleventh–twelfth centuries)—in the introductions to his *Guṇabharanī*, a commentary on the *Ṣaḍaṅgayoga* and to his *Ṣaḍaṅgayogaṭikā*, a commentary on the *Ṣaḍaṅgayoganāma*—gives a brief account of Anupamarakṣita's revelatory experience.¹³ According to the accounts recorded in the *Guṇabharanī* and the *Ṣaḍaṅgayogaṭikā*, Anupamarakṣita studied Buddhism and other Indian systems of thought. Under the guidance of Śrīkhasarpaṇa, he practiced for twelve years a meditation on reality without an object and free of conceptualizations, but was unable to gain a special insight. Depressed, he fell asleep, during which Vajrayoginī appeared to him, instructing him to go to Vikramapura, where he would attain that special insight. After arriving at midnight in Vikramapura—accompanied by his disciple, the great paṇḍita Śrīdhara—Anupamarakṣita received instruction on the six-phased yoga directly from the Buddha in the form of Avadhūta. By

merely receiving the instruction that confirmed, “This is reality,” he entered *samādhi*; and upon emerging from his *samādhi* in the early morning, Anupamarakṣita taught this knowledge to Śrīdhara.

With some variations, this story is repeated several times in later Tibetan chronicles of Buddhism and the lineage of the Kālacakratantra's six-phased yoga.¹⁴ Apart from Padma dkar po, who mistook Vikramapura for Vikramaśīla monastery in Bihar, none of the sources specify the location of Vikramapura nor the place from which Anupamarakṣita went to Vikramapura. It is likely that the Vikramapura to which Raviśrījñāna refers is Vajrayoginī village in contemporary Dacca, located in east-central Bengal, which is also thought to be the birthplace of Atīśa.¹⁵ This is perhaps the same Vikramapura mentioned in the inscriptions found in north India. In the inscriptions related to the rulers of the Varman and Vikramāditya dynasties of northern India, Vikramapura is mentioned as their capital during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Varman dynasty ruled eastern Bengal in the second quarter of the eleventh century, and their Vikramapura was eventually overtaken by Vijayasena, the greatest king of the Sena dynasty, in the middle of the twelfth century. Thus, Raviśrījñāna, who, according to Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism in India*, lived during the reign of the Sena dynasty, could have been referring to that Vikramapura.¹⁶ Some inscriptions mention Vikramapura as a capital founded by Vikramāditya VI (c. 1076–1126). His father, Someśvara I, reigned in Magadha and eastern Bengal, and he himself conquered central Bengal shortly before 1068 CE, after defeating Vīraḥapāla III. According to Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism in India*, Anupamarakṣita lived during the period of the Bhayapāla and Nayapāla kings of the Pāla dynasty.¹⁷ Nayapāla, the father of the mentioned Vīraḥapāla III, ascended the throne in the early eleventh century and ruled the kingdom that extended on the west up to Bihar and to the east to central Bengal. Tāranātha's information coincides with ‘Gos lo tsa ba gzhon nu dpal's assertion in the *Blue Annals* that Anupamarakṣita could not have been later than Nāro (956–1040 CE), since Nāro cites Anupamarakṣita's teaching in his *Sekkodeśaṭikā*.¹⁸ Thus, whether Raviśrījñāna was referring to the Vikramapura of the Pālas, Varmans, or Vikramādityas, according to Buddhist tradition the Kālacakratantra's six-phased yoga was first disseminated in Bengal.

Anupamarakṣita's name could have been easily related to the well-known Anupama monastery (*viḥāra*) in Kaśmīr, which produced Buddhaśrījñāna, Sarvajñaśrīrakṣita, and Śākyaśrībhadrā, the great early eleventh-century Kaśmīr scholars of the Kālacakratantra. His name also could have been related to Anupamapura, the seat of the two greatest Buddhist centers of learning in Kaśmīr during the eleventh and twelfth centuries—the monasteries of Ratnagupta and Ratnarāśmi. In either case, Anupamarakṣita could have come to Bengal from Kaśmīr.

It is clear from the extant Indian and Tibetan sources that there were several lineages of the Kālacakratantra's six-phased yoga in India. As these sources indicate, the most important among those lineages was that of Anupamarakṣita. In the *Guṇabharanī*, Raviśrījñāna gives the following lineage: Anupamarakṣita¹⁹—Śrīdhara—Bhāskara—Raviśrījñāna. The same lineage, but in an extended form, is also given in the *Blue Annals*, the fifteenth-century Tibetan chronicle of Buddhism in Tibet, which also mentions the famous lineages of Indian Buddhist masters. According to the *Blue Annals*, the most famous lineage of the Kālacakratantra's six-phased yoga in

India begins with Anupamarakṣita and ends with the Bengali *mahā-panḍita*, Vanaratna (1384–1468). Vanaratna received the transmission of the six-phased *yoga* from the *mahā-siddha* Śavaripa, one of the eighty-four legendary *mahā-siddhas* of India, and he taught it extensively in Tibet during the first half of the fifteenth century.²⁰ The extended lineage is given as follows: Anupamarakṣita—Śrīdhara—Bhāskaradeva—Dharmākaraśānti—Ratnarakṣita—Narendrabodhi—Muktīpakṣa—Śākyarakṣita—Sujata—Buddhaghōṣa—Vanaratna. The exact same lineage of Indian masters is also mentioned in Padma dkar po's (sixteenth century) *Dpe med 'tsho'i lugs kyi mal 'byor yan lag drug pa'i khrid rdo rje'i tshig 'byed*.²²

Earlier Tibetan historians of Buddhism in India and Tibet recorded a shorter branch of Anupamarakṣita's lineage in India. In his *Dpe med 'tsho'i sbyor drug gi br gyud pa*, included in the *Gsang sngags rgyud sde bzhi'i gzungs 'bum*,²³ Bu ston offers the following list for the Indian masters following the lineage of Anupamarakṣita: Anupamarakṣita—Śrīdhara—Bhāskaradeva—Dharmākaraśānti—Raviśrījñāna—Ratnarakṣita—Vibhūticandra. This line of Indian Buddhist masters ends with Vibhūticandra (twelfth–thirteenth centuries). According to Padma gar dbang,²⁴ Vibhūticandra received his *Kālacakratantra* initiation and teachings from three Indian scholars: Śākyasrībhadrā, the *mahā-panḍita* of Kāśmīr,²⁵ who was his principal spiritual mentor, Vikhyātaśānti, and Dharmadāsa. In Nepal, he mastered the *Kālacakratantra* under the guidance of Ratnarakṣita, the Newari *mahā-panḍita*, from whom he received the teachings of the six-phased *yoga* of the *Kālacakratantra* in the tradition of Anupamarakṣita. During his stay in Nepal, Vibhūticandra became an expert in the *Kālacakratantra* and in the practice of the six-phased *yoga*. According to Padma gar dbang,²⁶ he wrote annotations to the *Kālacakratantra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*, which influenced later Tibetan translators and commentators on the *Kālacakratantra*. As one of the Indian *mahā-panḍitas*, Vibhūticandra visited Tibet three times and became fluent in the Tibetan language. He himself translated his *Ṣaḍaṅgayoganāma* (*Rnal 'byor yan lag drug pa*)²⁷ into Tibetan. According to the Tibetan six-phased *yoga* tradition, the *Ṣaḍaṅgayoganāma* is the direct transmission of the six-phased *yoga* practice that Vibhūticandra received from Śavaripa during his stay at Stham Bihar monastery in Kathmandu, upon which he attained *dhāraṇā*, the fourth phase of this *yoga*. In subsequent centuries, this text became one of the most important and authoritative texts for the direct transmission of the *Kālacakratantra*'s six-phased *yoga* in Tibet, especially in the Jonangpa tradition. According to Tāranātha,²⁸ the teachings on the six-phased *yoga* that Śavaripa revealed to Vibhūticandra were based on the *dohas* of Saraha, and Saraha's yogic practice itself was based on the six-phased *yoga*.

In the *Sbyor ba yan lag drug gi rdzogs rim gyi gnad bsdu pa*, Tshong kha pa²⁹ (fourteenth–fifteenth centuries), following his teacher Bu ston, cites the Indian lineage of Anupamarakṣita in this way: Anupamarakṣita—Śrīdhara—Bhāskaradeva—Dharmākaraśānti—Raviśrījñāna—Ratnarakṣita—Vibhūticandra.

The Nature of Syncretism in the Kālacakratantra

Reading the *Kālacakratantra*, one immediately notices its prominent, syncretistic character, but close examination of this *tantra* and its commentarial literature reveals that the Kālacakra tradition has preserved a distinctively Buddhist orientation, and that its affiliation with non-Buddhist Indian systems is in form rather than content. The syncretism of this tantric system is a self-conscious absorption, or appropriation, of the modes of expression that are characteristic of the rival religious systems of India. This self-conscious syncretism variously permeates several areas of the *Kālacakratantra*, such as its theoretical system, language, medicine, and cosmology; and it is often inextricably related to Buddhist tantric conversionary efforts. For this reason, the term syncretism does not quite fit this tradition, whose rhetorical strategies and linguistic divergences, though cleverly disguised, are firmly rooted in Buddhist doctrine. The Kālacakra tradition expressly justifies its adaptive character as a skillful means for leading individuals of diverse mental dispositions to spiritual maturation. The *Paramādibuddhatantra* asserts that “one should teach the Dharma in whatever manner matures sentient beings.”¹

The conversionary mission of the *Kālacakratantra* is not the sole basis of its syncretistic character. The growing pluralism within the inner life of Indian Mahāyāna communities could have been another contributing factor in the proliferation of syncretism, for the flourishing of religious pluralism often makes syncretism a necessity rather than just a possibility. The pluralism that is characteristic of Indian tantric Buddhism can be described as a self-conscious recognition that although the Buddhist tradition is shared by all the members of a specific Buddhist community, the way it is interpreted, analyzed, and experienced differs within that community. It seems that the Kālacakra tradition tried to find grounds for dialogue with other Buddhist and non-Buddhist systems without ignoring their differences; while at the same time, it was apprehensive about losing its own distinct identity. Its ambivalence with regard to its own syncretism is evident throughout the *Kālacakratantra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*. For example, while refuting the particular views of the Indian non-Buddhist and the so-called Buddhist heterodox schools, the *Kālacakratantra* states:

through intermarriages. Likewise, the mutual pervasiveness of the mind and body of the Buddha and the interdependence of the thirty-seven factors of awakening represent the ultimate unity of the society, which is characterized by the interdependence and pervasiveness of its thirty-six social classes. Similarly, the mutual relations and influences of the individual, the cosmos, and time parallel those in the society. Thus, the organization and functions of the different members of the social body are nondual from the structure and functions of the different members of the bodies of the individual, the cosmos, and enlightened awareness. By identifying Indian society with the individual, the cosmos, time, and ultimate reality in the above-illustrated ways, the Kālacakra tradition demonstrates its vision of the ideal society and its potential, and it provides its rationale for that vision. Just as the transformation and unification of the various components of one's own mind and body on this tantric path transform one's experience of one's natural environment, so it transforms one's experience of one's social environment. Likewise, in this tantric tradition, the unification of all the phenomenal and ultimate aspects of the *vajra*-family, which abolishes all dualities, is nothing other than the state of self-knowing: the state of knowing oneself as the cosmos, society, individual, and enlightened awareness; and that self-knowledge is what is meant by omniscience (*sarva-jñatā*) in the tradition of the *Kālacakratantra*.

The Gnostic Body

The Kālacakratantra as a Buddhist Gnostic System

The twentieth-century discoveries of the Nag Hammadi Codices (Upper Egypt, 1945), and the Manichean texts of Inner Asia (Taklamakan desert, 1902–1914) have given rise to the contemporary view of gnosticism as a world religion rather than a mere heretical formulation of Christianity. This new awareness of the temporal and geographical, as well as the theoretical and practical diversity of gnosticism, has aroused great interest in that tradition among contemporary scholars of religions. At present, there is a wide range of translations of gnostic texts and secondary literature on gnosticism.

Fairly recent endeavors of Buddhist scholars in preparing new editions and definitive translations of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist *tantras* are bringing to light diverse and intriguing aspects of tantric Buddhism. Some Buddhist *tantras*, especially the *tantras* of the *anuttara-yoga* class, show a strong affinity with the gnostic views of the individual and the universe and striking similarities with practices of various non-Indian gnostic groups. Likewise, due to their strong emphasis on the soteriological significance of realizing gnosis (*jñāna*), the unmediated knowledge of absolute reality, the *anuttara-yoga-tantras* can justifiably be considered as religious treatises of a Buddhist gnostic tradition in India. The interpretation of gnosis as intuitive knowledge, knowledge or a vision of oneself as a spiritual reality, and the view of the universe as the macrocosm of that reality are found equally in Jewish and Christian forms of gnosticism, in eastern Manicheism, and in the *anuttara-yoga-tantras*. Similarly, the view of gnosis as distinct from reflective knowledge, namely, wisdom that is acquired through study and investigation, is common to the aforementioned gnostic traditions. I will attempt to demonstrate here that the Kālacakra tradition in India is an authentic gnostic tradition of Indian Buddhism and that gnosticism manifested itself in a greater variety of forms and localities than many scholars have originally thought.

While using the term “gnosticism” as a typological category, I am fully aware that

this term is a modern construct that does not accurately define all of the traditions and sources regularly classified as “gnostic.” The term “gnosticism” has often been used as an umbrella term for various systems of belief and multilayered traditions of thought that were held together by gnosis. One of the most renowned scholars of gnosticism, Hans Jonas, asserts that we can speak of gnostic schools, sects, and cults, of gnostic writings and teachings, of gnostic myths and speculations in the sense that they share the following common features: (1) the emphasis on gnosis as the means for attaining liberation or as the form of liberation itself, and (2) the claim to the possession of gnosis.¹ This broad typological definition of gnosticism can most certainly be applied to the branch of tantric Buddhism that is represented in the *Kālacakratāntra* and other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*.

In the *Kālacakratāntra*, gnosis (*jñāna*), which is considered the ultimate reality, is the most crucial concept. As in other gnostic traditions, the main focus of the *Kālacakratāntra* is on gnosis as the *source* of the individual's aspiration for enlightenment, as the *means* leading to the fulfillment of that aspiration, and as the *fulfillment* of that aspiration. When this source of aspiration for spiritual awakening is brought forth, or made fully conscious, it liberates one from cyclic existence. But when it is not brought forth, or remains unconscious, it destroys the individual and keeps him in cyclic existence. Therefore, it is said that gnosis is the source of both cyclic existence and *nirvāṇa*. In this regard, the *Kālacakratāntra* fully accords with the writings of other gnostic systems, which also see gnosis as the source of sublime power, the ground of all being, and the potential for liberation or destruction, existing in a latent state within the psyche of all people. The *Gospel of Thomas* expresses it in this way:

If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you.²

Likewise, the *Kālacakratāntra*'s interpretation of gnosis as the ultimate support of the conceptual mind in which it expresses itself by means of thought resonates with the following passage from the Nag Hammadi text *Trimorphic Protennoia*:

I am perception and knowledge, uttering a Voice by means of Thought. [I] am the real Voice. I cry out in everyone, and they know that the seed dwells within.³

Or in the poem that is included in the longer version of the *Apochryphon of John*, the Revealer says the following:

And I entered in the midst of their prison, that is, the prison of their body. And I said, “You who hear, wake up from the heavy sleep!” And he wept and poured forth heavy tears, and then wiped them away and said, “Who is it that is calling my name? And from where does this hope come, since I am in the chains of the prison?”⁴

The Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the presence of pure and transcendent gnosis within every sentient being and within all things as their nature, even when not being yet realized as such, also accords with interpretations of gnosis in other gnostic texts. For example, in the *Gospel of Thomas*, Jesus says to his disciples who mistake salvation, or “Kingdom,” for a future event, that the Kingdom is inside them and also outside of them. He says further: “What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognize it.”⁵

Furthermore, in the same way that some Christian gnostic texts identify Jesus the teacher simply with “knowledge of the truth,”⁶ so the Kālacakra tradition identifies the Buddha Kālacakra with both knowledge (*jñāna*) and truth (*tattva*). For the Kālacakra tradition as well as all other gnostic traditions, knowledge of the truth can be actualized only by looking within, for one's own gnosis is ultimately one's own teacher. The *Kālacakratāntra* expresses this in the following manner:

What mother or father, what precious sons or daughters of yours, what brother or sister, what wife, what master or group of friends, having abandoned the path of truth, can remove [your] fear of death? . . .⁷

The Christian gnostic text the *Testimony of Truth* asserts that the gnostic is a disciple of his own mind, “the father of the truth.”⁸ Therefore, gnosis is nothing other than self-knowledge, insight into the depths of one's own being. As for all other gnostic traditions, so too for the Kālacakra tradition, the individual who lacks this knowledge is driven by impulses that he does not comprehend. One suffers due to ignorance regarding one's own divine nature. Therefore, ignorance of oneself is a form of self-destruction. To know oneself, one must first understand the elements of one's own natural environment and of one's own body. For this very reason, the first two chapters of the *Kālacakratāntra* focus on the exposition of the elemental nature of the cosmos and the individual and on the manner of their origination and destruction. In this respect, the *Kālacakratāntra* also shows a great affinity with other gnostic writings. The following passage from the Christian gnostic text the *Dialogue of the Savior* perfectly accords with the Kālacakra tradition's way of understanding oneself and the world in which one lives in terms of conventional reality.

. . . If one does not [understand] how the fire came to be, he will burn in it, because he does not know his root. If one does not first understand the water, he does not know anything. . . . If one does not understand how the wind that blows came to be, he will run with it. If one does not understand how the body that he wears came to be, he will perish with it. . . . Whoever does not understand how he came will not understand how he will go. . . .⁹

Just as in the context of Christian gnosticism, whoever achieves gnosis is no longer a Christian, but a Christ, so for the Kālacakra tradition, whoever actualizes gnosis is no longer a mere tantric Buddhist, but the Buddha Kālacakra. In other words, in these gnostic traditions, one becomes the transcendent reality that one perceives at the time of spiritual transformation. Having perceived oneself in this way, one perceives and knows all things in the same way. Likewise, just as in the *Kālacakratāntra*, so too in some Christian gnostic systems, the realization of gnosis entails the transcendence of all differentiations, or dualities, for it is the final integration of the knower and the known. One reads in the *Gospel of Thomas*:

When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same . . . then you will enter [the Kingdom].¹⁰

The *Kālacakratāntra* speaks of this nondual perception of the world in terms of seeing all things as being of the “same taste” (*sama-rasa*), the taste of gnosis.

There are many other “gnostic” features characterizing the Kālacakra tradition and other Buddhist tantric systems in India that are also characteristic of other ancient gnostic systems. Some of their common, gnostic characteristics are the following: (1) an affinity for the nonliteral significance of language and for the usage of symbolic language, (2) the assertion that the ultimate is essentially indescribable but can be imagined as androgynous, a dyad consisting of masculine and feminine elements, the Father and Mother, (3) the claim to the possession of esoteric teachings that are not intended for the general public but only for those who have proven themselves to be spiritually mature and qualified for receiving initiation, and (4) a subversive attitude with regard to the social hierarchy and the deconstruction of established, cultural norms, which can be escaped through ritual enactments.¹¹ A certain ambivalence with regard to the physical body is equally found in various Nag Hammadi texts, in the *Kālacakratantra*, and in other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*. On the one hand, these texts speak of the physical body as a “prison” and a source of suffering due to its weakness and impermanence; and on the other hand, they present the human body as a domain in which the convergence of the two realms—the utterly pure, transcendent realm and the impure, material realm—takes place. Just as the *Kālacakratantra* sees the human body as a microcosmic image of the external world and spiritual reality and the universe as the body of the Buddha Kālacakra, so some Jewish and Christian gnostic groups saw the human anatomy as a kind of a map of reality and the universe as a divine body. For example, according to Hippolytus, Nassesenes interpreted the biblical description of the Garden of Eden and its four rivers as the brain and the four senses, whereas Simonians interpreted the Garden as the womb, Eden as the placenta, and the river that flows out of Eden as the navel, which is divided into four channels—two arteries and two veins. Similar allegorical interpretation of the human body and anatomical interpretation of the environment are characteristic of many Buddhist and non-Buddhist *tantras*. Likewise, for many gnostic systems, as for the *Kālacakratantra* tradition, a goal is not only to transform the mind but also to transform the body itself.

There are also some commonalities regarding the methods of achieving gnosis. Even though most of the gnostic texts discovered at Nag Hammadi do not explain methods for realizing gnosis, the few texts that describe the practice of meditation and tonal recitations as the means of accessing inner gnosis show correspondences with the Kālacakra tradition and all other tantric systems.

The “Final Document” of the conference on gnosticism that was held in Messina, Italy, in 1966 proposes a working definition of gnosticism, according to which,

not every *gnosis* is Gnosticism, but only that which involves in this perspective the idea of the divine consubstantiality of the spark that is in need of being awakened and re-integrated. This *gnosis* of Gnosticism involves the divine identity of the *knower* (the Gnostic), the *known* (the divine substance of one's transcendent self), and the *means by which one knows* that *gnosis* as an implicit divine faculty is to be awakened and actualized. This *gnosis* is a revelation tradition of a different type from the Biblical and Islamic revelation tradition.¹²

As the aforementioned parallels suggest, and as the rest of this chapter will demonstrate, the above-given definition of the gnosis of gnosticism can easily be ap-

plied to the *Kālacakratantra*, even though the Kālacakra tradition does not call itself “gnostic.” Nowhere in the Kālacakra literature can one find explicit references to the tradition as a Buddhist gnosticism and to its adherents as gnostics, but this does not mean that this tantric tradition did not recognize its gnostic orientation. As the early Buddhist Pāli sources indicate, the earliest disciples of the Buddha never referred to themselves as Buddhists (*baudha*) but as disciples (*sāvaka*), monks (*bhikhu*), novices (*sāmaṇera*), mendicants (*paribājaka*), and so on. The absence of their self-designation as Buddhists by no means excludes their Buddhist self-identification. Moreover, one encounters in the *Vimalaprabhā* at least one implicit reference to the *Kālacakratantra* as a gnostic system. Defining the Kālacakra tradition as the Vajrayāna tradition that consists of the systems of *mantras* (*mantra-naya*) and of perfections (*pāramitā-naya*), the *Vimalaprabhā* interprets *mantra* as gnosis in the following manner: “*Mantra* is gnosis because it protects the mind.”¹³ In this way, the *Vimalaprabhā* implicitly defines the *Kālacakratantra* as a gnostic system (*jñāna-naya*).

The absence of the explicit self-designation “gnostic” is characteristic of most gnostic writings. Scholars of gnosticism point out that in all original gnostic writings of different gnostic traditions, the self-designation *gnostikos* nowhere appears. It is only in the works of the early Christian heresiologists, specifically, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius, that we read reports of the self-designation *gnostikos*. The contemporary American scholar of gnosticism Michael A. Williams asserts: “to the extent that ‘gnostic’ was employed as a self-designation, it ordinarily, or perhaps always, denoted a quality rather than a sectarian or socio-traditional identity.”¹⁴ This also seems to be the manner in which the Kālacakra tradition in India understood its gnostic character.

Some scholars of gnosticism, seeing the obvious similarities between Buddhist and Judeo-Christian gnosticism, have considered the possibility of Buddhist influence on gnostic communities in Alexandria, where Buddhist missionaries had been proselytizing for generations at the time when trade routes between the Greco-Roman world and Asia were opening up and gnosticism flourished (8–200 CE).¹⁵ Edward Conze also points to the possible influences of Buddhism on the Christian gnostic communities in South India, whose authoritative scripture was the *Gospel of Thomas*.¹⁶ However, for the time being, the lack of conclusive evidence leaves us uncertain as to whether their commonalities are due to mutual influences or whether they are expressions of the same issues taking different forms at different times and in various regions.

Likewise, the *Kālacakratantra*'s evident gnostic orientation and affinity with non-Buddhist gnostic traditions led some German scholars to suggest that Manicheism influenced the Kālacakra tradition in India and even tantric Buddhism as a whole.¹⁷ Their suggestions are not sufficiently substantiated, however, and need further, thorough investigation of all the relevant sources and a judicious and balanced treatment of the difficult issues pertaining to the question of the origins and historical development of the Kālacakra tradition and Manicheism.

The Manichean texts do inform us that after engaging in missionary activities in the Persian kingdom of the Sassanians, in 240 or 241, Mani visited India and the adjacent regions, known today as Beluchistan, where he converted a Buddhist king, the Tūrān Shāh. In the *Kephalaia*, 184. 12, Mani claims that during his visit to the Indus

valley, he “moved the whole land of India.”¹⁸ However, there is no evidence that Manichean communities lasted in India for a long period of time or that Manicheism exerted a noticeable influence on Buddhism. On the contrary, Manichean texts, such as the *Cologne Mani Codex*, indicate that already in its earliest phase in the Parthian East Iran, where Buddhism was well established, Mani’s disciples made an attempt to adopt Mahāyāna Buddhist ideas. Hans Klimkeit points out that as one looks first at the Parthian and then at the Sogdian and Turkish literature of Manicheism, one can observe the increasing adaptation of Eastern Manicheism to Buddhism. In different areas of the world, Manicheism freely adopted different symbols, myths, and languages of the coexisting traditions in those areas. For example, the Chinese Manichean source the *Hymnscroll* frequently speaks of the divine spark in man, or gnosis, as the “Buddha nature.” As Mani claimed that the knowledge that he received from God embraces all wisdom contained in earlier religious traditions, the Manichean church was allowed to embrace all earlier religious communities. Mani and his missionaries thought that it was necessary to appropriate symbols and ideas from other religious traditions in order to ensure the proliferation of Manicheism in the world. Consequently, the Manichean syncretism systematically integrated itself into new cultural domains. Like the Kālacakra tradition, it was self-consciously absorbent and did not resort to just disorganized and scattered cultural borrowings and reinterpretations. There is a striking similarity between Manicheism and the Kālacakra tradition with regard to their use of syncretism as a form of proselytism. In this regard, both traditions claimed their own universality and supremacy over other religious systems, on the grounds that other systems are parochially tied to particular places and cultures. Likewise, these two gnostic systems equally see the present state of the individual as characterized by a mixture of good and evil, of gnosis and matter, which are in constant opposition to each other, with the individual as their battlefield. The second chapter of the *Kālacakratāntra* depicts the individual as a battlefield, in which the war that will be waged between the Cakrī and the Barbarians in the land of Mecca is already taking place within the body of the individual. In that internal battlefield, Kalkī, who is the individual’s correct knowledge (*samyag-jñāna*), with his army’s four divisions¹⁹—the four Immeasurables—wages battle with the vicious king of the Barbarians, Kṛṇamati, who is the evil within one’s own body, the path of nonvirtue (*akuśala-patha*). Kṛṇamati’s fourfold army, which consists of the four classes of Māras in the body, is led by the general Aśvatthāma, who is one’s own spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*). Kalkī’s victory in this battle is the attainment of the path of liberation (*mokṣa-mārga*), and within the body the destruction of Aśvatthāma is the eradication of the fear of cyclic existence. The established lineages of Kalkī’s sons Brahmā and Sureśa are the pure Buddhas, who have become the nature of one’s psycho-physical aggregates, elements, and sense-bases.²⁰ Similarly, the *Kephalaia* warns that there are many powers in the body, who are its magnates that creep and walk in the body, wounding and destroying each other; however, the Mind of Light in the body acts like a soldier, releasing the body from sins and generating a new body and a new sense of self.²¹ Just like the gnosis of the *Kālacakratāntra*, the Manichean Mind of Light functions as the protector of the body and mind. The *Kephalaia* expresses it in this way:

Look, then, at how much the strength and diligence of the Mind of Light is upon all the watchtowers of the body. He stands before his camp. He shuts all the reasonings of the body from the attractions of sin. He limits them, scatters them, removes them by his will.²²

Thus, in the Kālacakra tradition and in Manicheism, the soteriological struggles in the external world are constantly being enacted in exact mimesis within one’s own body. The powers in the world and within the individual are interrelated and analogous. The analogy between the microcosm and macrocosm plays an important role in both traditions. Similarly, the liberation of the mind involves its freedom from their matter, which fetters the mind to sin. Therefore, the holders of both traditions were equally concerned with their bodies as with their minds.

These and other similarities between the *Kālacakratāntra* and eastern Manicheism do not constitute sufficient evidence for determining that the two traditions directly influenced each other. Rather, they suggest that their commonalities could have resulted from their independent reinterpretations of earlier Mahāyāna Buddhist concepts, which Manicheism liberally appropriated.

To determine the specific, gnostic orientation of the Kālacakra tradition, we must first understand the ways in which this tantric system interprets gnosis and its functions and delineates the practices for actualizing it.

The Individual, Gnosis, and the Individual as Gnosis

As in the case of other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*, the Kālacakra tradition’s interpretation of gnosis has an earlier precedent in the Mahāyāna’s interpretation of the perfection of wisdom—specifically, in the literature of the *Prajñāpāramitā* corpus. The internal evidence, however, indicates that its closest precedent is the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*’s presentation of the omniscient and innately pure gnosis (*jñāna*). The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* and the *Kālacakratāntra* are intimately related in terms of their expositions of the Jñānakāya. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* was traditionally included in the literary corpus of the Kālacakra tradition. Its close connection to the Kālacakra tradition is indicated by the *Vimalaprabhā* itself, which states that the *Kālacakratāntra* “is embraced by the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, which clarifies the Jñānakāya, Vajradhara.”²³ It asserts that the Tathāgata, having extracted the essence of the Bhagavān Vajradhara from all three Vehicles, illuminates the sublime, imperishable gnosis in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*. In this way, the *Vimalaprabhā* suggests that the essence of the Vajrayāna teachings lies at the heart of all Buddhist teachings. It also states that the Jñānakāya, which “is described by one hundred and sixty-two verses in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*,” is “called the *vajra*-word in every king of *tantras* (*tantra-rāja*)”²⁴—specifically, in the *Māyājāla* and in the *Samājā*, which it oddly classifies as the *kriyā* and *yoga-tantras*.²⁵ The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* itself also hints at its affiliation with the *Māyājālatantra*.²⁶

The *Vimalaprabhā* frequently cites such verses from the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* in order to support and elucidate the *Kālacakratāntra*’s theory of gnosis and the Jñānakāya. As the following analysis of the Kālacakra tradition’s discussion of gnosis will demonstrate, the Kālacakra tradition’s explanations of gnosis in terms of ultimate reality coincide at almost every point with the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*’s presen-

tation of gnosis as the gnostic being (*jñāna-sattva*), Vajrasattva, who is endowed with sublime bliss (*mahā-sukha*); as Vajradhara, who is self-arisen from space and therefore similar to space, eternal and nondual, who is thusness (*tathatā*), the completely auspicious (*samantabhadra*), great mind of the Buddhas, reality (*tattva*); and as the Ādibuddha, who is without beginning or end, the sublime breath (*mahā-śvāsa*), established within the minds of all sentient beings, and so on. Likewise, both the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* and the *Ādibuddhatantra* make almost identical references to the Jñānakāya as “the beginningless and endless Buddha, Ādibuddha,” as “the five-syllable great emptiness (*mahā-śūnya*) and the six-syllable drop-emptiness (*bindu-śūnya*),”²⁷ and the like.

Gnosis as the All-Pervading Mind and as the Four Bodies of the Buddha

There are many ways in which gnosis is referred to and explained in the Indian sources of the *Kālacakratāntra* tradition. It is primarily interpreted as the mind (*citta*) that brings forth immutable bliss as the desired result, and as the mind that is the result itself, namely, the mind of immutable bliss.²⁸ Thus, gnosis is seen as the unity (*ekatva*) of two aspects of the mind, which are the cause and result of spiritual awakening. From that vantage point, gnosis is also referred to as the supreme and indestructible *vajra-yoga* consisting of wisdom (*prajñā*) and method (*upāya*), or emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*). Emptiness, which is its reflection, or form (*bimba*), is the cause; and compassion, which is indestructible bliss, is the result. Gnosis is the nondual *yoga* of these two. As such, it is identified as the unified mind that is free of momentariness and any causal relation (*niranvaya*), and lacks an inherent existence (*svabhāva*).²⁹ It is free of momentariness in the sense that for gnosis there is no origination, duration, or cessation of any phenomenon, although by its efficacy all worlds and everything in them arise and cease.³⁰ It is free of causal relations in the sense that it transcends all conceptual classifications. The *Ādibuddhatantra* describes it in the following way:

It has passed beyond [the designations:] “It exists” and “It does not exist.” It is the cessation of existence and non-existence. It is nondual. It is the *vajra-yoga* that is non-differentiated from emptiness and compassion. It is the supreme bliss.

It has transcended the reality of atoms. It is devoid of empty *dharma*s. It is free of eternity and annihilation. It is the *vajra-yoga* that is without causal relations.³¹

In the Kālacakra literature, gnosis of the indivisible, supreme, and imperishable (*akṣara*) bliss is given different names in accordance with its qualities and functions. Thus, it is called the “*vajra*,” and one who has it is referred to as a *vajrī* (“one who has a *vajra*”). *Vajra* is characterized as indestructible (*akṣara*) since it is imperishable and does not go anywhere. Therefore, in the literary corpus of the *Kālacakratāntra*, the word “imperishable” always designates supreme, imperishable bliss and gnosis of that bliss.

Gnosis is also called a *mantra* due to its function of protecting the mind. Likewise, it is called “spiritual knowledge” (*vidyā*) of the individual and the “perfection

of wisdom” (*prajñā-pāramitā*). It is termed the “the great seal” (*mahā-mudrā*), for it is believed that there is nothing beyond it. Similarly, it is referred to as the *dharma-dhātu*, the Sahajakāya (“The Innate Body”), the Jñānakāya (“Gnosis-body”), or the Viśuddhakāya (“Pure Body”). It is identified as the couple, Vajrasattva and Mātā, which evades the dependently arisen sense-faculties because it has transcended the reality of atoms (*paramāṇu-dharmatā*) and because it is like a dream or an image in a prognostic mirror. It is of the nature of the aggregates (*skandha*) and sense-bases (*āyatana*), which are free of obscurations (*āvaraṇa*) and have become of the same taste (*sama-rasa*). On that ground, they are called “supreme and indestructible” (*paramākṣara*). The supreme, indestructible is designated as the letter *a*, the Samyakṣambudha, Vajrasattva, the androgynous state, the Bhagavān Kālacakra.³²

Gnosis is the mind, radiant by nature and devoid of the impurities of habitual propensities (*vāsanā*) of transmigratory existence. This pure mind is not characterized by any form, for it is devoid of atomic particles, nor is it characterized by formlessness, for its “form” is emptiness.³³ Thus, being devoid of both form and formlessness, it is like a reflection in a prognostic mirror.

Gnosis transcends the duality of subject and object, for it is simultaneously both knowledge (*jñāna*) and the object of knowledge (*jñeya*). As the subject and the object of knowledge, it is free of conceptualizations (*vikalpa*) and atomic matter (*paramāṇu-dravya*). Although gnosis is free of conceptualizations, it is not devoid of mentation (*cintanā*) because unlike the state of deep sleep, it is self-aware (*sva-saṃvedya*).³⁴ But its self-awareness does not preclude the fact that gnosis is the knowledge of the absence of the inherent existence of all phenomena. Moreover, it is precisely the self-awareness and natural luminosity of the Tathāgata’s gnosis that enable the Tathāgata to teach Dharma in accordance with the mental dispositions of sentient beings. This self-awareness of the Tathāgata is not affected by the sense-faculties, so it is partless, all-pervasive, free of obscurations, and aware of the nature of all *dharma*s, which are themselves unconscious due to lacking self-awareness. The independence of self-awareness from the sense-faculties implies that one does not require a physical body in order to remove mental obscurations and experience the self-awareness of the gnosis of sublime, imperishable bliss due to the unification of one’s own mind with the appearances (*pratibhāsa*) of that mind. According to this tantric system, gnosis can become self-aware through the mind alone, due to the efficacy of the adventitious (*āgantuka*), habitual propensities of the mind (*citta-vāsanā*). The adventitious, habitual propensities of the mind are the so-called psycho-physical aggregates, elements, and sense-bases. Under their influence, feelings of happiness and suffering enter the mind. Experiences in the dreaming state attest to the fact that the mind can become self-aware in the absence of a physical body in the dream. In the dreaming state, a dream body, which consists of the habitual propensities of the mind and is devoid of agglomerations of atoms, suffers injury or experiences great pleasure, and consequently, feelings of suffering or pleasure enter the mind of the dreamer, and self-awareness as knowledge of one’s own suffering or happiness takes place. But this all occurs without the dreamer’s actual body experiencing injury or pleasure. The *Vimalaprabhā* refers to this ability of the mind as a “great miracle,” which even the learned cannot fathom. It comments that if this limited knowledge is difficult to grasp for the learned, then how much more difficult it is for foolish people to understand

“the completely auspicious (*samantabhadra*) gnosis of sublime, imperishable bliss, the *yogī*’s self-awareness, which arises from the habitual propensities that are free of obscurations and which transcends the habitual propensities of transmigratory existence.” To those who may assert that the mind’s ability for self-awareness entails the presence of a physical body, claiming that dreaming, waking, and deep sleep arise in dependence upon the inhalations and exhalations in the body, the *Vimalaprabhā* poses the following questions and arguments:

If the dreaming state does not arise in the mind without inhalations and exhalations, then how is it possible that without inhalations and exhalations, the appearance of the mind occurs up to one watch of the day in the unconscious state of death? How is it possible that the body, which is being led to the city of Yama by the messengers of Yama, in accordance with the injunction of king Yama, comes into existence? How is it that king Yama also appears in the city of Yama; and how is it that Yama examines the sins and virtues of the body that has been brought? Upon examining [the sins and virtues], he says: “Because the life of this one has not yet been exhausted, swiftly take this person to the world of mortals so that his body may not perish! This is the task of Yama’s messengers. In accordance with their task, the messengers of Yama throw that body into the world of mortals. Once it is thrown there, then due to the power of the habitual propensities of the mind, the inhalations and exhalations of that body reoccur. Afterwards, due to the efficacy of a different habitual propensity, the waking state occurs. After the mind’s awakening into the waking state, that [person] informs his relatives about king Yama. Therefore, without the body and without the inhalations and exhalations, the adventitious, habitual propensities of the mind arise due to the power of rebirths, and they are not inherent to sentient beings. . . . Thus, due to the power of the habitual propensities of the mind and not due to acquiring a body of atoms, the gnosis of wisdom (*prajñā-jñāna*) becomes self-awareness.”³⁵

As the last line of this passage indicates, in this tantric tradition, the Buddha’s self-awareness is also understood as the gnosis (*jñāna*), or awareness, of his own wisdom (*prajñā*) that perceives the empty nature of all phenomena.

The *Vimalaprabhā* also criticizes those who argue that because during the experience of sexual bliss in a dream, it is the dreamer’s physical body that emits semen and not the dream body, the self-awareness of the mind arises due to the capacity of the physical body and not due to the capacity of the mind. It rebuts their argument by asserting that even formless beings, whose bodies are composed of the space-element alone, also emit semen (which consists of the space-element) under the influence of the habitual propensities of their minds. It argues that if the emission of semen could not occur without a physical body, then formless beings would not emit semen, and thus would not be subject to the cycle of transmigration. Since formless beings are subject to the cycle of transmigration, they must experience the gnosis of bliss and seminal emission, and thus, seminal emission must arise due to the capacity of the mind and not the physical body.³⁶

For this tantric system, gnosis is Buddhahood, the ultimate reality (*paramārtha*) of the Buddhas, thusness (*tathatā*), which is directly perceived³⁷ and whose nature is supreme, immutable bliss. That reality is a life-principle, or a sublime *prāṇa* (*mahā-prāṇa*), which pervades the entire universe, manifesting itself in different forms. As

such, it is said to be present within the heart of every sentient being.³⁸ As a sublime *prāṇa*, it is recognized as the source of all utterances, even though it is unutterable itself.

As the pervader of everything, gnosis is recognized as the sixth element, the element of gnosis (*jñāna-dhātu*), or *dharma-dhātu*, which exists in the other five elements—earth, water, fire, wind, and space—and is also their beginning (*ādi*). The Kālacakra tradition views the gnosis-element as the birthplace (*yonī*) of all phenomena on the ground that it is primordially unoriginated. This view has its precedent in the Mahāyāna view of the *dharma-dhātu*, as presented in the *Mahāyānābhīdharmasūtra*, which reads:

The beginningless *dhātu* is the common basis of all phenomena. Because it exists, there is every state of existence and the attainment of *nirvāṇa* as well.³⁹

The aforementioned explanation of the gnosis-element in the Kālacakra tradition indicates that the word *dhātu* in the compounds *jñāna-dhātu* and *dharma-dhātu* is understood in three ways—as the ingredient, as the cause, and as the locus; whereas, in the *Mahāyānābhīdharmasūtra*, the word *dhātu* seems to be understood in just two ways—as the locus and as the cause. The gnosis-element as the component of phenomenal existence has two aspects: atemporal and temporal. Although the gnosis-element as the beginningless source of phenomenal existence is atemporal, it appears as temporal when it arises in the impermanent body of the individual. In its temporal appearance, the gnosis-element, like the other five elements, originates in the body from one of the six flavors—specifically from the sour flavor, provided by the embryo’s nourishment through the mother’s food and drink.⁴⁰ From that temporal gnosis-element within the body arise sexual bliss, which is a phenomenal aspect of gnosis, the individual’s mental faculty (*mano-indriya*), and sound (*śabda*). These three are identified with the gnosis-element from which they originate. As the mental faculty, the gnosis-element apprehends the *dharma-dhātu*, which arises from the space-element (*ākāśa-dhātu*); and as sound, it is apprehended by the auditory sense-faculty, which also arises from the space-element.⁴¹ In light of this, one may infer that within the body of the individual, the gnosis-element, being the apprehending subject (*grāhaka*) of the space-element and the apprehended object (*grāhya*) of the space-element, bears the characteristics of the space-element. Thus, being like the space-element, gnosis is indestructible and eternal. However, one does not experience one’s own gnosis-element as such until one’s own “gnosis merges with the form of emptiness (*śūnyatā-bimba*),” meaning, until the mind as the apprehending subject (*grāhaka*) merges into the appearance of the mind as the apprehended object (*grāhya*) and “becomes of the same taste (*sama-rasa*)—imperishable and eternal.”⁴² The merging of gnosis into space, which is an empty *dharma* from which all phenomena arise just as a sprout arises from a seed,⁴³ is understood here as emptiness. This awareness of the ultimate absence of the origination and cessation of all phenomena is the appearance of one’s own mind. It is gnosis, the indestructible bliss. Thus, when one’s own gnosis merges into its own appearance, which is nothing other than the absence of the origination and cessation of all phenomena, it becomes of the same taste, due not to a causal, or generative, relation with regard to its own reflection, but due to being unified in the appearance of one’s own mind.⁴⁴

The *Vimalaprabhā* interprets the *Kālacakratānta*'s characterization of gnosis as eternal (*śāśvata*) in terms of its freedom from obscurations (*nirāvaraṇa*).⁴⁵ In this way, it points to the lack of contradiction of this characterization of gnosis with the earlier quoted statement from the *Ādibuddhatantra*, which defines gnosis as "free of eternity (*śāśvata*) and annihilation (*uccheda*)" in terms of eluding any categorization.

Gnosis also transcends all classifications with regard to its grounding, for it does not abide in *nirvāṇa* or *saṃsāra*. A closer look at the *Kālacakratānta*'s interpretation of gnosis reveals that for this tantric tradition, gnosis is not grounded in either one of these two because in its empty aspect, it is devoid of *nirvāṇa* and in its blissful aspect, it transcends *saṃsāra*. This interpretation of the manner in which gnosis abides neither in *nirvāṇa* nor in *saṃsāra* is also expressed by the following verse from the *Sekoddeśa*, which states:

Its form (*bimba*) is devoid of *nirvāṇa*, and indestructible [bliss] transcends *saṃsāra*.
The union of these two, which is devoid of eternalism (*śāśvata*) and nihilism (*uccheda*), is nondual and without parallel.⁴⁶

The same text explains further that this interpretation does not imply that the form of emptiness (*śūnyatā-bimba*) enters *saṃsāra* and indestructible bliss enters *nirvāṇa*. Instead, these two aspects of gnosis are "mutually embraced and peaceful, the supreme state of androgyny."⁴⁷

Although gnosis itself is not grounded in *saṃsāra* or *nirvāṇa*, it is called *saṃsāra* when it manifests as the universe with its atoms, stars, planets, mountains, rivers, sentient beings, and so forth; and it is called *nirvāṇa* when it appears as complete knowledge (*parijñāna*) of cyclic existence. The complete knowledge of cyclic existence is the perception of the three realms—the desire, form, and formless realms—as they are within the three times: past, present, and future.⁴⁸

This view of gnosis as the omnipresent mind of the Buddha, which simultaneously transcends the cycle of transmigration and is immanent within it, is similar to panentheism, the view that the finite universe lies within God, who is unbounded and infinite. However, the Kālacakra tradition goes beyond panentheism by interpreting gnosis not only as being *immanent* within the inanimate universe and within every sentient being, but also as *manifested* in the form of the phenomenal existence. It asserts that the three realms of cyclic existence are the form (*rūpa*) of Vajrasattva because gnosis dwells with great bliss within the nature of all things.⁴⁹ Likewise, the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that "conventional reality has the form of emptiness and emptiness has the form of conventional reality,"⁵⁰ since gnosis is free of atoms and yet it is found in emptiness. This conviction that the entire cosmos is a manifestation of gnosis underlies the *Kālacakratānta*'s theory of the cosmos as the macrocosmic aspect of the individual and its presence within the body of the individual.

One may ask here: If gnosis is the source and ontological reality of everything, what are the implications for Buddhist claims about identitylessness (*nairātmya*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*)? The *Kālacakratānta* indirectly addresses this question in a number of ways, which will be indicated later. Primarily, though, it addresses this question by identifying gnosis with the blissful aspect of the mind, which is nondual from the emptiness of inherent existence of that mind, and it thereby evades reification. It asserts that there is neither a Buddha nor enlightenment, since "the entire uni-

verse is empty, devoid of reality and of the nature of the appearances of things."⁵¹ In this way, the *Kālacakratānta*'s theory of gnosis as the reality that transcends all conceptual constructs, including those of existence and nonexistence, in no way contradicts the Madhyamaka themes of identitylessness and emptiness. The *Vimalaprabhā* explicitly states that gnosis lacks inherent existence since gnosis is endowed with all aspects (*sarvākāra*), just as it lacks shape and yet it gives rise to all manners of shapes.⁵² Likewise, as in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, so in this tantric system, gnosis is interpreted as the awareness that transcends the reality of consciousness (*viññāna-dharmatā*), which is ascertained by the Yogācāra school.⁵³

According to this tantric system, gnosis is not only the ontological reality of everything there is, but it is also "the supreme goal" (*mahārtha*) to be realized by the tantric adept. It is the Buddha Kālacakra,⁵⁴ who is seen as both "the self (*ātman*) of one's own body, speech, mind, and passion"⁵⁵ and as "the supreme, immutable bliss characterized by perfect awakening in a single moment" (*eka-kṣaṇābhisambodhi*).⁵⁶ Perfect awakening in a single moment is interpreted here as the mind that is free of momentary phenomena (*ksaṇa-dharma*) and is designated as "the lack of inherent existence" (*niḥsvabhāva*).⁵⁷ It is gnosis called "reality" (*tattva*) that is devoid of one or many moments.⁵⁸

As supreme, immutable bliss, gnosis is also the means by which the tantric adept realizes that goal. The tantric adept attains perfect awakening in a single moment by bringing forth 21,600 moments of supreme, immutable bliss. For this reason, the Kālacakra literature also defines gnosis as "the path of the Jina"⁵⁹ and as "the path of liberation, which, embraced by wisdom, or emptiness, is one's own mind that has entered innate bliss."⁶⁰

Furthermore, the Kālacakra tradition presents gnosis not only as the goal to be attained and as the path to that goal, but also as the discourse of the *Kālacakratānta* and as its original teacher. Such an interpretation of gnosis reminds one of Dignāga's explanation of the perfection of wisdom (*prajñā-pāramitā*), given in the *Prajñāpāramitāpiṇḍārtha*. According to Dignāga, the perfection of wisdom is nondual knowledge, the Tathāgata, the text of the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*, and the path toward that nondual knowledge.⁶¹ The Kālacakra tradition's identification of gnosis with the perfection of wisdom indicates that its presentation of gnosis as the enlightened teacher and teaching is most intimately related to the aforementioned Mahāyāna's interpretation of the perfection of wisdom.

In this tantric system, gnosis is described not only in terms of the mind but also in terms of the body. The *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that apart from the body, there is no other Buddha who is the pervader (*vyāpaka*) and the bestower of liberation. The elements of the body that are free of obscurations (*nirāvaraṇa*) are the bestowers of Buddhahood and liberation.⁶²

For this and other related tantric systems, due to the mental dispositions of sentient beings, gnosis, the bliss of ultimate reality, manifests in sentient beings born from a womb as the four types of bliss—namely, bliss (*ānanda*), supreme bliss (*paramānanda*), extraordinary bliss (*viramānanda*), and innate bliss (*sahajānanda*).⁶³ Each of these four types of bliss has four aspects: a bodily, verbal, mental, and gnostic aspect. For this reason, gnosis manifests with sixteen aspects of bliss altogether. These sixteen aspects of gnosis are none other than the body, speech, mind, and

gnosis of the four bodies of the Buddha: namely, the Sahajakāya, Dharmakāya, Saṃbhogakāya, and Nirmāṇakāya. The sixteen aspects of bliss are said to appear in these four bodies according to the superior aspirations (*adhimukti*) of sentient beings. Thus, the aspect in which this unified and indivisible reality, named gnosis, will appear to the individual is determined by the individual's own dispositions and degree of spiritual maturation. Although the four bodies of the Buddha manifest and function in different ways, they are of the same nature and are mutually pervasive.

The Kālacakra tradition's theory of the manifestation of the sixteen aspects of gnosis in terms of both conventional (*saṃvṛti-satya*) and ultimate realities (*paramārtha-satya*) is schematically presented in table 7.1.

The sixteen facets of the four bodies of the Buddha (listed in the second column of the following table) arise when the sixteen types of bliss that characterize the body of the individual cease. Thus, the sixteen types of bliss of the individual are the impure, or perishable, aspects of the sixteen facets of the sublime, imperishable bliss (*mahākṣara-sukha*) of the Sahajakāya. They become purified due to the cessation of bodily semen having sixteen parts, which are the internal sixteen digits of the moon. Due to the purification of semen, one becomes the Buddha Kālacakra, whom the *Vimalaprabhā* characterizes in this respect as "the stainless light of the vajra-moon," using the words of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*'s eulogy of the gnostic being, Mañjuśrī.⁶⁴ The *Vimalaprabhā* indicates that this classification of the gnostic vajra of the Buddha, which has sixteen types of bliss, has its precedent in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s characterization of Mañjuśrī as one who "knows the reality with sixteen aspects."⁶⁵ However, as indicated in the introductory chapter, the *Nāmasaṃgīti* (182. 5. 2) interprets these sixteen aspects of reality not in terms of bliss but in terms of emptiness.

With regard to the spiritually awakened ones, the sixteen facets of the four bodies of the Buddha are seen as the four types of unions (*yoga*), due to the classification of the four bodies of the Buddha. In terms of ordinary human beings, the aforementioned sixteen types of bliss are also characterized as the four *yogas*—the *yogas* of the body, speech, mind, and gnosis—in accordance with the classification of the waking, dreaming, sleeping, and the fourth state of the mind.⁶⁶

In order to understand the Kālacakra tradition's concept of gnosis in terms of ultimate reality, one needs to look first at its most unmediated aspects and functions as expressed in the four bodies of the Buddha. Emphasizing the indestructibility of the four bodies of the Buddha, the Kālacakra tradition often depicts them as the four *vajras*—specifically, as the gnosis-*vajra*, the mind-*vajra*, speech-*vajra*, and the body-*vajra*. The *Kālacakratāntra* demarcates the four *vajras* in the following way:

The body-*vajra* of the Jina, which has all aspects, is inconceivable in terms of sense-objects and sense-faculties. The speech-*vajra* accomplishes Dharma by means of utterances in the hearts of all sentient beings. The mind-*vajra* of the Vajrī, which is the nature of the minds of sentient beings, is present throughout the entire earth. That which, like a pure gem, apprehends phenomena is the gnosis-*vajra*.⁶⁷

On the premise that gnosis is constantly present in every sentient being born from the womb, the *Kālacakratāntra* asserts that those four *vajras* are perpetually present in all such sentient beings, but not in a fully manifested form. Their presence in every individual is attested by one's capacities of the body, speech, mind, and gnosis,

TABLE 7.1 The Sixteen Aspects (*ṣoḍaśākārā*) of Gnosis (*jñāna*)

The sixteen aspects of gnosis in terms of conventional reality	The sixteen aspects of gnosis in terms of the ultimate reality
The Four Types of Bliss (<i>ānanda</i>) the bliss of the mind (<i>cittānanda</i>) the bliss of the body (<i>kāyānanda</i>) the bliss of speech (<i>vāg-ānanda</i>) the bliss of gnosis (<i>jñānānanda</i>)	The Four Aspects of the Sahajakāya the Sahaja-Body (<i>sahaja-kāya</i>) the Sahaja-Mind (<i>sahaja-citta</i>) the Sahaja-Speech (<i>sahaja-vāc</i>) the Sahaja-Gnosis (<i>sahaja-jñāna</i>)
The Four Types of Supreme Bliss (<i>paramānanda</i>) the supreme bliss of the body (<i>kāya-paramānanda</i>) the supreme bliss of the mind (<i>citta-paramānanda</i>) the supreme bliss of speech (<i>vāc-paramānanda</i>) the supreme bliss of gnosis (<i>jñāna-paramānanda</i>)	The Four Aspects of the Dharmakāya the Dharma-body (<i>dharma-kāya</i>) the Dharma-mind (<i>dharma-citta</i>) the Dharma-speech (<i>dharma-vāc</i>) the Dharma-gnosis (<i>dharma-jñāna</i>)
The Four Types of Extraordinary Bliss (<i>viramānanda</i>) the extraordinary bliss of the body (<i>kāya-viramānanda</i>) the extraordinary bliss of the mind (<i>citta-viramānanda</i>) the extraordinary bliss of speech (<i>vāg-viramānanda</i>) the extraordinary bliss of gnosis (<i>jñāna-viramānanda</i>)	The Four Aspects of the Saṃbhogakāya the Saṃbhoga-body (<i>sambhoga-kāya</i>) the Saṃbhoga-mind (<i>sambhoga-citta</i>) the Saṃbhoga-speech (<i>sambhoga-vāc</i>) the Saṃbhoga-gnosis (<i>sambhoga-jñāna</i>)
The Four Types of Innate Bliss (<i>sahajānanda</i>) the innate bliss of the body (<i>kāya-sahajānanda</i>) the innate bliss of the mind (<i>citta-sahajānanda</i>) the innate bliss of speech (<i>vāc-sahajānanda</i>) the innate bliss of gnosis (<i>jñāna-sahajānanda</i>)	The Four Aspects of the Nirmāṇakāya the Nirmāṇa-body (<i>nirmāṇa-kāya</i>) the Nirmāṇa-mind (<i>nirmāṇa-citta</i>) the Nirmāṇa-speech (<i>nirmāṇa-vāc</i>) the Nirmāṇa-gnosis (<i>nirmāṇa-jñāna</i>)

in the four states of the mind—waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and the fourth state, the state of sexual bliss—and in the classification of the four limbs of the individual. Within the ordinary human being, the four *vajras* are located within the four respective *cakras* in the navel, heart, throat, and forehead. The four *vajras* are the seats of the twelve links of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Thus, spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*), karmic formations (*saṃskāra*), and consciousness (*vijñāna*) are in the gnosis-*vajra*. The mind-and-body (*nāma-rūpa*), six sense-bases (*ṣaḍ-āyatana*), and sensory contacts (*spṛṣa*) are in the body-*vajra*. Feeling (*vedanā*), craving (*tṛṣṇā*), and grasping onto existence (*upādāna*) are in the speech-*vajra*. Becoming (*bhava*), birth

(*jāti*), aging (*jarā*), and death (*maraṇa*) are in the mind-*vajra*. In this way, the twelve links of dependent origination are the twelve impure aspects of the four *vajras*. When the twelve links of dependent origination, the bodily *prāṇas*, and uterine blood cease, that is to say, when they become the twelve facets of perfect awakening, the four *vajras* of the individual manifest as the four purified *vajras*, or the four bodies, of the Buddha Kālacakra. In this regard, the *Vimalaprabhā* resorts again to the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*'s description of Majñuśrī, by characterizing the Buddha Kālacakra as "the *vajra*-sun, the supreme light."⁶⁸ These twelve aspects of the individual's and the Buddha's four *vajras* are considered to be the twelve conventional aspects of the supreme, indestructible bliss of sentient beings and Buddhas.⁶⁹

On the basis of the belief that the gnostic *vajra* generates sexual bliss, it is considered as the "progenitor" of the twelve links of dependent origination. This view of the gnosis-*vajra* as the fundamental cause of the twelve links of dependent origination indicates that all other *vajras* of the individual's body are simply different manifestations of a single gnosis-*vajra*, which has the twelve links of dependent origination as its twelve phenomenal aspects.⁷⁰ This fourfold classification of the gnosis-*vajra* corresponds to the Kālacakra tradition's identification of the Jñānakāya with the other three bodies of the Buddha.

Furthermore, it is also believed that the efficacy of the four drops (*bindu*) generates the twelve links of dependent origination. The four drops are physical composites of the size of a small seed, which consist of red and white drops of the semen and uterine blood. They are pervaded by very subtle *prāṇas* and located within the four earlier-mentioned *cakras*. Each of the four *bindus* has its own specific capacities that may manifest differently, depending on whether or not they are affected by the habitual propensities of spiritual ignorance (*avidyā-vāsanā*). For example, the drop in the *lalāṭa* has the capacity to bring forth appearances to the mind. When this drop is affected by the habitual propensities of spiritual ignorance, it brings forth impure appearances of phenomena to the mind, and it produces the waking state when most of the *prāṇas* converge in the *lalāṭa*. When this drop becomes purified, it manifests as nonconceptual gnosis. The drop at the throat-*cakra* has the capacity to bring forth verbal expression. When this drop is affected by the habitual propensities of spiritual ignorance, it brings forth improper speech, and it produces the dreaming state when most of the *prāṇas* converge in the throat-*cakra*. When this drop becomes purified, it brings forth the Buddha's all-faceted speech. Similarly, the drop at the heart-*cakra* has a dual capacity. In its impure form, this drop induces confusion, and it produces the state of deep sleep when most of the *prāṇas* converge in the heart-*cakra*. When purified, it manifests as the nonconceptual mind. Finally, the drop at the navel-*cakra* has the capacity to bring forth innate bliss. In its impure aspect, this drop brings forth the experience of sexual bliss when most of the *prāṇas* converge in the navel-*cakra*. When this drop is purified, it induces the supreme, immutable bliss of *nirvāṇa*.

The four bodies of the Buddha, which are latently present within the individual, are located within the six *cakras* of the individual's body due to the *guṇas* of those *cakras*. Thus, the Sahajakāya, which is free of ideation and is similar to a prognostic mirror, is in the secret *cakra*, in the *uṣṇīṣa*, and in the navel-*cakra*, which arise from the elements of gnosis, space, and earth, respectively. The Dharmakāya is located in the heart-*cakra*, which arises from the wind-element. The Saṃbhogakāya is in the

TABLE 7.2 The Four Kāyas of the Buddha in the Body of the Individual

Sahajakāya	Dharmakāya	Saṃbhogakāya	Nirmāṇakāya
the secret- <i>cakra</i> the navel- <i>cakra</i> the forehead- <i>cakra</i>	the heart- <i>cakra</i>	the throat- <i>cakra</i>	the forehead- <i>cakra</i>
the gnosis-element the space-element the earth-element	the wind-element	the fire-element	the water-element
the gnosis- <i>vajra</i> spiritual ignorance (<i>avidyā</i>)	the mind- <i>vajra</i> becoming (<i>bhava</i>)	the speech- <i>vajra</i> feeling (<i>vedanā</i>)	the body- <i>vajra</i> mind and body (<i>nāma-rūpa</i>)
karmic formations (<i>saṃskāra</i>)	birth (<i>jāti</i>)	craving (<i>tṛṣṇā</i>)	six sense-bases (<i>āyatana</i>)
consciousness (<i>vijñāna</i>)	aging (<i>jarā</i>) and death (<i>maraṇa</i>)	grasping (<i>upādāna</i>)	contact (<i>sparsa</i>)

throat-*cakra*, which arises from the fire-element. The Nirmāṇakāya is in the *lalāṭa*, which arises from the water-element.⁷¹ Table 7.2. illustrates the manner in which the Kālacakra tradition delineates the four bodies of the Buddha with regard to the body of the individual.

The four *vajras* that are present within the bodily *cakras* manifest as the four bodies of the Buddha only at the attainment of full and perfect awakening (*samyak-saṃbodhi*). When the individual reaches full and perfect enlightenment, the individual's gnosis-*vajra* that has been purified by the liberation through emptiness (*sūnyatā-vimokṣa*) becomes the Sahajakāya. The individual's mind-*vajra* that has been purified by the liberation through signlessness (*animitta-vimokṣa*) manifests as the Dharmakāya. The individual's speech-*vajra* that has been purified by the liberation through desirelessness (*apraṇihita-vimokṣa*) appears as the Saṃbhogakāya. The individual's body-*vajra* that has been purified by liberation through non-compositeness (*anabhisamskāra-vimokṣa*) manifests as the Nirmāṇakāya.⁷²

It is interesting to note the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the phrase "liberation through non-compositeness." A textual study of the literature of the Kālacakra tradition in India reveals that in the context of this tantric system, the term "non-compositeness" refers to both freedom from the accumulation of *karma* and to freedom from atomic matter. In all other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*, however, it is explained chiefly in terms of the Buddha's freedom from the accumulation of *karma*. For the Kālacakra tradition, the eradication of the fine atomic particles that constitute the transmigratory mind and body—which are the material repositories of afflictive and cognitive obscurations and the internal objects of one's actions—includes the eradication of all *karma*.

The Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the four bodies of the Buddha as the four purified *vajras* has a direct bearing on its classification of the four gates of liberation (*vimokṣa-mukha*) as opposed to the more common classification of the three gates of liberation, which is characteristic of Mahāyāna literature in general. In terms

of the four gates of liberation, the *Kālacakratāntra* views the four bodies of the Buddha as the four immediate manifestations of the Buddha's fourfold perfect awakening: namely (1) perfect awakening in a single moment (*ekakṣaṇābhisambodhi*), (2) perfect awakening with five aspects (*pañcākārābhisambodhi*), (3) perfect awakening with twenty aspects (*vimśatyākārābhisambodhi*), and (4) perfect awakening with the net of illusions (*māyājālābhisambodhi*).

1. Perfect awakening in a single moment refers here to enlightenment attained in a single moment of supreme, immutable bliss. It is the spiritual awakening that arises from bliss and that, in turn, generates immutable bliss. Thus, it is "of the nature of bliss and not of some other *karma*."⁷³ The moment of supreme, immutable bliss is the moment after which there is no origination, duration, or cessation of any phenomena. The moment of perfect awakening in a single moment of bliss (*sukha-kṣaṇa*) signifies an absence of all moments, and that moment of bliss is the means by which the ten powers (*daśa-bala*) of enlightened awareness descend to earth from space. The purified aggregates that are produced by that moment of bliss, in turn, generate that bliss. Thus, from the Sahajakāya, which is the gnosis of innate bliss, arises the Dharmakāya; from the Dharmakāya arises the Saṃbhogakāya; from the Saṃbhogakāya arises the Nirmāṇakāya; and from the Nirmāṇakāya arises the Sajakāya.⁷⁴ This innate bliss, or gnosis, is like a seed from which first arise the roots, then the branches and flowers, and lastly the fruits, which, in turn, produce the seed. This interpretation of the arising of the four bodies of the Buddha in dependence upon each other implies that even the four bodies of the Buddha, like everything else in the world, do not arise of their own nature. Their mutually dependent arising further implies their absence of inherent existence.

The *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*'s interpretation of perfect awakening in a single moment suggests that the perfect awakening in a single moment is analogous to the experience of the single moment of bliss characterizing the consciousness that desires a birth and that has become of the same taste (*sama-rasa*) as the mother's and father's drops that are in the mother's secret *cakra*. It also indicates that in terms of the body belonging to the consciousness that is in the mother's womb, the perfect awakening in a single moment is analogous to the body that, like a red fish, has only one aspect, meaning, one body without limbs. In terms of enlightened awareness, the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* describes the perfect awakening in a single moment as a nonemitted (*acyuta*) drop that is of the nature of the pure gnosis and consciousness (*śuddha-jñāna-vijñāna*), a *vajra-yoga* of the gnosis of the Svabhāvikakāya, and as Vajrasattva, who perceives all things due to being enlightened in a single moment due to the cessation of the ordinary sense-faculties and arising of the divine sense-faculties, which result from the eradication of the circulation of breaths and from establishing the mind in sublime *prāṇa* (*mahā-prāṇa*).⁷⁵

2. Perfect awakening with five aspects refers to enlightenment that is characterized by the five types of gnosis of the Buddha: namely, the mirror-like gnosis (*ādarśa-jñāna*), the gnosis of equality (*śamatā-jñāna*), the discriminating gnosis (*pratyaवेक्षण-jñāna*), the accomplishing gnosis (*kr̥tyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna*), and the gnosis of the sphere of reality (*dharmadhātu-jñāna*). These five types of gnosis are understood here as one's purified psycho-physical aggregates, sense objects and sense-fac-

ulties, Māras, and five types of spiritual ignorance. They are the mutually indivisible *vajras* that have all the aspects.

According to the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, the perfect awakening with the five aspects is analogous to the five types of knowledge that are of the nature of the habitual propensities (*vāsanā*) of the form and other aggregates (*skandha*), which the fetus acquires, having the indication of the five limbs, like a tortoise. With regard to the enlightened awareness, it interprets the perfect awakening with five aspects as the Dharmakāya, the *vajra-yoga* of the mind, a sublime being (*mahā-sattva*) that has the supreme, imperishable bliss due to being enlightened with five aspects. The characteristics of the five types of gnosis are of the nature of the wisdom and method of the elements and psycho-physical aggregates due to the cessation of the five *maṇḍalas*.⁷⁶

The Kālacakra tradition defines these five types of gnosis in a number of ways. In its eulogy to gnosis with five aspects, the *Ādibuddhatantra* describes each aspect in terms of supramundane truth with the following five verses. With regard to the mirror-like gnosis, or the purified form-aggregate, it says:

This collection of phenomena in space, which is devoid of the form of ideation (*kalpanā*), is seen like a prognostic image (*pratisenā*) in the mirror of a young maiden.

With regard to the gnosis of equality, or the purified aggregate of feeling, it states:

Having become identical to all phenomena, it abides as a single, indestructible phenomenon. Arisen from the imperishable gnosis, it is neither nihilism nor eternalism.

With regard to the discriminating gnosis, or the purified aggregate of discernment, it says:

Letters, having all designations, have their origin in the family of the letter *a*. Having reached the sublime, imperishable state, they are neither the designation nor the designated.

As for the accomplishing gnosis, or the purified aggregate of mental formations, it states:

Among non-originated *dharma*s, which are devoid of mental formations (*saṃskāra*), there is neither spiritual awakening nor Buddhahood, neither a sentient being nor life.

Lastly, with regard to the gnosis of the *dharma-dhātu*, or the purified aggregate of consciousness, it says:

The *dharma*s that have transcended the reality of consciousness, that are purified in gnosis, transparent and luminous by nature, are present on the path of the *dharma-dhātu*.⁷⁷

In terms of the relation of the five types of gnosis to cyclic existence, the *Kālacakratāntra* characterizes them in the following manner:

That in which the form of birth reaches its culmination is called the sublime form. That in which the suffering of transmigratory existence reaches its culmination is called the sublime feeling. That in which a discernment of transmigratory existence

reaches its culmination is the sublime, *vajra* discernment. That in which the expansion of transmigratory existence reaches its culmination is called the *vajra* mental formation.

That in which waking and other states reach their culmination is called consciousness. That in which the existence of spiritual ignorance reaches its culmination is the Sage's gnosis. . . .⁷⁸

According to this tantric tradition, these five aspects of gnosis, entering the earth and other elements, become the Nirmāṇakāyas, by means of which the single Buddha Kālacakra displays his supernatural power (*ṛddhi*) among the humans, *asuras*, and gods that live within the desire realm. Even though the Buddha is free of obscurations (*āvaraṇa*) and mental afflictions (*kleśa*), he enters the human realm by descending into a woman's womb and taking on the five psycho-physical aggregates and birth for the sake of bringing ordinary people (*prākṛta-jana*) to spiritual maturation. He leads those who have acquired nonvirtue and are devoid of precepts to the realization of the impermanence of all composite phenomena. By taking birth, he demonstrates that even the Nirmāṇakāyas of the Buddhas, which are essentially the Vajrakāya, are of an impermanent nature. In this way, he seeks to liberate ordinary people from constant concern for their own bodies, which are, in comparison to the Vajrakāya, like the pith of a plantain tree. The *Kālacakratāntra* asserts that the illusion (*māyā*) of the Buddha's emanations, which has immeasurable qualities, is inconceivable even to the Buddhas themselves. That illusion, seeing itself within the three worlds, divided in accordance with the diverse mental states of sentient beings, enters the individual minds of the Buddhas, gods, and men. It takes on their originated nature. However, it does not truly arise in the mass of atoms due to the absence of a previous body, and therefore it is not truly subject to origination and cessation. Its origination gives a false impression, like the reflection of the sky in water.⁷⁹ The Buddha is an appearance of the minds of virtuous beings, since in reality, he neither originates nor ceases. His body and speech that appear to sentient beings are like the body and speech that appear in a dream. The *Vimalaprabhā* likens the appearance of the Buddha to the dream experience of a student who, asking his teacher about some dubious subject, receives clarification from the teacher, while in reality there is no actual teacher in the dream, but merely an appearance of the habitual propensities of the student's mind.⁸⁰ Thus, when the Nirmāṇakāya appears to the individual, in reality, it has neither arisen from somewhere other than one's own mind nor will it cease in some place other than one's own mind.

The *Vimalaprabhā* contests the view of those who assert that the Nirmāṇakāya of the Buddha is his Rūpakāya, in the sense of a material body, and argue that if the Buddha does not become embodied (*rūpin*), then none of his activities on earth would come into existence nor would his bodily constituents arise, which are worshipped as relics by the inhabitants of the three worlds. It refutes this view of the Buddha as becoming truly embodied with the following arguments:

Furthermore, if the Bhagavān became embodied here, then due to being a Rūpakāya, while dwelling in one place, he would be unable to perform activities that benefit sentient beings as numerous as the dust of the immeasurable mountain ranges within

the [limitless] world systems and as the [grains of] sand of the river Ganges. The words of the simple-minded people are: "Upon going to a single world system by means of his Rūpakāya and performing actions that benefit sentient beings dwelling there, he goes to another world system, and after that, he goes elsewhere." This does not stand logically. Why? Because world systems do not have a measure with regard to the division of directions. Repeatedly going by means of the Rūpakāya [in the form of] limitless sentient beings to world systems that are located in the ten directions, he would not be able to benefit sentient beings even in the course of limitless eons.⁸¹

Likewise, the *Vimalaprabhā* rejects the belief that the Buddha attracts sentient beings who dwell in the world systems of innumerable Buddha-fields by the power of his meditation and *mantra*, places them in front of himself and teaches them Dharma, establishes them on the Buddhist path, and sends them back to their world systems. It rebuts this notion on the basis that the Buddha cannot simultaneously abide with a body of atoms in the presence of limitless sentient beings who dwell in the numerous world systems that are present throughout space. It asserts:

According to the words of simple-minded people, by means of his Rūpakāya, he engages in activities that benefit sentient beings dwelling in the triple chiliocosm within a single Buddha-field. When this statement is investigated logically and in terms of ultimate truth, it is [found to be] meaningless, just like the words of Īśvara, which are established by means of authority (*ājñā*) and are devoid of verifying cognition (*pramāṇa*) and logic. According to the received Āgamas, Īśvara is a partless creator of all. Not taking into consideration the effect, he creates and destroys the world for the sake of play, as it pleases him. In the same way, because of this heterodoxy, the Bhagavān Rūpakāya, who brings about the benefit of all sentient beings, is established by means of authority. Thus, due to the absence of wisdom among Buddhist heterodox groups (*tīrthika*), there is nothing special even about their *pañḍitas*. Therefore, these words that are uncritical (*parīkṣa*) are not the words of the Bhagavān. . . . According to the Bhagavān's words, the Buddha who is investigated in the *Nāmasaṃgītī* is not the Rūpakāya. Why? Since he has arisen in space, he is self-arisen (*svayambhū*), has all aspects (*sarvākāra*) and is without aspects (*nirākāra*), holds the four *bindus*, transcends the state of having parts and is partless, holds the tens of millions [moments] of the fourth bliss, is detachment and supreme attachment, is free of possessiveness (*mamātva*) and self-grasping (*ahaṃ-kāratva*), generates the meanings of all *mantras*, is the supreme *bindu*, indestructible, the sublime emptiness (*mahā-śūnyatā*) of the five indestructibles,⁸² is the indestructibility of the space *bindu*, and is similar to space. Thus, the Bhagavān Buddha explained the Vajradharakāya of Vajrapāṇi in terms of both truths by means of one hundred and sixty-two verses of the *Nāmasaṃgītī*, beginning with: "Now, the glorious Vajradhara" and ending with: "Homage to you, the Jñānakāya." . . . Thus, according to the Bhagavān's words, the Bhagavān is not the Rūpakāya, because he is the assembly (*saṃāja*) of all the Buddhas. If the Rūpakāyas were the Buddhas, then the [Rūpakāyas] would not come together in the form of atoms. Even after hearing the Bhagavān's words in this manner and investigating the deep and profound Dharma that was taught by the Bhagavān, sentient beings do not understand it. Not testing a spiritual mentor for the sake of Buddhahood, they do not honor him. Great fools, overcome by greed, think: "In this life, our putrid bodies are the bodies of the Buddha."⁸³

Thus, for the sake of eradicating the self-grasping (*ahaṃ-kāra*) of the Śrāvakas in heaven, and for the sake of helping them understand that the state of a god is one of great suffering, the physically nonembodied Tathāgata displays his supernatural power among them by means of his Saṃbhogakāyas. By means of his Dharmakāyas, he reveals his supernatural power among the Bodhisattvas, Subhūti, Maitreya, and others who abide in the realization of emptiness, for the sake of establishing them in the highest, perfect awakening by teaching them about the four bodies of the Buddha.⁸⁴

3. Perfect awakening with twenty aspects is not explicitly described in the *Kālacakratāntra* or the *Vimalaprabhā*. Nevertheless, Mañjuśrīmitra's *Nāmasaṃgīti*,⁸⁵ commenting on v. 133 of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, that is cited in the *Vimalaprabhā*, enumerates the twenty aspects of the Buddha's mind.⁸⁶ According to the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, the twenty aspects of perfect awakening include the sixteenfold knowledge of the sixteen types of emptiness and the first four of the aforementioned five types of the Buddha's gnosis. According to the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, the perfect awakening with twenty aspects should be known as being due to the cessation of the five sense-faculties, the five sense-objects, the five faculties of action (*karmendriya*), and the activities of the five faculties of action that are with obscurations. The same text also indicates that the perfect awakening with twenty aspects is analogous to the classification of the habitual propensities of the four elements, earth and the like, and to the body of the fetus that has twenty fingers. In terms of enlightened awareness, it explains the perfect awakening with twenty aspects as the *vajra-yoga* of speech of the Saṃbhogakāya and as a Bodhisattva who assists other Bodhisattvas and teaches Dharma by means of the utterances of all sentient beings due to being enlightened with twenty aspects.⁸⁷

4. According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, perfect awakening with the net of illusions refers to the Buddha's Nirmāṇakāya, which manifests in innumerable forms, like an endless net of illusions, and knows the reality that has sixteen aspects.⁸⁸ The *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* describes it in a similar fashion but adds that the perfect awakening with the net of illusions is the bodily *vajra-yoga*, a pledge being (*samaya-sattva*) who is the foremost assistant to sentient beings due to his knowledge of the reality with sixteen aspects. For Nāḍapāda, this type of awakening is due to the cessation of the drops of the sixteen types of bodily bliss (*kāyānanda*). He also sees it as analogous to the knowledge of the limitless phenomena that are like a net of illusions, which is acquired by being born from the womb.⁸⁹

Just as the Buddha's mind is characterized by the four types of spiritual awakening, so are the four bodies of the Buddha characterized by the four different types of knowledge and their functions. The Sahajakāya is characterized by omniscience (*sarvajñatā*) on the ground that it sees everything. The Dharmakāya is characterized by knowledge of the aspects of the path (*mārgākāra-jñatā*), because it is saturated by supreme, immutable bliss. The Saṃbhogakāya is characterized by knowledge of the path (*mārga-jñatā*), for it simultaneously teaches the mundane (*laukika*) and supra-mundane (*lokottara*) Dharmas, using the different modes of expression of countless sentient beings. Finally, the Nirmāṇakāya is characterized by knowledge of all aspects (*sarvākāra-jñatā*), since it simultaneously spreads its powers and manifestations by means of limitless Nirmāṇakāyas.⁹⁰

Each of these four bodies of the Buddha represents a particular type of union (*yoga*). For example, the Sahajakāya represents the union of purity and gnosis; therefore, it is also called the pure *yoga* (*śuddha-yoga*). The Dharmakāya is the union of the Dharma and the mind; hence, it is also referred to as the *dharma-yoga*. The Saṃbhogakāya is the union of speech and enjoyment, for that reason, it is also identified as the *mantra-yoga*; and the Nirmāṇakāya is the union of the body and its emanation, therefore, it is also designated as the form-*yoga* (*saṃsthāna-yoga*).⁹¹ This perspective on the four bodies of the Buddha as the four types of *yogas* explicates the Kālacakra tradition's definition of gnosis as the *vajra-yoga*. As alluded earlier, these four types of *yogas*, which purify Kālacakra, are the four gates of liberation (*mokṣa*): a liberation through emptiness (*śūnyatā-vimokṣa*), a liberation through signlessness (*animitta-vimokṣa*), a liberation through wishlessness (*apraṇihita-vimokṣa*), and a liberation through non-compositeness (*anabhisamskāra-vimokṣa*). According to the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, a liberation through emptiness is the gnosis that is characterized by its condition of being empty and by apprehending that the past and future are empty. Due to that gnosis, the purified, imperishable, sublime bliss (*mahā-sukha*) arises from the eradication of the fourth state of the mind (*turyā*). This liberation through emptiness is nothing else than the *vajra-yoga* consisting of compassion, the Sahajakāya, or the purified *yoga*. A liberation through signlessness is the gnosis that is without a sign (*nimitta*), or a cause (*hetu*), which is a mind with conceptualizations such as the "Buddha," "enlightenment," and so on. Due to this absence of a cause, the mind of the deep sleep vanishes and the mind-*vajra* that consists of loving kindness (*maitrī*), which is the Dharmakāya, arises. Since its nature is Dharma, it is also called the *dharma-yoga*. A liberation through wishlessness is a freedom from reasoning (*tarka*) that manifests in thinking: "I am the fully awakened one," and so on. The absence of such reasoning results from the absence of the earlier mentioned sign, or cause. In liberation through wishlessness, the sleeping state is destroyed, and on account of that, arises the indestructible voice that is characterized by *mantras* and sympathetic joy (*muditā*). That voice is the speech-*vajra*, the Saṃbhogakāya. It is a *mantra* because it protects (*trāṇa*) and gladdens (*modana*) the minds with the expressions of all sentient beings. Therefore, it is also called the *mantra-yoga*. A liberation through non-compositeness, which results from the absence of wish (*praṇidhāna*) is the form-*yoga*. It is the body-*vajra* that consists of equanimity (*upekṣā*) and that manifests with all forms: ferocious, passionate, peaceful, and so on, leading others to the path of opposition to mental afflictions by means of limitless Nirmāṇakāyas. This liberation is said to be pure due to the destruction of the waking state.⁹²

Just as there is one gnosis that manifests as various types of cognition, so too there is one Sahajakāya, which becomes of four kinds. According to the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the four bodies of the Buddha as the four facets of enlightened awareness, which are the purified aspects of the four states of the individual's mind, the Sahajakāya is also of four kinds. First of all, the Sahajakāya is the facet of the Buddha's mind that is devoid of the fourth state of the mind (*turya*), and thereby it is not affected by the sense-faculties nor is it polluted by attachment. For that reason, it is seen as the attainment of one's own well-being. The Sahajakāya is said to be neither wisdom nor compassion, nor of the nature of both. Due to the eradication of the state of deep sleep, it becomes the Dharmakāya for the sake of others'

well-being. Due to freedom from the state of deep sleep, the Dharmakāya is never saturated by darkness. It is of the nature of both wisdom and compassion due to the distinction between gnosis (*jñāna*) and consciousness (*viññāna*). Gnosis is understood in this context as the apprehending mind (*grāhaka-citta*), the mind that is the subject; and consciousness is taken to mean the apprehended (*grāhya*) knowledge of others' minds, minds that are objects of knowledge (*jñeya*). Gnosis, or the apprehending mind, is wisdom (*prajñā*) because it is devoid of ideation (*kalpanā*); and the apprehended mind—namely, enlightened awareness as it manifests as the world—is method (*upāya*), which is conceptually fabricated (*parikalpita*) and has the characteristic of compassion. Likewise, the Saṃbhogakāya is the mind that is free of the dreaming state, which is invariably produced by *prāṇas*. It is also of the nature of wisdom and compassion. By means of the divine eye (*divya-cakṣu*), its divine consciousness (*divya-viññāna*) perceives past and future forms like transparent reflections in a mirror; and by means of the divine ear, it apprehends sounds that arise in those transparent forms as echoes. It knows past and future times, as well as certain events that have happened or will happen. The Saṃbhogakāya becomes the Nirmāṇakāya for spiritually mature sentient beings. The Nirmāṇakāya is the mind that is free of the waking state, and therefore it is not characterized by false notions arising from conceptualization. It also consists of wisdom and compassion. Even though it is one, it becomes many, because sentient beings see its various emanations. Ultimately, the unity of one and many Nirmāṇakāyas is the unity of wisdom and compassion, even though conventionally there is an obvious contradiction in the concept of one and many Nirmāṇakāyas. The illusion of the Buddha's emanations, which have immeasurable qualities, is said to be inconceivable even to the Buddhas themselves.⁹³

Table 7.3. illustrates the Kālacakra tradition's characterization of the four bodies of the Buddha as the four types of spiritual awakening and the four facets of the Buddha's mind.

As was indicated earlier, these four bodies of the Buddha collectively and individually are understood to be nothing other than the four different manifestations of the Jñānakāya ("Gnosis-body"). The Kālacakra tradition's characterization of the Jñānakāya is based on the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*'s characterization of Mañjuśrī, who is identified there with the Jñānakāya. Likewise, as the main topic of the *Kālacakratāntra*'s discourse, the Jñānakāya is referred to as the "vajra-word" that is also taught in other "kings of *tantras*"—specifically, in the method-*tantras* such as the *Guhyasamāja*, and in the wisdom-*tantras* such as the *Cakrasaṃvara*.⁹⁴ Thus, in this tantric system, the Jñānakāya is the unity of the speaker, who is the Ādibuddha, and his teaching, the *vajra*-word.

In the *Kālacakratāntra*, the Jñānakāya is discussed in terms of both conventional and ultimate realities. In terms of ultimate reality, it is taught in the above way as the four bodies of the Buddha, or as the clear light of the mind (*citta-pratibhāsa*), appearing in space and being directly perceived through the yogic practices of unifying the left and right *nāḍīs* in the *madhyamā*. In terms of conventional reality, it is presented as the body that is mentally fabricated by the yogi's own mind as being endowed with form, various colors, and other attributes.

With regard to the impure manifestations of the four bodies of the Buddha within the individual, the Kālacakra tradition correlates the four bodies of the Bud-

TABLE 7.3 The Four Kāyas of the Buddha as the Four Aspects of Enlightenment

Sahajakāya	Dharmakāya	Saṃbhogakāya	Nirmāṇakāya
the gnosis- <i>vajra</i>	the mind- <i>vajra</i>	the speech- <i>vajra</i>	the body- <i>vajra</i>
purified in liberation through emptiness (<i>śūnyatā-vimokṣa</i>)	purified in liberation through signlessness (<i>animitta-vimokṣa</i>)	purified in liberation through desirelessness (<i>apraṇihita-vimokṣa</i>)	purified in liberation through noncompositeness (<i>anabhisaṃskāra-vimokṣa</i>)
perfect awakening in a single moment (<i>eka-kṣaṇābhi-sambodhi</i>)	perfect awakening with five aspects (<i>pañcākārābhisambodhi</i>)	perfect awakening with twenty aspects (<i>viṃśatyākārābhisambodhi</i>)	perfect awakening with the net of illusions (<i>māyā-jālābhisambodhi</i>)
omniscience (<i>sarvākāra-jñatā</i>)	knowledge of the aspects of the path (<i>mārgākārā-jñatā</i>)	knowledge of the path (<i>mārga-jñatā</i>)	knowledge of all aspects (<i>sarvākāra-jñatā</i>)
the purified yoga	the <i>dharma</i> -yoga	the <i>mantra</i> -yoga	the form-yoga
the absence of the fourth state	the absence of the deep sleep state	the absence of the dreaming state	the absence of the waking state
in the navel- <i>cakra</i>	in the heart- <i>cakra</i>	in the throat- <i>cakra</i>	in the <i>lālāṭa</i>

dha with the four stages of development of a fetus in the womb and with the four phases of one's life outside the womb. Thus, at the moment of conception, consciousness, gnosis, semen, and uterine blood constitute the impure, or obscured, phenomenal aspect of the Sahajakāya. The fetus consisting of the psycho-physical aggregates and elements corresponds to the Dharmakāya. The fetus at the stage of developing the sense-bases (*āyatana*) corresponds to the Saṃbhogakāya; and the fetus that at the time of birth is completely endowed with arms, legs, hair, and the other bodily parts corresponds to the Nirmāṇakāya.⁹⁵

With regard to the individual who is outside the womb, a newborn infant, whose *prāṇas* first begin to flow from the navel-*cakra*, corresponds to the Sahajakāya. The newborn child, though, corresponds to the Sahajakāya only for the period of sixty breaths during which the infant's *prāṇas* flow in the central *nāḍī*. The child, in the phase of life in which its limbs begin to move due to the circulation of *prāṇas*, in which its first teeth begin to grow and its indistinct speech arises, corresponds to the Dharmakāya. From the time that the child's first teeth fall out until the age of eight, when its new teeth grow and its speech becomes clear, the child corresponds to the Saṃbhogakāya. Lastly, in the phase of life from the growth of new teeth until death, the individual represents the impure aspect of the Nirmāṇakāya.⁹⁶ This categorization of the four bodies of the Buddha as the individual in the four phases of life is based on the Kālacakra tradition's view of the manner in which the individual's *prāṇas*, speech, and mind interact.

Even though the Kālacakra tradition often speaks of gnosis as the ultimate nature of all sentient beings and of the four bodies of the Buddha as present in the body of every individual, the *Vimalaprabhā* emphasizes that this does not imply that all sen-

tient beings are already Nirmāṇakāyas of the Buddha. It criticizes those who mistakenly conclude that the bodies of sentient beings are the Buddha's Nirmāṇakāyas simply because all the kings of *tantras* (*tantra-rāja*) identify the five psycho-physical aggregates with the five Buddhas, the bodily elements with the consorts of the five Buddhas, and so on. It argues that if sentient beings within the three realms of cyclic existence are already Nirmāṇakāyas of the Buddha, then this implies that they have previously become Samyaksambuddhas. However, the fact that sentient beings lack the powers and qualities of the Buddha and are still subject to the origination, cessation, and all the other sufferings of transmigratory existence indicates that they are not perfectly awakened but deeply entrenched in *saṃsāra*. It also argues that if sentient beings have already attained Buddhahood, then the practices of generosity, meditation, reflection, listening to Dharma teachings and the like would be useless. This, it says, "has not been seen, heard, inferred, or predicted by the Tathāgata."⁹⁷ Likewise, it claims that the *Kālacakratāntra*'s identification of the bodily components—specifically, the male and female sexual organs, feces, urine, uterine blood, and semen—with the five Buddhas does not imply that these impure bodily constituents are actually the five Buddhas. Such identification, it says, is to be understood in terms of the language of tantric pledges (*saṃaya-bhāṣā*) and not in terms of definitive language, which employs words that explicitly designate their referents. It also argues that a localized (*prādeśika*) body of the individual cannot be taken as the all-pervasive body of the Buddha.

The *Kālacakratāntra*'s fourfold categorization of the Buddha's body has its precedent in the earlier Mahāyāna classification of the Buddha's body into the Svābhāvika-kāya ("Essential Body"), Dharmakāya, Sambhogakāya, and Nirmāṇakāya. The *Kālacakratāntra* itself never mentions the Svābhāvika-kāya; it mentions only the Sahajakāya, the Viśuddhakāya ("Pure Body"), and the Jñānakāya as synonymous. However, the *Vimalaprabhā* comments that in the system of perfections, which has the characteristic of the cause, the mind of gnosis (*jñāna-citta*) is designated as the "Svābhāvika-kāya of the perfection of wisdom (*prajñāpāramitā*)," or as the "Prajñāpāramitākāya" ("Body of the Perfection of Wisdom").⁹⁸ Whereas in the system of *mantras*, which has the characteristic of the result, it is called "innate bliss" (*sahajānanda*), or the "Sahajakāya."⁹⁹ For this reason, the terms "Svābhāvika-kāya" and "Sahajakāya" are sometimes used interchangeably in the commentarial literature of the Kālacakra tradition.¹⁰⁰

The *Vimalaprabhā*, cites the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Ch. I, v. 18), to support this view of the close relation between the Svābhāvika-kāya and the Sahajakāya; and it suggests that its classification of the four bodies of the Buddha has precedents in the interpretations of some Mahāyāna authors. The cited verse from the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* reads:

The Dharmakāya, which is with activity, is said to be of four kinds: the Svābhāvika-kāya, together with the Sambhogakāya, and the Nirmāṇakāya.¹⁰¹

The Kālacakra tradition interprets the Sahajakāya similarly to some Indian Mahāyāna authors' interpretation of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*'s reading of the Svābhāvika-kāya.¹⁰² Just as in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, the Svābhāvika-kāya is just another way of characterizing the essential nature (*svabhāva*, *prakṛti*) of undefiled Buddha *dharma*s, so in the *Kālacakratāntra*, the Sahajakāya is the defining essence of Bud-

dhahood, which is indivisible from the Dharmakāya. Furthermore, just as in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, the Svābhāvika-kāya designates the emptiness of the Buddha's nonconceptual mind, characterized by the freedom from defilements (*nirāśrava*) and the purity of all aspects (*sarvākārā viśuddhi*),¹⁰³ so according to the Kālacakra tradition,

the mind that is devoid of the habitual propensities of transmigratory existence is called Buddhahood. Likewise, the Bhagavān stated in the *Prajñāpāramitā*, "That mind, which is the mind, is not the mind." That very mind that is devoid of the habitual propensities of transmigratory existence is luminous by nature (*prakṛti-prabhāsvara*). Therefore, Māra is the mind that has impurities (*mala*), and the Buddha is the mind that is without impurities (*amala*).¹⁰⁴

In another place, the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts:

That which is taught in terms of ultimate reality for the sake of attaining the supramundane *mahāmudrā-siddhi*, which is endowed with the best of all forms, is the luminosity (*pratibhāsa*) of the *yogis*' own mind, which can be directly perceived, which is devoid of the characteristics of the ideation of one's own mind, which shines in the sky and is similar to the reflection in a young maiden's mirror.¹⁰⁵

Thus, with respect to the essential purity of the Buddha's mind, the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*'s interpretations of the Svābhāvika-kāya accord with the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the Sahajakāya. There are also other points of agreement between the Mādhyamika interpretation of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*'s presentation of the Svābhāvika-kāya and the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the Sahajakāya. For example, references to the Svābhāvika-kāya and the Sahajakāya as the mirrorlike gnosis (*ādarśa-jñāna*) are found in both Buddhajñānapāda's (eighth century) *Samcayagāthāpañjikā* commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and in the *Vimalaprabhā*.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, identifications of the Svābhāvika-kāya and the Sahajakāya with a Samantabhadra, pure luminosity, the *dharma-dhātu*, which is ultimately the sole body of the Buddha, are encountered in both Dharmamitra's *Prasphuṭapadā* (late eighth–early ninth century) and in the *Kālacakratāntra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*.¹⁰⁷

Furthermore, the *Vimalaprabhā* defines the Dharmakāya and the Svābhāvika-kāya in the following way:

[The body] that is neither impermanent nor permanent, neither single nor has the characteristic of many, neither substance (*dravya*) nor non-substance (*adravya*), is the Dharmakāya, which is without basis (*nirāśraya*).

[The body] that is indivisible from emptiness and compassion, free of attachment and non-attachment, that is neither wisdom nor method, is the additional Svābhāvika-kāya.¹⁰⁸

This description of the Dharmakāya and the Svābhāvika-kāya suggests that the Dharmakāya characterizes here enlightened awareness, which transcends the reality of atoms and yet exists in terms of emptiness, and which lacks a basis for superimpositions such as permanence and impermanence, existence and non-existence. Whereas the Svābhāvika-kāya represents the empty nature of the enlightened awareness,

which ultimately is neither the apprehending mind nor the apprehended mind. Thus, the Svābhāvīkākāya does not designate here some independent component of Buddhahood, but the essential nature of all the aspects of the enlightened mind. In this respect, the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the fourth body accords with the Mādhyamika interpretation of the Svābhāvīkākāya.

On the basis of textual evidence, one could infer that in the *Kālacakratāntra* tradition, which claims to consist of both the system of perfections and the system of *mantras*, the Prajñāpāramitākāya, or the Sahajakāya, represents the unity of the two aspects of the Buddha's mind—namely, the empty nature of the Buddha's mind, which is the cause, and the blissful aspect of the Buddha's mind, which is the result. On the grounds that the empty and blissful natures of the Buddha's mind are essentially nondual, the Kālacakra tradition attends to them as a single fact, as a form (*bimba*) of emptiness and compassion. More than the literature of Mahāyāna, the Kālacakra tradition, in addition to emptiness, strongly emphasizes the blissful aspect of Buddhahood, which is seen as ultimately nondual from emptiness. One reads in the *Ādibuddhatāntra*: "this Vajrasattva is the foundation of the bliss of all Buddhas due to the union of the body, speech, and mind."¹⁰⁹ It is in this regard that the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of the blissful aspect of Buddhahood and the ways of achieving it diverge from the Mahāyāna's interpretation of the Svābhāvīkākāya and consequently from Mahāyāna forms of practice. Thus, in the Kālacakra tradition, the Sahajakāya designates the two aspects of the essential nature of the Buddha's mind: emptiness and bliss. Considering that for this tantric system, those two aspects are nondual from each other and indivisible from all other bodies of the Buddha, one may further infer that ultimately there is only one body of the Buddha, the Gnostic Body.

The primary purpose of the *Kālacakratāntra*'s classification of the four bodies of the Buddha is to provide a model for *Kālacakratāntra* practice that will accord with its goal. In this tantric system, the fourfold classification of the Buddha's body outlines the essential components of spiritual awakening, which are meticulously correlated to the contemplative's psycho-physical constituents and their functions. Thus, the Sahajakāya is a representation of both the basis of purification, which is the individual's psycho-physical constituents and their functions, and the result of purification, which is the components of Buddhahood and their activities.

This concept of the Sahajakāya is common to all *anuttara-yoga-tantras*. The *Vimalaprabhā* denies that the realization of the Sahajakāya, or Jñānakāya, is ever found among Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Vijñānavādins, for the Sahajakāya is free from all residues (*upadhi*) and transcends the reality of consciousness (*vijñāna-dharmatā*).¹¹⁰ This claim not only supports the *Kālacakratāntra*'s openly stated affiliation with the philosophical views of the Mādhyamikas,¹¹¹ but it also indirectly expresses the Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of other *anuttara-yoga-tantras* as being based on the Mādhyamika philosophy.

Gnosis and Mental Afflictions

The Kālacakra tradition's theory of the Jñānakāya is most intimately connected with the *Kālacakratāntra*'s view that "sentient beings are Buddhas and that there is not some other great Buddha in the universe apart from sentient beings."¹¹² It is by means

of sentient beings' prayers and their elimination of conceptualizations (*vikalpa*) that cyclic existence ceases.¹¹³ As indicated earlier, this view of gnosis as innately present in all sentient beings was already expressed in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, which affirms it in the following manner:

Present within the minds of all beings, he attained equality with their minds. Gladdening the minds of all sentient beings, he is the joy of the minds of all sentient beings.¹¹⁴

This view of sentient beings is not unique to the *Kālacakratāntra*, as it is also found in the earlier *anuttara-yoga-tantras*. For example, one reads in the *Hevajratāntra* that the Buddha cannot be found elsewhere in some other world-system (*loka-dhātu*), for the mind itself is the perfect Buddha. It asserts that all species of sentient beings, from gods to worms, are innately endowed with a blissful nature.¹¹⁵ Likewise, in the root *tantra* of the *Samvara* literary corpus, the *Lakṣābhīdhāna*, it is stated that Vajrasattva, the sublime bliss, is within the self of sentient beings.¹¹⁶ Similarly, in the root *tantra* of the *Yamāntaka* literature, the *Yogānuvīdhatāntra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā*, states that a unique, principal deity abides in the self of the three worlds with the nature of innate bliss.¹¹⁷

The view that the Buddha's mind is present in all sentient beings has its earliest precursor in the early Buddhist notion of the innate luminosity, or purity, of the mind. The *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, I. 10, expresses this view in the following manner: "Monks, the mind is luminous (*prabhassara*), but it is contaminated by adventitious defilements." Its later precursors can be traced to the Mādhyamika view of the mind and the *tathāgata-garbha* theory. One reads in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Ch. 9, v. 103) that sentient beings are by nature liberated. The *Pañjikā* commentary interprets this statement in light of the Mādhyamika view of the absence of inherent existence of the transmigratory mind and of *nirvāṇa*. It asserts that natural *nirvāṇa* (*prākṛta-nirvāṇa*), which is characterized by the absence of inherent existence, is always present in the streams of consciousness of all sentient beings.¹¹⁸ According to the *Tathāgata-garbhāsūtra*, which identifies all sentient beings with the embryo (*garbha*) of the Tathāgata, the Buddha sees with his divine eye that all sentient beings are endowed with the Buddha's knowledge (*buddha-jñāna*), Buddha's eyes (*buddha-cakṣu*), and Buddha's body (*buddha-kāya*).¹¹⁹ Likewise, the "Ṣaṭvimśatsāhasra-sarvadharmasamuccaya" chapter of the *Saddharmalaṅkāvatārasūtra* asserts that the *tathāgata-garbha*, which is inherently pure clear light and primordial purity itself, is present within the bodies of all sentient beings, covered over by the psycho-physical aggregates, elements, and sense-bases.¹²⁰ Statements similar to these can also be found throughout the *Ratnagotravibhāga* and other writings of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition. This identification of all sentient beings with the essence of the Buddha is also characteristic of some other Mahāyāna texts. For example, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* states that all embodied beings are the embryos of Tathāgatahood.¹²¹ Likewise, according to the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the essence of the Buddha (*buddha-dhātu*) is found within all sentient beings.¹²²

This view of all sentient beings as being endowed with the embryo of the Tathāgata has lent itself to two different interpretations. One is that the *tathāgata-garbha* refers only to sentient beings' potential for spiritual awakening; and the other

is that the presence of the *tathāgata-garbha* in every sentient being implies that all sentient beings are *fundamentally enlightened* but need to recognize it. As in the case of other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*,¹²³ the *Kālacakratāntra*'s view of sentient beings as Buddhas largely accords with the second interpretation. The *Kālacakratāntra* explains that enlightened awareness is innately present within an ordinary individual's body in the following way:

Just as space does not disappear [from a jar] when water is poured into the jar, in the same way, the sky-*vajrī*, who is the pervader of the universe and devoid of sense-objects, is within the body.¹²⁴

Even though enlightened awareness is innate to each individual, it is not actualized as long as one does not ascertain one's innate gnosis as such. However, the ascertainment of one's own gnosis as enlightened awareness entails the absence of afflictive and cognitive obscurations, which impede one's self-recognition. Their absence is conditioned by the path of purification that aims at manifesting this self-awareness of gnosis. The *Kālacakratāntra* asserts that due to the power of unwholesome actions, a sinful person does not see that the wish-fulfilling gem is present in his own mind; but when purification takes place, that person becomes the Lord of Jinas (*jīnendra*) and has no use for some other Jina.¹²⁵

Thus, even though sentient beings are innately Buddhas, they are not manifestly Buddhas, and their spiritual awakening needs to manifest as a nondual gnosis that is directly aware of its own blissful and empty nature. That nondual gnosis is the mind that is essentially pure and unfettered by the obscurations of mental afflictions (*kleśāvaraṇa*), even if it is veiled by them. Therefore, that nondual gnosis is effective in the elimination of mental afflictions. The mind of a sentient being that supports the habitual propensities of *karma* (*karma-vāsanā*) and brings about suffering and happiness is the omnipresent mind that transcends transmigratory suffering and happiness and that cannot be destroyed by conceptualizations (*vikalpa*).

Like the texts of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition, the Kālacakra tradition offers explicit reasons why one's innate gnosis, although underlying mental afflictions, remains untainted by them. However, its explanations differ from those of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition in several ways. According to the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, the innately pure mind remains untainted by mental afflictions because mental afflictions that obscure the mind are adventitious (*āgantuka*) and are not connected with the mind, whereas the purifying elements present in the mind are innate to the mind and are indivisible from it.¹²⁶ Likewise, according to another text of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition, the *Śrīmālādevī*, the momentary mind (*kṣaṇika-citta*), whether it is wholesome (*kuśala*) or unwholesome (*akuśala*), remains unaffected by mental afflictions because those afflictions neither touch the mind nor are touched by the mind.¹²⁷

In contrast, a text of the Kālacakra corpus, the *Sekoddeśa*, explains the relationship between the mental afflictions and the mind in the following way:

An adventitious stain is not in the mind nor is it prior to the mind. It does not arise without the mind nor does it stay immutable in the mind.

If it were only adventitious, then the mind would be formerly stainless. If it is prior to the mind, then from where has it originated?

If it is arisen without the mind, then it is like a sky-flower. If it is always present in the mind, then it could never vanish.

Just as the impurity of copper disappears due to the prepared mixtures, its natural property, which remains in the stainless state, does not vanish.

So a stain of the mind disappears due to the *yoga* of emptiness, but its state of gnosis, which remains in the stainless state, does not vanish.¹²⁸

Even though the *Sekoddeśa* agrees that human beings are already endowed with the immutable bliss that characterizes Buddhahood, it stresses the necessity for mental purification in this way:

Just as one must completely refine iron that is melted by intense fire, even though a precious substance is already present in one part of the iron, in the same way, one must completely refine the mind that is heated by the fire of desire, even though immutable bliss is already present in one part [of the mind].¹²⁹

The *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that habitual propensities of the mind arise and cease due to the same cause, the power of the individual's rebirths. If the habitual propensities were inherent to the mind, then sentient beings could never reach Buddhahood, because Buddhahood comes about due to the eradication of the habitual propensities of transmigratory existence. If one examines transmigratory existence in various ways, one finds that *saṃsāra* is nothing other than the degree of one's own habitual propensities of the mind. A habitual propensity of *saṃsāra* is the moment (*kṣaṇa*) of bliss that is characterized by the emission of semen, and so it is perishable. A habitual propensity of *nirvāṇa* is the moment of bliss that is characterized by non-emission of semen, and therefore it is imperishable.¹³⁰

The perfection of wisdom is the inconceivable gnosis of the Buddha because it consists of both attachment (*rāga*) and aversion (*virāga*). When sentient beings start thinking, attachment to desirable things and aversion to disagreeable things begin to arise. These two, attachment and aversion, are the mental causes of transmigratory existence. However, when gnosis, which is free of thinking, becomes actualized, there is no longer any attachment to desirable things or aversion to undesirable things. The absence of both results in freedom from transmigratory existence, and freedom from transmigratory existence results in full and perfect awakening.¹³¹

The *Kālacakratāntra* itself offers only an implicit explanation. Its repeated assertion that the nature of gnosis is free of the elements of earth, water, fire, wind, and semen and their modifications implies that gnosis is free of mental afflictions, which arise from those elements. Moreover, the *Kālacakratāntra*'s fundamental idea that mental afflictions, lacking inherent existence, are ultimately unreal implies that mental afflictions exist only from the perspective of the dualistic mind in which they arise. However, they neither exist nor not exist in relation to innately pure gnosis, which is beyond every perspective. This seems to be supported by the *Vimalaprabhā*, which maintains that "the nirvāṇic mind, which has transcended *saṃsāra* and is present in every body, is neither bound nor liberated by anything."¹³² It further asserts that "the *vajrī*, the purified mind, is the [mind] that does not have the two—eternal existence and non-existence, or annihilation."¹³³

Furthermore, according to the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition and other Indian Mahāyāna schools, mental afflictions arise from the habitual propensities of spiritual ignorance (*avidyā-vāsanā*), which manifests as erroneous views. Thus, these traditions see spiritual ignorance as the primary cause of mental afflictions, and they see the erroneous views that arise from that ignorance as the indirect cause of mental afflictions.¹³⁴ For example, for Vijñānavādins, the direct cause of mental afflictions is the view of objectification (*viśaya-dṛṣṭi*), and for Mādhyamikas, it is any view that stands as a dogmatic position (*pakṣa*). The Kālacakra tradition, however, does not explicitly speak of any particular view as the immediate cause of mental afflictions. Although the Kālacakratāntra often implies that applying any view contrary to that of identitylessness (*nairātmya*) or emptiness (*śūnyatā*) is detrimental to one's liberation, it clearly stresses the nature and function of *prāṇas* as the immediate cause of mental afflictions and their elimination.¹³⁵ In the Kālacakratāntra system, mental afflictions are also referred to as impurities (*kaluṣa*) and are described as the perturbations or deformations (*vikāra*) of the mind, which are most intimately connected with the psycho-physiological constitution and processes of the individual.¹³⁶ According to the Kālacakratāntra, the *prāṇas* are closely related to the mental states of an individual and are thus at the basis of both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. *Prāṇas* give rise to mental afflictions by conveying the six elements through the *nāḍīs* in the body. However, it is due to the efficacy of the six elements that constitute the *prāṇas*—namely, gnosis, air, wind, fire, water, and earth—that avarice (*mātsarya*), hatred (*dveṣa*), jealousy (*īrṣyā*), attachment (*rāga*), pride (*māna*), and confusion (*moha*) respectively arise.¹³⁷ Thus, the same gnosis-element, which is identified as the cause of the Sahajakāya, which is present in the individual's secret *cakra*, also functions as the direct cause of the three kinds of the *apāna* wind, which give rise to avarice.

According to the Kālacakratāntra, as long as a sentient being remains in the mother's womb, the *prāṇas* stay motionless in the navel-*cakra*, and mental afflictions do not arise. With the first breath at the time of birth, the *prāṇas* begin to move, carrying the five elements and thereby mental afflictions along with them. The first breath, which begins in the central *nāḍī*, is said to be devoid of the three *guṇas*; whereas the second breath takes place either in the left or the right *nāḍī* that carries the ten *maṇḍalas*, due to the power of the *sattva-guṇa*; the third breath takes place due to the power of *rajas*, the fourth breath due to the power of *tamas*, and so on. Each of these breaths that are of the nature of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* become the five kinds due to the classification of the *guṇas* of the five sense-objects. Then, due to the three-fold classification of the body, speech, and mind, they become forty-five. Then, due to the further classification of the two feet and two arms, they become one hundred and eighty breaths; and afterward, due to the nature of wisdom and method, they, multiplied by two, become three hundred and sixty breaths.¹³⁸

In this way, the *prāṇas* sustain mental afflictions and consequently perpetuate the cycle of rebirth. When the *prāṇas* are purified, that is, when the six elements constituting the *prāṇas* are transformed into pure gnosis, they obliterate all causes of mental afflictions and secure the bliss of liberation. Likewise, when all the bodily constituents—consisting of the elements and manifesting with the natures of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—become purified from the afflictive and cognitive obscurations, they manifest as the ten *bodhisattva-bhūmis* and bring about Buddhahood. Thus, the

bodily hair and the hair of the head become the first *bodhisattva-bhūmi*, Pramuditā, the skin and flesh become Vimalā, the two types of blood manifest as Prabhākārī, sweat and urine as Arciṣmatī, the bones and marrow as Sudurjayā, the *nāḍīs* and *prāṇas* as Abhimukhī, the gnosis-*vajra* and the element of passion (*rāga-dhātu*) as Dūraṅgamā, the mind-*vajra* as Acalā, the uterine blood as Sādhumatī, and semen as Dharmameghā. In light of this view, the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that apart from the body, there is no other Buddha who is the pervader (*vyāpaka*) and bestower of liberation.¹³⁹

Being the direct causes of mental afflictions and the immediate causes of their elimination, the bodily *prāṇas* are said to be supported by volition (*cetanā*).¹⁴⁰ Volition is understood here as the mind (*citta*), which under the influence of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, has the waking, dreaming, and sleeping states. That mind is comprised of the five elements (*dhātu*), the mental faculty (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), and self-grasping (*ahaṃkāra*). Hence, in this tantric system, volition, being the transmigratory mind, is both a mental and a physical phenomenon. This transmigratory mind is further supported by innate gnosis, which is free of the five elements and thereby free of conceptualizations and mental afflictions. Being free of conceptualizations and mental afflictions, gnosis is beyond happiness and suffering, and yet it is active in bringing about the eradication of happiness and suffering.¹⁴¹ This is yet another way in which the Kālacakra tradition attempts to explain why omnipresent gnosis cannot be defiled by mental afflictions despite being covered by them. One may infer here that innately pure gnosis, being the ultimate and indirect support of *prāṇas*, also functions as the ultimate factor in sustaining and eliminating mental afflictions. This understanding of the relationship between the innately pure gnosis and mental afflictions underpins the Kālacakratāntra's view of gnosis as the primary basis of both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*.

Furthermore, spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*) is explained in the Kālacakra tradition simply as a modification (*pratyaya*) of the elements, which are contained in the mother's blood and the father's semen and are grasped by consciousness at the moment of conception.¹⁴² The very idea that spiritual ignorance never arises in the absence of the elements precludes the role of spiritual ignorance as the direct cause of mental afflictions. But the *Vimalaprabhā* does, on the other hand, define spiritual ignorance as a mental affliction, which consists of attachment, hatred, and delusion, and it presents it as a primary cause of these mental afflictions. It describes it as a habitual propensity of beginningless attachment, but because attachment is perishable, it gives rise to aversion (*virāga*), or hatred (*dveṣa*), which is of the nature of confusion (*mūrcchā*), or delusion (*moha*).

The *Vimalaprabhā* defines these and other mental obscurations as mental stains, which are nothing other than the mind of Māra.¹⁴³ On the ground that both the innately pure gnosis and afflictive and cognitive obscurations are present in the body of the individual, the Kālacakratāntra asserts that both minds—the mind of Māras, which causes fear and agitation, and the blissful mind of the Buddhas—are present in the hearts of sentient beings.¹⁴⁴ Whereas gnosis aspires and incites one to venture for liberation from cyclic existence, the mind of Māra is said to be forever devoid of such aspiration and venturing.¹⁴⁵ Thus, it is due to the presence of both minds in the hearts of sentient beings that the three realms of cyclic existence endlessly revolve by the power of the Buddha within. Likewise, when the Buddha crushes the four

Māras, it is one's own innately pure gnosis that crushes the internal Māras, who are the habitual propensities of one's own body, speech, mind, and spiritual ignorance and who are not some external entities.¹⁴⁶ The mind of Māra and the mind of the Buddha do not exist simultaneously in the body of the individual. The moment in which the mind of Māra arises is the moment that is devoid of Buddhahood, because the mind is obscured; and the moment in which Buddhahood arises is the moment that is devoid of Māra because of the absence of obscurations. It is on this ground that the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that Buddhahood does not precede the Buddha's destruction of Māras nor does the eradication of Māras precede Buddhahood.¹⁴⁷ If Buddhahood were to precede the destruction of Māras as external entities, then the Buddha's assault on Māras would imply his lack of freedom from obscurations. But if the destruction of Māras were to precede Buddhahood, then it would be unclear why ordinary sentient beings were unable to destroy Māras at any time.

According to this tantric system, the spiritual ignorance of those who delight in mundane pleasures arises due to the words of the internal Devaputra Māra. When one refuses to conform to the words of Devaputra Māra by not manifesting spiritual ignorance, the habitual propensities of one's own mind become Vajrasattva. Therefore, like Māras, Vajrasattva, who is the mind, is one's own self-imposed (*sva-kṛta*) experience. The form of Vajrasattva is a *mantra* because it is by means of *mantras* that one guards one's own mind from Māras.

That which begets all of the internal Māras is said to be a moment of perishable bliss, which is called here "Cupid" (*kāma-deva*). Eliminating one's inner Cupid by actualizing the moment of supreme, imperishable bliss, one destroys Māras, which have the form of one's own afflictive and cognitive obscurations.¹⁴⁸ However, it is said that out of compassion for others, one intentionally does not destroy all of one's afflictive obscurations, but retains just a trace of them "that are of the nature of the activities (*kriyā*) for the benefit of sentient beings," in order to show that path of liberation to others.¹⁴⁹

Gnosis and Karma

Even though the Kālacakra tradition's philosophical explanation of *karma* is akin to the Mādhyamika view of *karma*, as being caused by mental afflictions and thereby being of the nature of mental afflictions,¹⁵⁰ its explanation of *karma* in terms of human physiology takes on another slant. According to the Kālacakra tradition, *karma* originates from the same elements from which mental afflictions arise. Thus, one can say here that *karma* is of the nature of mental afflictions, because they both originate from a common source. Since *karma* originates from the six elements, it is characterized by origination and cessation and therefore by conceptualization. In this way, *karma* induces and perpetuates the dualistic mind in relation to which mental afflictions arise. For the elimination of both mental afflictions and *karma*, purification takes place by melting away the fine atomic particles of the bodily *prāṇas*, which induce a dualistic vision of reality and carry the habitual propensities of *karma*. It is due to the dissolution of the atomic structure of one's body and mind that the tantric adept realizes the emptiness of all phenomena, which transcends the materiality of atoms, and thereby becomes free of *karma*.

Moreover, in terms of conventional reality, the agent (*kartṛ*) of *karma* is identified here as consciousness, or innate bliss, which appropriates the elements in the mother's womb. Eventually, when the body is formed, the six sense-faculties and the faculties of action become its means of action. However, that very consciousness is also recognized here as the agent of the elimination of *karma*, which at the time of death gradually leaves the five elements within the navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown-*cakra*.¹⁵¹ In terms of ultimate reality, the agent of *karma* is not an agent but a "a sky-pervader, a *vajrī* in the sky, free of sense-objects," the Sahajakāya without physical constituents.¹⁵² Thus, in terms of conventional reality, gnosis is the source, originator, and destroyer of *karma*; and in terms of ultimate reality, it is none of the above, since the mind of gnosis is neither a derivative of the five elements nor does it perceive itself or anything else as an agent.¹⁵³

Gnosis and Sexual Bliss

In the Kālacakra tradition supreme imperishable bliss is defined as tranquillity (*śānta*), which pervades the elements of every sentient being's mind and body and of the entire inanimate world. Thus, the body of every sentient being is the abode of immutable bliss¹⁵⁴ and contains the four bodies of the Buddha. In beings who are bound to transmigratory existence, the blissful nature of the Buddha's mind manifests in the form of sexual bliss, in which the mind, for a brief time, becomes non-dual and free of conceptualization. However, since the experience of sexual bliss is mutable, it creates habitual propensities of mutable sexual desire (*kāma-vāsanā*) and induces the further emergence of that desire. In this way, it reinforces mental afflictions by binding the experiencer to sensual pleasures. For that very reason, mutable bliss is viewed in the Kālacakra tradition as being characterized by transmigratory existence.

Nevertheless, the Kālacakra tradition stresses the importance of not avoiding sensual bliss but implementing it on the path as a condition that generates mental joy, which in turn brings forth the subtle mind that counteracts conceptualizations and directly perceives the empty nature of phenomena. Thus, by refining the mind, innate bliss secures freedom from cyclic existence. The *Sekoddeśa* affirms the refining power of bliss in the following manner:

Just as copper, refined by chemical solutions, does not become copper again, so the mind, refined by bliss, does not enter suffering again.¹⁵⁵

Due to the purifying power of bliss, the experience of innate bliss is regarded as an indispensable condition for attaining Buddhahood. The *Kālacakratāntra* speaks of its soteriological significance in this way:

For one who abandons that [moment of bliss]—which is the cause of the Buddhas, by means of which the Lords of Jinas have originated and come out of the womb by the efficacy of days, and by means of which Siddhas, not emitting semen, have pulsation (*spanda*) and non-pulsation (*niḥspanda*)—and who meditates on another empty Buddhahood devoid of immutable bliss, he will not experience innate bliss for tens of millions of eons.¹⁵⁶

Likewise, with regard to the soteriological efficacy of sexual bliss, one reads in the *Vimalaprabhā*:

Bliss that is produced by two sexual organs is the reality (*tattva*) that brings forth the result of Buddhahood. Men are the aspects of Vajradhara, and women are the *vajra*-women.¹⁵⁷

Since sexual bliss cannot arise without passion (*rāga*), the inducement and nurturing of passion are viewed as central components of the *Kālacakratāntra* path to spiritual awakening. One reads in the *Vimalaprabhā*:

Sin is due to the elimination of passion, on account of which, hatred toward the most loved one arises. Due to hatred there is delusion; and on account of this, the mind always becomes stupified due to the descent of one's own *vajra*.¹⁵⁸

The *Sekoddeśa* also speaks of the absence of passion as sin. It states:

There is no greater sin than dispassion (*virāga*), and there is no greater virtue than bliss. Therefore, o king, the mind should always dwell in imperishable bliss.¹⁵⁹

Passion here means sexual desire (*kāma*). As indicated in chapter 5 on the "Cosmic Body," the *Kālacakratāntra* identifies sexual desire with gnosis and its fire with the fire of gnosis.¹⁶⁰ The fire of sexual desire incinerates the impurities of the mind. Therefore, in this tantric system, to eliminate passion means to prevent virtue from arising. The tantric adept retains passion by retaining semen during sexual union, whereas the emission of semen results in dispassion, or aversion, and subsequent mental afflictions. It impedes the emergence of imperishable bliss and creates a condition for the further emergence of repeated desire for transitory bliss and all its unfavorable consequences.

The *Sekoddeśa* cautions against the deadly power of seminal emission in these words:

It has been known that emission arouses dispassion, and dispassion arouses suffering. Due to suffering the men's elements are destroyed, and due to that destruction there is death.

Due to death there is rebirth, and due to rebirth there are repeated deaths and seminal emissions. Thus, the rebirth of sentient beings is due to the arising of dispassion and not due to anything else.¹⁶¹

Whether seminal emission occurs occasionally or frequently, the consequences of seminal emission are equally detrimental with regard to one's liberation from cyclic existence. The *Vimalaprabhā* expresses it in these words:

A lion, who feeds on deer, occasionally engages in the pleasure of sexual union at the end of the year. A pigeon, who feeds on gravel, constantly engages in the pleasure of sexual union.

But just as neither one [of them] has supreme bliss, due to emitting semen either once or at all times, so too an ascetic and a lustful man do not have it because of emission in sleep and in the waking state.

Just as a sleeping man who is bitten by a snake does not live, so too an ascetic is ruined by the vulva of a base woman, due to not retaining his semen.¹⁶²

The *Kālacakratāntra* also asserts the adverse affects of the habitual propensities of seminal emission on one's ability to actualize imperishable bliss, for perishable bliss is as antithetical to imperishable bliss as poison is to ambrosia. It asserts that imperishable bliss does not arise from the mind that is not purified from the perishable bliss of seminal emission, just as grapes do not come from the *nimba* tree and lotus flowers do not blossom from the *udumbara* tree.¹⁶³ Whereas the passion that is characterized by seminal emission brings destruction, or death, the passion that is characterized by nonemission becomes the supreme and imperishable moment of bliss, by means of which sentient beings are liberated. In this regard, it is said that the Buddhas guard the bliss, present in their hearts, which sentient beings release.¹⁶⁴ For this reason, the tantric *yogī* must learn to retain his semen for the sake of the *sādhana* on imperishable bliss, which is taught as a meditation on bliss through sexual union without seminal emission. It is by means of such a *sādhana* that one is able to eliminate the habitual propensities of the perishable bliss of seminal emission. One's habitual propensity for seminal emission (*cyuti-vāsanā*) is said to be an adventitious stain (*āgantuka-mala*), which has characterized the minds of sentient beings since beginningless time,¹⁶⁵ and it is said to be a cause of transmigratory existence. However, just as sexual union creates a condition for the arising of the habitual propensity of seminal emission, so too does it create a condition for the arising of the habitual propensity of seminal retention.¹⁶⁶ In light of this, the *Kālacakratāntra* likens the transformative power of sexual union with regard to semen to the power of fire with regard to mercury. It states:

Fire is an enemy of mercury. The cohesiveness (*bandha*) of mercury never occurs without fire. When it is not cohesive, it does not produce gold. Without gold, it does not give pleasure to alchemists. Likewise, the cohesiveness of men's semen (*bodhicitta*) never occurs without union with a woman. If it is not cohesive, it does not transmute the body; and the non-transmuted body does not give supreme bliss.¹⁶⁷

Thus, just as mercury, which escapes due to its contact with fire, can also be made cohesive by that fire, so too semen, which escapes due to sexual contact, can be made cohesive by that contact. Likewise, just as cohesive mercury is exceptionally potent in purifying ordinary metal and transforming it into gold, so too cohesive semen has the power to purify one's psycho-physical aggregates from obscurations. Therefore, in this tantric tradition, meditation on a deity during sexual union, including the union with an actual consort (*karma-mudrā*), in which the *yogī*'s semen becomes motionless, is considered to be analogous to the processes of calcination (*jāraṇa*) and trituration (*svedana*) of mercury. Just as the process of making mercury cohesive is of two kinds—one involving the trituration and the other involving calcination—so too the process of making one's own semen cohesive and motionless has two aspects—dispassion (*virāga*) for a consort and passion (*rāga*) for a consort. It consists of passion and dispassion, because the *yogī* focuses his mind on a deity and on the personal identitylessness of himself and his consort, which induces dispassion, while engaged in sexual union with a consort, which induces passion. Likewise, just as the

twofold process of making mercury cohesive and thermostable induces the different states of mercury, from vaporous to motionless,¹⁶⁸ due to its different powers of consuming metals, so too, the habitual practice of this twofold process of making one's own semen cohesive induces different states of semen, from soft, moderate, excessive, to the most excessive, due to meditation on the impermanence of the individual, different *kṛtsnas*, and due to the destruction of the inanimate (*jaḍa*) aggregates, elements, and sense-bases.¹⁶⁹

Although the *Kālacakratāntra* identifies sexual bliss with the blissful nature of gnosis, the experience of sexual bliss is seen only as a *facsimile* of the manifestation of self-aware gnosis, because, while experiencing that bliss in sexual union, one is unable to ascertain it as gnosis. Similarly, although the nonconceptual state of the mind that is induced by sexual bliss is identical to the direct realization of emptiness, the experience of that state is only a *facsimile* of the realization of emptiness, because, while being in that state of nonconceptuality, one is unable to ascertain it as such. Nevertheless, the experience of the *facsimiles* of the manifestation of gnosis and of the realization of emptiness can facilitate the *actual* manifestation of gnosis and the realization of emptiness. When the experience of the facsimiles of immutable bliss and emptiness is utilized as the essence out of which a tantric adept mentally creates *maṇḍalas* and their deities in the stage of generation, it diminishes the habitual propensities that impel one to grasp onto ordinary experiences as truly existent. When the experience of mutable bliss is implemented in this way, it induces one's mental perception of the world as a mere illusion, and consequently, diminishes one's attachment to the world.

Thus, in the Kālacakra tradition, the transformation of mutable bliss into immutable bliss is contingent upon one's motivation and one's mode of engaging in sexual practices. Those who engage in sexual practices merely for the pleasure of mutable bliss or while grasping onto such concepts as the Self (*ātman*) and creator are said to be incapable of actualizing imperishable bliss.

Thus, one may conclude that it is not the nature of gnosis itself that sustains and eliminates one's mental obscurations but one's mode of experiencing it. As long as one's experience of gnosis as innate bliss is mutable, the cycle of transmigration is perpetuated. When one's experience of innate bliss becomes immutable, Buddhahood is realized. The mode of one's experience of innate bliss directly depends upon the presence or absence of mental obscurations, and the presence of those obscurations proceeds from the fusion of consciousness and matter. The *Kālacakratāntra*'s view that one's gross, physical body is a mere hindrance to Buddhahood is supported by the earlier-mentioned theory that mental afflictions and *karma* arise from the elements that form the human body.

From the premise that one's psycho-physical factors are the source of one's mental obscurations arises the necessity of transforming the ordinary physical nature of one's body and mind. The *Kālacakratāntra* considers that transformation as the most direct means leading to the state in which one's own body, speech, and the mind of immutable bliss become mutually pervasive and unified. The result of that transformation is none other than the actualization of the four bodies of the Buddha, the four aspects of gnosis and bliss.

Within the context of *Kālacakratāntra* soteriology, to *actualize* the four bodies of

the Buddha means to bring one's own gnosis into conscious experience. One reason for this is that the *presence* of the gnosis of imperishable bliss in sentient beings does not imply that it is *fully manifest in their experience*. When nondual gnosis becomes fully manifest, an ordinary sentient being becomes the Bhagavān Kālacakra, who, according to the *Vimalaprabhā*, "is praised by the Jinas in all the *tantras* as Vajrasattva, the word *evaṃ*."¹⁷⁰ The Kālacakra tradition's interpretation of Vajrasattva, which is based on the definition given in the *Ādibuddhatantra*, is almost identical to that of the *Hevajatantra*. It states:

Gnosis that is entirely indivisible (*abheda*) is called the "*vajra*." A being (*sattva*) who is the unity of the three worlds is called "Vajrasattva."¹⁷¹

Likewise, according to the *Vimalaprabhā*, the word *evaṃ* designates Vajrasattva in this way: the letter *e* denotes the space-element, which is the *vajra* throne occupied by syllable *vaṃ*, which denotes the body, speech, mind, and gnosis.¹⁷² In light of these interpretations of Buddhahood, one may say in conclusion that in this tantric system, the actualization of the innate gnosis of imperishable bliss involves the realization of the unitary nature of all forms of existence, which manifests in the four aspects that are, like space, all-pervading and empty of inherent existence.

The Transformative Body

The Path of Actualizing Gnosis, the Individual, and the Path as the Individual

The *Kālacakratantra*'s theory of the nature of gnosis, *prāṇas*, spiritual ignorance, and mental afflictions, as well as the relationship among them, provides the rationale for the *Kālacakratantra* practices for eliminating mental afflictions and actualizing the four bodies of the Buddha. Among the *Kālacakratantra*'s multifaceted approach to the eradication of mental afflictions, several are especially significant. First, the path of eliminating mental afflictions is the path of sublimating the afflictive nature of mental afflictions into the peaceful and pure nature of the enlightened beings who are the pure aspects of the elements from which mental afflictions arise. Second, the path of sublimating mental afflictions in the *Kālacakra* tradition is the path of recognizing the ultimate nature of one's own mental afflictions, which is gnosis. This path is comprised of two methods. One is a conceptual method of familiarizing oneself with the ultimate nature of one's own mind by means of autosuggestion, specifically by means of generating oneself in the form of the deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*. The other method is a nonconceptual method of spontaneous and direct recognition of gnosis as the ultimate nature of one's own mind. The first method, which is characteristic of the stage of generation (*utpatti-krama*), is contrived and based on one's faith in the innately pure nature of one's own mind, and it uses primarily one's powers of imagination. Even though it is characterized by freedom from grasping onto one's own ordinary psycho-physical aggregates, or one's self-identity as an ordinary being, it is still characterized by holding onto the imagined self-identity. The second method, which is characteristic of the stage of completion (*sampatti-krama*), draws upon the experience of imperishable bliss and the direct perception of the innately pure nature of one's own mind, which is devoid of grasping onto any identity. Thus, on the path of sublimating mental afflictions, the *Kālacakratantra* adept starts the purificatory practices using one type of conceptualization in order to eliminate another type of conceptualization, and concludes with the eradication of all conceptualization. In this

tantric tradition then, mental afflictions are nothing other than conceptualizations that obstruct the unmediated perception of the empty and blissful nature of one's own mind.

In the *anuttara-yoga-tantras* other than the *Kālacakratantra*, the primary goal of the path of sublimating mental afflictions is the purification of their immediate causes, beginning with the *prāṇas*. In those *tantras*, the purified *prāṇas* eventually become a purified material substance of the mind of clear light, and one's pure illusory body arises from this substance. In the *Kālacakratantra*, on the other hand, the primary goal of sublimating mental afflictions is the complete eradication of all present and future *prāṇas*. It is upon such complete eradication that the body of empty form, called "the form of emptiness" (*śūnyatā-bimba*), and the mind of immutable bliss arise. Since the cessation of the circulation of the *prāṇas* induces the actualization of Buddhahood in the form of *Kālacakra*, Buddhahood is characterized here as the "windless state" (*avāta*) that one attains by means of wind. Similarly, the nonabiding *nirvāṇa* (*apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa*) of the Buddha is also explained in terms of the absence of the wind of the *prāṇas*.¹ The eradication of the *prāṇas* is characterized by two conditions of the mind. First, due to the destruction of the *prāṇas*, one's dualistic mind becomes unified, and it becomes both the apprehending subject and the apprehended object. In this way, one's own mind becomes a form of emptiness (*śūnyatā-bimba*), in which conceptualizations cannot arise. Second, the destruction of the *prāṇas* and the elements that they carry eradicates the five psycho-physical aggregates and, in their absence, imperishable bliss arises.

Thus, in the context of the *Kālacakratantra*, by completely extinguishing one's own psycho-physiological constitution and processes, one extinguishes the source of one's own cycle of rebirth and attains the state of the eternal manifestation of the gnosis of supreme, immutable bliss. From the premise that one's ordinary psycho-physical factors, which are composed of atomic particles, are the source of one's mental obscurations, arises the necessity of transforming the ordinary, physical nature of one's body and mind into their blissful nature. The *Kālacakra* tradition considers that process of transformation as the most direct means to the state of the mutual pervasiveness and unification of one's own body, speech, and the mind of immutable bliss.

The diverse aspects of this tantric path of actualizing the gnosis of immutable bliss are closely related to the previously described views of the *Kālacakra* tradition on the ways in which the four bodies of the Buddha are present within the individual and on the manners in which their powers manifest in the bodily, verbal, and mental capacities of the human being. In light of the *Kālacakra* tradition's identification of the individual with the four bodies of the Buddha, the path of actualizing the gnosis of immutable bliss can be seen as the path of bringing forth the true nature of one's own bodily, verbal, and mental capacities. The path of actualizing the four bodies of the Buddha is the path of the purification of the previously mentioned four bodily drops from the habitual propensities of spiritual ignorance, which are sustained by *prāṇas*. Therefore, in the *Kālacakra* tradition, the path of actualizing the fourfold mind of the Buddha is inseparable from the path of the sublimation, or transformation, of the *prāṇas* and *nāḍīs* in the body. In that regard, the phenomenal forms of the four bodies of the Buddha and the manners in which they manifest within every individual are most intimately related through their common causal relation-

ship to the *prāṇas*. Their interrelation is even more clearly demonstrated in the *Kālacakratantra*'s multifaceted, practical approach to the actualization of the four bodies of the Buddha.

With regard to this, one may say that in this tantric system, the transformative body of the path of actualizing blissful gnosis is the path of the mind's self-discovery through the elimination of its inessential ingredients with which the mind falsely identifies itself. Thus, the transformative body of the *Kālacakratantra* path is nothing else than the gnostic body revealing itself in the process of elimination until there is nothing left to be identified with, until the basis for self-affirmation, or self-identification, ceases and nondual self-awareness arises.

As in other related tantric systems, here too, the transformative path of actualizing the gnosis of immutable bliss consists of the three main stages of practice: the initiation (*abhiṣeka*), the stage of generation, and the stage of completion. However, the contents of these three main stages of *Kālacakratantra* practice differ from those in the other *anuttara-yoga-tantras*, since the form of Buddhahood that is sought in this tantric tradition differs from those in the other related *tantras*.

In this tantric tradition, the actualization of the four bodies of the Buddha as the four aspects of the Jñānakāya is instantaneous, but the path of purifying the four drops, which are the inner supports of the four types of the Jñānakāya, is gradual. The process of sublimating the four drops is characterized by the *Kālacakratantra*'s unique path consisting of three types of accumulations: the accumulations of merit (*puṇya*), ethical discipline (*śīla*), and knowledge (*jñāna*). For this tantric system, the accumulation of merit results in the attainment of the first seven *bodhisattva-bhūmis*, and the accumulation of ethical discipline leads to the attainment of the eighth, ninth, and tenth *bodhisattva-bhūmis*. The accumulation of ethical discipline is defined here as meditation on reality (*tattva*),² and it is said to result from observing the tantric vows (*vrata*) and pledges (*niyama*), especially those related to the practices with a consort. Lastly, the accumulation of knowledge results in the attainment of the eleventh and twelfth *bodhisattva-bhūmis*, which are characterized by the actualization of the gnosis of imperishable bliss and by the unification of one's own mind and body. Consisting of not two but three types of accumulations, this tantric path is closely related to the yogic practices that are specific to the *anuttara-yoga-tantras* and to the relevant schema of the twelve *bodhisattva-bhūmis*.

Likewise, this entire tantric path of spiritual transformation is seen as being of two kinds, mundane and supramundane, due to the differing qualities of tantric disciples. Thus, the stage of initiation is said to be of two kinds: mundane (*laukika*) and unexcelled (*anuttara*). The mundane initiations are those that involve the generation of bliss by means of sexual union with an actual consort (*karma-mudrā*). Due to their involvement with union with an actual consort, these mundane initiations are considered ineffective in bringing forth nondual gnosis, without which there is no Buddhahood; and their inefficacy is explained as follows. If in the union of the tantric couple, the bliss of the male consort that has arisen due to the female consort is the gnosis of the female consort, then the bliss of the female consort that has arisen due to the male consort is the gnosis of the male consort. In that case, there are two types of gnosis between the two consorts, which means that there is an absence of nonduality. Accordingly, the *Vimalaprabhā* asserts that the mundane initiations are taught

not for the sake of bringing about the experience of nonduality but for converting people to this tantric path.³ The unexcelled initiations, on the other hand, do not involve the union of two sexual organs but are practiced by means of the *mahāmudrā*-consort, or the empty form consort, and these initiations do give rise to the nondual gnosis of imperishable bliss.

Similarly, the stage of generation, in which one meditates on the sexual union of oneself and an imagined consort (*jñāna-mudrā*) is regarded as a mundane *sādhana*, for it brings about only mundane results, such as the perishable experience of innate bliss and the mundane *siddhis*. The stage of completion, on the other hand, in which one meditates by means of the *mahāmudrā*-consort, is seen as the supramundane path to Buddhahood, for it induces the realization of the supramundane gnosis.

Thus, the transformative body of the path takes on first a mundane form that is accessible to the tantric practitioner who is new to the *Kālacakratantra* theory and practice; and it gradually evolves into the supramundane form by means of which the mundane person is transformed into a supramundane being.

The Transformative Body of the Path of Initiation

This tantric path of the accumulation of merit, ethical discipline, and knowledge begins with the sevenfold initiation into the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, and this is seen as the first step in enabling the individual's four *vajras* to eventually arise as the four bodies of the Buddha. It ends with two sets of the four higher initiations, intended for the advanced Buddhist practitioners. The first seven initiations authorize the initiate to engage in the meditations on *mantras*, *mudrās*, and *maṇḍalas* that will facilitate the elimination of mental afflictions and the consequent accumulation of merit. According to the *Kālacakra* tradition, they are given for the sake of converting sentient beings to this body of the path and for providing the initiate with an understanding of this tantric path. The four higher initiations authorize the initiate to engage in the meditation on emptiness that has the best of all aspects, which facilitates the accumulation of knowledge;⁴ and the four highest initiations authorize the initiate to become a tantric master, a *vajrācārya*.

The initial method of manifesting the four bodies of the Buddha is characterized by the initiate's entrance into the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* through the four gateways of the *maṇḍala*-palace, which symbolize the four gates of liberation corresponding to the four bodies of the Buddha, and by the initiate's visualization of his own psycho-physical constituents in the form of deities. This visualization during the stages of initiation of one's entire psycho-physical makeup in the form of deities is unique to *Kālacakratantra* practice.

1. The first two initiations, the Water (*udaka*) and Crown (*mukūṭa*) initiations, are designed to induce the initial eradication of the obscurations of the drop in the *lalāṭa cakra* by sublimating the initiate's elements and psycho-physical aggregates, respectively. Thus, these two initiations, during which the initiate is led into the *maṇḍala* through the northern gate, are said to facilitate the transformation of the initiate's body and the eventual actualization of the five Tathāgatas. Thus, this initial purification of the drop in the *lalāṭa* is believed to empower the initiate to actualize the Nirmāṇakāya of the Buddha.⁵

The other two initiations, the Crown-pendant (*paṭṭa*) and the Vajra-and-Bell (*vajra-ghaṇṭā*) initiations, are designed to purify the drop in the throat-*cakra* by purifying the right and left *nāḍīs*. In doing so, these two initiations, which are performed at the southern gate of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, are said to facilitate the purification of the initiate's speech-*vajra* and the actualization of the Saṃbhogakāya. The Crown-pendant initiation is said to empower the initiate to attain the ten powers that are for the sake of attaining the ten perfections; whereas the Vajra-and-Bell initiation is said to empower the initiate to attain imperishable bliss by purifying the semen and uterine blood.⁶

Likewise, the Vajra-Conduct (*vajra-vrata*) and Name (*nāma*) initiations, which are performed at the eastern gate of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, are designed to facilitate the purification of the drop at the heart-*cakra*, which is the mind-*vajra*, and the actualization of the Dharmakāya. The Vajra-Conduct initiation is said to induce the initial sublimation of the sense-faculties and their objects and to empower the initiate to attain the divine eye (*divya-cakṣu*) and other divine faculties. The Name initiation is believed to purify the faculties of action (*karmendriya*) and their activities and to empower the initiate to attain the four Immeasurables (*brahma-vihāra*).⁷

Lastly, the Permission (*anujñā*) initiation, which is performed at the western gate of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, is designed to remove the defilements of the drop at the navel-*cakra* and to facilitate the actualization of the Jñānakāya. It is said to empower the initiate to set the Wheel of Dharma in motion.

In this tantric system, the initiate who has undertaken this initial purification of the body, speech, mind, and gnosis by means of the seven initiations is considered authorized to practice the *sādhana*s for the sake of the mundane *siddhis* (*laukika-siddhi*).⁸ While receiving these seven initiations, the initiate takes the twenty-five tantric vows (*vrata*) and the pledges to avoid the fourteen root downfalls (*mūlāpatti*). In this manner, he increases his store of merit.⁹ The power of merit that the initiate accumulates by means of the first seven initiations is considered effective in facilitating the attainment of the first seven *bodhisattva-bhūmis*, either in this life or in a future rebirth. If the initiate visualizes the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* while he is being initiated into it, then he accumulates enough merit to empower him to attain mastery over the seven *bodhisattva-bhūmis* in his present life. But, if the initiate who is free of the ten nonvirtues dies, he attains mastery over the seven *bodhisattva-bhūmis* in the next life.¹⁰

2. The two higher initiations, the Vase (*kumbha*) and Secret (*guhya*) initiations, are designed to increase the initiate's ethical discipline that qualifies him to eventually attain permanent mastery over the other two *bodhisattva-bhūmis*, Acalā and Sādhumatī. In terms of the sexual *yoga* of Kālacakratāntra practice, attaining Acalā ("Immovable") entails the immovability, or nonemission, of semen; and attaining Sādhumatī ("Good") entails the attainment of the mind of sublime bliss (*mahā-sukha-citta*) during sexual intercourse.¹¹ Likewise, the other two higher initiations, the Wisdom and Gnosis initiations, are believed to facilitate the attainment of the tenth *bodhisattva-bhūmi*, Dharmameghā, which is described in this tradition as "the rain of sublime bliss that brings forth one's own well-being and the well-being of others," "the state of Mañjuśrī that removes the fear of cyclic existence."¹² These empowerments are said to be effective due to the power of the ethical discipline that the initiate accumulated during the two earlier higher initiations.

The four higher initiations are believed to empower the initiate to attain the remaining *bodhisattva-bhūmis* by further purifying the habitual propensities of the previously accumulated impurities. In the course of these four higher initiations, the initiate engages in sexual union with an actual consort (*karma-mudrā*), experiences sexual bliss, and at the same time meditates on emptiness. At the same time, the initiate identifies himself with the Buddha's four *vajras*—the *vajras* of the body, speech, mind, and gnosis, respectively. Thus, in the Vase initiation, the initiate identifies himself with the body-*vajra*, and he mentally offers to his spiritual mentor the young consort, the *maṇḍala*, and prayers. When the offered consort returns, the initiate gazes at the imagined consort, whom he visualizes as Viśvamātā, and imagines caressing her breasts. By doing so, the initiate brings forth the experience of bliss (*ānanda*), and while experiencing that bliss, he meditates on emptiness. This unified manner of experiencing bliss and cognizing emptiness during the Vase initiation is believed to facilitate the purification of the drop at the forehead-*cakra* and to further empower the initiate to attain the Nirmāṇakāya.

During the Secret initiation, the initiate identifies himself with the speech-*vajra* and visualizes his spiritual mentor engaging in sexual union with his own consort. Subsequently, he visualizes that rays of light, which are emitted from the spiritual mentor's heart, bring all the deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* into the spiritual mentor's mouth. Those deities descend into the spiritual mentor's heart, and from there they arrive at the tip of his sexual organ, at which point, the initiate imagines the spiritual mentor placing a drop of purified semen into the initiate's mouth. The initiate gazes at the sexual organ of the consort and experiences sexual bliss, due to which the drop of *bodhicitta* from the throat-*cakra* descends into the initiate's heart-*cakra* and causes the initiate to experience supreme bliss (*paramānanda*). While experiencing supreme bliss, the initiate meditates on emptiness. Thus, by unifying the initiate's experience of great bliss with his cognition of emptiness, the Secret initiation facilitates the purification of the drop in the throat-*cakra* and further empowers the initiate to attain the Saṃbhogakāya.

During the Wisdom initiation, the initiate identifies himself with the mind-*vajra*. Here, the initiate enters into sexual union with the imagined consort (*prajñā-mudrā*) whom he offered to his spiritual mentor during the Vase initiation. During the imagined sexual union, the initiate visualizes his sexual organ as a five-pointed *vajra* and the organ of his consort as light out of which arises a red lotus with three petals, with the yellow syllable *phaṭ* in its center. Due to this sexual union, the initiate experiences innate bliss (*sahajānanda*) as the drop of *bodhicitta* descends from the heart-*cakra* into the navel-*cakra*. While experiencing this innate bliss, the initiate meditates on emptiness. Unifying the initiate's experience of bliss with his cognition of emptiness in this manner, the Wisdom initiation is said to facilitate the purification of the drop in the heart-*cakra* and to empower the initiate to attain the Dharmakāya.

During the Gnosis initiation, the initiate identifies himself with the gnosis-*vajra*, and he identifies his consort with Viśvamātā. He enters into sexual union with the consort and experiences supreme, immutable bliss (*parama-sama-sukha*). Due to the experience of this bliss, a drop of *bodhicitta* descends from the navel-*cakra* to the tip of his sexual organ and remains there without being emitted. While experiencing the moment of supreme, immutable bliss, the initiate meditates on emptiness. In

this manner, the Gnosis initiation facilitates the purification of the drop in the navel-cakra and empowers the initiate to attain the Jñānakāya.

Thus, one may say that in the four higher initiations, it is the initiate's experience of the four types of bliss¹³ and emptiness that induces the further purification of the four drops. In the Vase initiation, it is the experience of sexual bliss induced by the imagined caressing of the body and breasts of the consort; in the Secret initiation, it is the experience of sexual bliss induced by the imagined sexual union; in the Wisdom initiation, it is the experience of sexual bliss induced by the pulsation (*spanda*) of the tip of the sexual organ; and in the Gnosis initiation, it is the experience of sexual bliss induced by nonpulsation (*niḥspanda*) that is caused by passion for the *mahāmudrā* consort. In light of this, the four higher initiations themselves can be classified into the two types of path. The first two higher initiations can be characterized as the mundane, or conceptual, path, and the other two as the supramundane, or nonconceptual path. The four types of blissful experiences then are seen as the means by which these four initiations contribute to the removal of the habitual propensities of former mental obscurations and counteract their further emergence.

The initiate's progress through the eleven initiations is seen in the Kālacakra tradition as a symbolic representation of one's spiritual progress on the Buddhist path from a lay person to a monastic novice, to a fully ordained monk, and finally, to a Buddha. This symbolic progression is considered to be related to the initiate's empowerment to eventually attain the twelve *bodhisattva-bhūmis*. Thus, one who is initiated in the first seven initiations is referred to as a "lay Buddhist" (*upāsaka*), for he is predicted to attain the first seven *bodhisattva-bhūmis*. One who is initiated in the higher Vase initiation is referred to as a "novice" (*śrāmaṇera*), a "Buddha's son" (*buddha-putra*), or a "youth," since he is predicted to attain the eighth *bodhisattva-bhūmi*. Similarly, one who is initiated in the higher Secret initiation is referred to as a "fully ordained monk" (*bhikṣu*), "an elder" (*sthavira*), or "a crown-prince (*yuva-rāja*) of the Buddha," for he is predicted to attain the ninth *bodhisattva-bhūmi*. One who is initiated in the higher Wisdom and Gnosis initiations is referred to as a "Buddha," or "a teacher of the Dharma," since he is predicted to attain the tenth *bodhisattva-bhūmi*.¹⁴ The four highest initiations empower the initiate to attain the remaining two *bodhistava-bhūmis*.

This analogy of the progression through the eleven initiations to the progression from a Buddhist lay life to Buddhahood is one of many internal indications of the Kālacakra tradition's strong monastic orientation. This analogy is similar to the *Sekoddeśa*'s analogy of the four higher initiations to the four stages of life—childhood, adulthood, old age, and Buddhahood. However, the *Sekoddeśa* draws its analogy on the basis of the experience of the four types of bliss during the four higher initiations, whereas the *Kālacakratāntra*'s analogy is based on the predicted attainment of the *bodhisattva-bhūmis*. Therefore, in the *Sekkoddeśa*, one who is initiated in the higher Vase initiation is called a "child" (*bāla*), since he attains sexual bliss merely by touching the consort. One who is initiated in the higher Secret initiation is called an "adult" (*prauḍha*), for he experiences his bliss due to the imagined sexual union. One who is initiated in the higher Wisdom initiation is called an "old person" (*vr̥ddha*), for he experiences bliss caused by *bodhicitta* touching the tip of his sexual organ. Lastly, one who is initiated in the higher Gnosis initiation is called "the progenitor of all Pro-

tectors," "Vajrasattva," "a great being" (*mahā-sattva*), "Bodhisattva," "the nondual," "the indestructible," "the fourfold *vajra-yoga*," "Kālacakra," and so on, since his experience of bliss is caused by his passion for the *mahā-mudrā* consort.¹⁵

The four highest initiations (*uttarottarābhiṣeka*) have the same names as the four higher initiations. They are said to induce the further purification of the four drops from their obscurations. In the four highest initiations, the initiate is given ten consorts, representing the ten powers (*śakti*), or ten perfections. As in the earlier Vase initiation, here too the initiate experiences sexual bliss by arousing sexual desire due to mentally gazing and caressing the breasts of a consort who is chosen from among the ten. Due to the aroused desire, a drop of *bodhicitta* descends from his *uṣṇīṣa* into the *lalāṭa* and gives rise to bliss (*ānanda*). During the other three highest initiations, due to the imagined sexual union with the remaining nine of the ten consorts and due to the retention of semen, he sequentially experiences supreme bliss (*paramānanda*), extraordinary bliss (*viramānanda*), and innate bliss (*sahajānanda*). As in the four higher initiations, which came earlier, here too the experience of the four types of bliss is accompanied by meditation on emptiness. Due to this, the experience is believed to further facilitate the transformation of the *vajras* of the body, speech, mind, and gnosis into the four bodies of the Buddha.¹⁶ As with the preceding path of the four higher initiations, due to the experience of the four types of bliss, this fourfold path of initiation has both aspects: mundane and supramundane. In this way, the four highest initiations are the preliminary practices for the stage of completion.

In the four higher and the four highest initiations, the experience of the four types of bliss becomes the means of purifying one's own mental obscurations and facilitating the nondual vision of reality. As indicated earlier, the experience of sexual bliss is thought to exert its purifying power only when it is accompanied by both the retention of semen and meditation on emptiness. The following verses from the *Ādibuddhatantra* express this in the following manner:

In the union with an actual consort (*karma-mudrā*) and in desiring a gnosis-consort (*jñāna-mudrā*), those who firmly hold the vows should guard their semen (*bodhicitta*), the great bliss.

Upon placing one's own sexual organ into the vulva, one should not emit *bodhicitta*. Rather, one should meditate on the entire three worlds as the body of the Buddha.

Due solely to that guarded [*bodhicitta*], Buddhahood, which is completely filled with the accumulation of ethical discipline and is fully endowed with merit and knowledge, comes about in this lifetime.

The Samyaksambuddhas, who have attained the ten perfections, abide in the three times. By means of this [guarded *bodhicitta*], all Samyaksambuddhas turn the Wheel of Dharma.

There is no greater gnosis than this, which is the lord of the three worlds and is not devoid of emptiness and compassion for the sake of accomplishing its own well-being and the well-being of others.¹⁷

Thus, already in the stage of initiation, one's own gnosis that manifests as both sexual bliss, or passion, characterized by seminal nonemission, and as the cognition of emptiness, or dispassion, acts as the means for actualizing the gnosis of imperishable bliss.

The Transformative Body of the Path of the Stage of Generation

The second phase of the transformative body of the path of actualizing the four bodies of the Buddha is the stage of generation (*utpatti-krama*). It consists of four main phases of practice, which are classified as the four types of *sādhana*s:

1. the generation of the body, or the supreme king of *maṇḍala*s (*maṇḍala-rājāgṛī*), which is specified as the "phase of worship" (*sevān(ga)*),
2. the generation of the speech, or the supreme king of actions (*karma-rājāgṛī*), which is specified as the "auxiliary *sādhana*" (*upāsādhana*),
3. the *yoga* of the drops (*bindu-yoga*), which is characterized by the generation of the drops of semen and is specified as a "*sādhana*,"
4. and the subtle *yoga* (*sūkṣma-yoga*), which is characterized by the arising of bliss and is specified as the "sublime *sādhana*" (*mahā-sādhana*).¹⁸

This fourfold classification of the stage of generation corresponds to the fourfold classification of the Buddha's bodies, and it delineates the body of the path which is made up of progressively more subtle forms of tantric practice. The first two types of *sādhana*, which involve meditation on the fourfold *kālacakra-maṇḍala* and all its indwelling deities, are based on intricate mental imagery, which cannot be maintained without adequate meditative quiescence (*śamatha*). Moreover, the symbolic implications of the mental imagery sustained by meditative quiescence facilitate the contemplative's insight (*vipaśyanā*) into the empty and blissful nature of that imagery and its referents. Investigating the impermanent nature of the imagined deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, and thereby realizing his own impermanence and the impermanence of all sentient beings abiding within the triple world, the tantric contemplative realizes that nothing in the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* or in the three worlds is of enduring essence. Therefore, on the stage of generation, the path of the purification of the four drops is uniquely characterized by the simultaneous development of quiescence and insight. This path is complemented by the practice of the meditator's self-identification with the visualized deities, or the cultivation of divine pride, which is necessarily based on some conceptual understanding of the emptiness of inherent existence of the deities with whom the contemplative identifies himself.

The visual formation of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is called "the supreme sovereign *maṇḍala*" because it corresponds to the generation of the four bodies of the Buddha.¹⁹ When this mentally created, supreme, sovereign *maṇḍala* is conceived as the visual representation of the pure aspects of the contemplative's own gnosis, mind, speech, and body, it acts as the purifying agent of the meditator's four drops. The transformative power of the visualized *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is believed to lie in its efficacy to partially eradicate the obscurations of conventional reality (*saṃvṛty-āvaraṇa*), by allowing ultimate reality to manifest itself through the generated *maṇḍala*. However, as indicated earlier, its purifying efficacy is believed to be contingent upon the con-

templative's own understanding of emptiness. The *Kālacakratantra* asserts that one should engage in meditation on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* only after one has understood that "the entire world is empty," that ultimately "there is neither a Buddha nor spiritual awakening."²⁰ The transformative power of this practice is also said to lie in the contemplative's understanding that the entire *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, which is a mere illusion (*māyā*) and an ideation (*kalpanā*), is nothing other than the manifestation of one's own mind. Accordingly, the contemplative must understand that in order to free his mind from ideation, he must eventually leave behind this form of practice and, in order to transform his mind into the actual Kālacakra, the unity of bliss and emptiness, he must engage in nonconceptual meditation. In light of this, the *Kālacakratantra* states:

Because the entire *sādhana* of a *vajrī* is an illusion, o king, one should make one's own mind free of impurities; one should make it the lord of the *maṇḍala*.²¹

On the grounds that the visualized *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is a mere mental construct that arises nondually with the meditator's own mind, one may say further that in this stage of practice the transformative agent of the meditator's four drops is his own mind.

1. In the first phase of the stage of generation, the method of purifying the four drops is characterized by the visualization of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* and its diverse classes of deities, who represent the enlightened aspects of the meditator's body and of the cosmic body. As in the case of many Buddhist Mahāyāna meditational practices, here too, the confession of sins, rejoicing in virtue, taking refuge, and arousing the spirit of awakening (*bodhicitta*) precede the practice of meditative visualization.

The path of the actualization of the four bodies of the Buddha on the stage of generation involves meditative practices during which the tantric adept imaginatively dies as an ordinary person and arises as the Buddha Kālacakra. For that reason, the stage of generation begins with a meditation in which the tantric adept mentally casts off his transmigratory psycho-physical aggregates in order to obtain the supra-mundane aggregates (*lokottara-skandha*). In this phase of practice, prior to visualizing the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* as the sublimated aspect of his own body and of the cosmic body, the tantric adept imaginatively dissolves the atomic structure of his own body and the body of the universe. In order to relinquish his habituated sense of self-identity and establish his new identity, the meditator mentally disintegrates his body in the same manner that the body dissolves by itself during the dying process. By meditating on the water-element, he eliminates first the fire-element; then when the earth-element has lost its solidity due to the absence of fire and it becomes liquid, he dries it up by meditating on the wind-element, which he disperses afterward into space. After that, he meditates on the space-element as the reflection of emptiness, or as empty form, which transcends the reality of atoms.²² This manner of settling one's own mind on empty form and establishing it as one's true identity is a prerequisite for adequate meditative practice of generating oneself in the form of the deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*.

Whereas the first phase of the stage of generation is analogous to the stage of dying and the dissolution of the cosmos, the second phase of the stage of generation is analogous to conception in the womb and to the formation of the cosmos. It entails

the mental generation of the four divisions of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* as the mother's body and as the cosmic body. In this phase of practice, the tantric practitioner visualizes first the mind-*maṇḍala*, at the center of which is gnosis, which has the form of a lotus within the tetrahedral source of wisdom (*prajñā-dharmodaya*). In this way, he symbolically generates the Dharmakāya and the Jñānakāya of the Buddha, the sublimated aspects of the wind and earth *maṇḍalas* of the universe and of the mother's forehead and navel *cakras*. After mentally generating the mind-*maṇḍala*, the tantric contemplative visualizes the speech-*maṇḍala* encircling the mind-*maṇḍala*. By visualizing the speech-*maṇḍala*, he generates the Sambhogakāya of the Buddha, the sublimated aspect of the fire-*maṇḍala* of the universe and of the mother's throat-*cakra*. He further visualizes the body-*maṇḍala* encircling the speech-*maṇḍala*, and in this way, he generates the Nirmāṇakāya of the Buddha, the sublimated aspect of the water-*maṇḍala* of the cosmic body and of the mother's heart-*cakra*. Visualizing these four *maṇḍalas* of the gnosis, mind, speech, and body, together with their individual sets of four gates, portals, and the like, the tantric *yogī* mentally generates the sublimated universe and the mother's body, as well as his transformed environment, in which he will arise as the Buddha Kālacakra in the next phase of the stage of generation practice. (See figure 8.1.)

The following verses from the *Ādibuddhatantra* indicate the manner in which a tantric adept should understand that the *maṇḍalas* that he generates as the purified aspects of the mother's body and the cosmos are the symbolic representations of the Buddhahood into which he will arise as the Śuddhakāya:

The *maṇḍalas* of the mind, speech, and body correspond to the Buddha, Dharma, and sublime Saṅgha. The four *vajra*-lines correspond to the four divine abidings (*brahma-vihāra*).

A quadrangular [form within the *maṇḍala*] entirely corresponds to the four applications of mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthāna*),²³ and the twelve gates correspond to the cessation of the twelve links [of dependent origination].

Likewise, the exquisite portals correspond to the twelve *bhūmis*, and the cremation grounds in the eight directions correspond to the Noble Eightfold Path.

The sixteen pillars are [sixteenfold] emptiness, and the upper floors correspond to the elements. The crests correspond to the eight liberations, to the eight corporeals (*rūpin*),²⁴ and to the eight qualities.²⁵

The face and the sides [of the gates] accord with the classification of the mind, speech, and body. The five pure colors correspond to the five: ethical discipline (*śīla*), and the like.

The three fences in the *maṇḍalas* of the mind, speech, and body correspond to the three Vehicles, to the five faculties of faith, and the like, and to the five powers (*bala*) of faith, and so on.

The pavilions in the three *maṇḍalas* correspond to the *samādhis* and *dhāraṇīs*. The variegated jeweled strips of fabric correspond to all of the ten perfections.

INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY

UNIVERSE

green space - *maṇḍala*black space - *maṇḍala*red fire - *maṇḍala*white water - *maṇḍala*yellow earth - *maṇḍala*

Meru

moon-disc

sun-disc

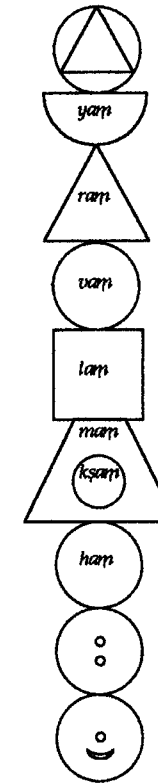
rāhu-disc*uṣṇīṣa*, *ḍomba**lalāṭa*, *śūdra*throat-*cakra*, *kṣatriya*heart-*cakra*, *brāhmaṇa*navel-*cakra*, *vaiśya*secret-*cakra*, *caṇḍāla**nāḍī* of semen*nāḍī* of feces*nāḍī* of urine

FIGURE 8.1 The body of the seed-syllables

The pearl-garlands and the half [pearl-garlands] correspond to the eighteen unique qualities [of the Buddha] (*āveṇikā-dharma*). *Bakulī* flowers correspond to the [ten] powers.²⁶ The balconies correspond to virtues.

[Balconies] filled with the sounds of bells and the like correspond to liberation through emptiness, and so on. Their state of being full of victory-banners corresponds to the [four] bases of supernatural powers (*ṛddhi-pāda*), and their glistening with mirrors corresponds to the [four] exertions (*prahāṇa*).

The vibration of their yak-tail whisk corresponds to the [seven] limbs of enlightenment, and their decorative garlands correspond to the nine divisions [of the Buddha's teaching]. The corners that are adorned with variegated *vajras* correspond to the four means of assembly (*saṃgraha*).

Their being studded with the four jewels of [the Four Noble] Truths at the junctures between the gates and crests and always being surrounded by five great circles [symbolizes] the five extrasensory perceptions (*abhijñā*).

They are surrounded by the *vajra*-chain of the constituents of enlightenment (*bodhyaṅga*) of one who knows all aspects, by a single wall of bliss, and by the light-rays of the gnosis-*vajra*.

The ever-risen moon and sun are in accordance with the division of wisdom and method. The pure mind, speech, and body are the Wheel of Dharma, the great pitcher, drum, tree of spiritual awakening, its wish-fulfilling jewels, and the like. This is a *maṇḍala* of splendid Kālacakra, which is the *dharma-dhātu*.²⁷

After purifying one's own perception and conception of the environment in this way, the tantric practitioner enters the next phase of the stage of generation, in which he imagines himself as an enlightened being arising in a pure environment. Therefore, this phase of the stage of generation is analogous to the individual's development in the mother's womb and to the origination of cosmic time. At this phase of practice, the tantric *yogī* generates the body of the Buddha Kālacakra as the sublimated form of the universe and of his own body by visualizing Kālacakra standing on the discs of the sun, moon, and Rāhu and emanating the five rays of light. This phase of visualization is analogous to the moment of conception in the womb. Thus, the sun, moon, and Rāhu represent the purified aspects of the mother's uterine blood, the father's semen, and the meditator's consciousness, which are joined in the purified mother's body that was generated earlier as the four *maṇḍalas*. The five rays of light symbolize the five types of gnosis, the purified aspects of the meditator's psycho-physical aggregates.

The next phase of visualization, which is analogous to the third month in the womb, represents the sublimation of the three links of dependent origination. In that phase, the meditator visualizes the Buddha Kālacakra standing in the *ālīḍha* posture,²⁸ which symbolizes the flow of the *prāṇas* in the meditator's right *nāḍī* and their retraction in his left *nāḍī*. With his feet, the Buddha Kālacakra crushes the hearts of Rudra and Māra, the meditator's mental defilements. Here the tantric contemplative visualizes Kālacakra in union with Viśvamātā, the personified representation of the perfection of wisdom, or gnosis, who is standing in the *pratyālīḍha* posture,²⁹ which symbolizes the flow of the *prāṇas* in the contemplative's left *nāḍī* and their retraction in his right *nāḍī*. By visualizing Kālacakra and Viśvamātā, the tantric adept mentally generates the two aspects of the Buddha's mind: bliss and emptiness. According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, Kālacakra represents innate bliss (*sahajānanda*), or supreme, imperishable bliss (*akṣara-sukha*); and Viśvamātā represents the gnosis of the emptiness that has all aspects (*sarvākāra-śūnyatā-jñāna*), which perceives the three times and is "purified by the elimination of the obscurations of conceptualizations (*vikalpa*) and the bliss of seminal flow (*cyavana-sukha*)."³⁰ Their sexual union within the pericarp of the lotus of the *maṇḍala* symbolizes the union of these two aspects of the Buddha's mind. The presence of these two deities in the heart of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is to remind the meditator that gnosis, characterized by bliss and emptiness, is the ultimate nature of all other deities in the *maṇḍala*, that is to say, of all other aspects of Buddhahood and of the meditator's own psycho-physical constituents. In other words, all other deities in the *maṇḍala* are to be understood as the emanations of the two principal deities. For example, Viśvamātā, who is the perfection of wisdom, becomes Vajradhātviśvarī for the sake of destroying ordinary hatred (*prākṛta-dveṣa*) and bring-

ing forth sublime hatred (*mahā-dveṣa*), which is the absence of hatred. She becomes Locanā for the sake of destroying ordinary delusion. Due to her sublime compassion, she becomes Māmakī for the sake of destroying ordinary pride, Pāṇḍarā for the sake of destroying ordinary attachment, and Tārā for the sake of eradicating ordinary envy, and so on. Likewise, Vajrasattva becomes Vairocana for the sake of illuminating the minds of deluded people, Amitābha for the sake of those afflicted by attachment, Ratnasambhava for the sake of generosity toward suffering beings, Amoghasiddhi for the sake of removing obstacles, and so on.³¹ In this way, unified bliss and emptiness, symbolized here by the two principal deities in sexual union, free the mind from its obscurations by sublimating the elements that give rise to mental obscurations.

At times, the two principal deities are also identified with the contemplative's aggregate of gnosis (*jñāna-skandha*) and the element of gnosis (*jñāna-dhātu*), respectively; and at other times, they are both referred to as the element of gnosis that gives rise to the individual's mental sense-faculty (*mano-indriya*). For this reason, they are also called "the gnostic deities" (*jñāna-devatā*).³²

The subsequent phases of the visualization of the deities accompanying Kālacakra and Viśvamātā are viewed as analogous to the further development of the fetus in the womb and to the sublimation of the remaining links of dependent origination. Thus, the tantric adept further visualizes the two principal deities surrounded by the eight goddesses who stand on the eight petals of the lotus and represent eight perfections. As he visualizes the other deities of the mind-*maṇḍala*—the four Buddhas and their consorts, the Vidyās, the deities with a tree and a pitcher (*sataru-sakalaśā*), the male and female Bodhisattvas, and the five male and female wrathful deities (*krodhendra*)—the tantric adept generates the sublimated aspects of his elements, sense-bases (*āyatana*), and other bodily constituents. The generation of the four Buddhas and their consorts and the male and female wrathful deities within the mind-*maṇḍala* is said to be analogous to the fourth month in the womb and to the sublimation of the fourth link of dependent origination.³³ Whereas the generation of the male Bodhisattvas is seen as analogous to the fifth month in the womb and to the sublimation of the fifth link of dependent origination or the six sense-faculties. The generation of their female consorts is analogous to the sixth month in the womb and to the sublimation of the sixth link of dependent origination.

In the schema of the fourfold *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, the gnostic couple, Kālacakra and Viśvamātā, who are the meditator's sublimated gnosis-aggregate and element, represent the Sahajakāya of the Buddha; all other deities of the mind-*maṇḍala* represent the Dharmakāya of the Buddha. The sequential visualization of the deities of the gnosis and mind-*maṇḍalas* illustrates the Kālacakra tradition's view of the Dharmakāya arising from the Sahajakāya as analogous to the arising of the sense-faculties and their objects from the elements. Accordingly, the Kālacakra tradition views the mental generation of the mind-*maṇḍala* as the sublimation of the meditator's conceptual and perceptual types of awareness. Every deity in the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* corresponds to the specific component of the human body or to its functions. Table 8.1 illustrates the manner in which the Kālacakra tradition identifies the six Buddhas and their consorts with the six elements, and the six male and female Bodhisattvas with the twelve sense-bases that arise from the six elements, respectively.³⁴

Upon generating this mind-*maṇḍala*, the contemplative generates the goddesses

TABLE 8.1 Buddhas and Bodhisattvas within the Human Body

Six male buddhas and bodhisattvas	Six female buddhas and bodhisattvas
Amoghasiddhi = the wind-element	Tārā = the wind element
Vaigarbha = the nose	Spārśavajrā = touch
Ratnasambhava = the fire-element	Pāṇḍarā = the fire element
Kṣitigarbha = the eye	Rasavajrā = taste
Vairocana = the earth-element	Locanā = the earth-element
Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhī = the body	Gandhavajrā = smell
Amitābha = the water-element	Māmakī = the water-element
Lokeśvara = the tongue	Rūpavajrā = form
Kālacakra = the gnosis-element	Viśvamātā = the gnosis-element
Samantabhadra = the mind	Śabdavajrā = sound
Akṣobhya = the space-element	Dharmadhātviśvarī = the space-element
Vajrapāṇi = the ear	Dharmadhātuvajrā = a mental object

of the *nāḍīs* of time (*kāla-nāḍī*) within the speech-*maṇḍala*, in addition to the eight goddesses (*devī*) and their attending sixty-four *yoginīs* as standing on the eight petals of the speech-*maṇḍala*. The visualization of the eight principal goddesses and their retinue of *yoginīs* of the speech-*maṇḍala* is analogous to the seventh month in the womb and to the sublimation of the seventh link of dependent origination. By visualizing the goddesses of the speech-*maṇḍala*, the tantric adept generates the Saṃbhogakāya of the Buddha.³⁵

After visualizing the speech-*maṇḍala*, the meditator visualizes the diverse classes of deities of the body-*maṇḍala*: namely, the *nairītyas*, *sūryadevās*, *nāgas*, and *pracaṇḍās*. Visualizing the twelve *nairītyas*, the tantric practitioner generates the sublimated aspects of the twelve main *nāḍīs* of his body; and visualizing the twelve lotuses on which they are standing, he generates the twelve purified aspects of the *cakras* within the twelve joints of his arms and legs, which are called the action-*cakras* (*karma-cakra*) and the activity-*cakras* (*kriyā-cakra*). Similarly, mentally creating the *sūryadevas*, the contemplative generates the purified aspects of the *nāḍīs* of his hands, feet, crown-*cakra*, and anus. The generation of these two classes of deities, *nairītyas* and *sūryadevas*, is viewed as analogous to the eighth month in the womb and to the sublimation of the eighth link of dependent origination. Visualizing the ten *nāgas* and ten *pracaṇḍās* within the body-*maṇḍala*, the *yogī* generates the sublimated *nāḍīs* of his ten fingers and ten toes. This visualization is said to be analogous to the ninth month in the womb and to the sublimation of the ninth link of dependent origination. Visualizing the deities of the body-*maṇḍala* in this way, the contemplative generates the Nirmāṇakāya of the Buddha.

Just as all of the aforementioned deities of the four *maṇḍalas* symbolize the purified aspects of the four bodies of the Buddha that are latently present in the body of the fetus, so do they symbolize the purified aspects of the four bodies of the Buddha that are latent in the body of the individual born from the womb. The deities of the gnosis and mind *maṇḍalas* symbolize the four bodies of the Buddha latently present in the body of a young child; and the deities of the speech and body *maṇḍalas* symbolize the actualized aspects of the four bodies of the Buddha that are present in the

TABLE 8.2.A The Gnosis and Mind Maṇḍalas within the Individual

Gnosis- <i>maṇḍala</i>					
Sahajakāya			Sahajakāya		
Kālacakra			consciousness		
Viśvamātā			gnosis		
divyās			semen		
satarusakalāsās			uterine blood		
Mind- <i>maṇḍala</i>					
Dharmakāya		Saṃbhogakāya		Nirmāṇakāya	
Buddhas	aggregates	Bodhisattvas	sense-bases	krodhas	arms
vidyās	elements				legs
					hair, etc.

body of the individual.³⁶ Thus, by mentally generating the deities of the four *maṇḍalas*, the tantric adept imaginatively transmutes his entire life, from the time of conception until death, into the state of Buddhahood.

Tables 8.2.a–b show the correspondences among the deities of the fourfold *maṇḍala*, the four bodies of the Buddha, and one's bodily constituents.

The Kālacakra tradition sees this entire phase of the generation of the body of Kālacakra as the fourfold *kālacakra-maṇḍala* as a meditation on perfect awakening with five aspects (*pañcākāra-saṃbodhi*); and it considers the following phase of *upāsādhana* to be a meditation on perfect awakening with twenty aspects.³⁷

2. The *upāsādhana* phase of the stage of generation practice involves a *sādhana* on the enlightened activities of the deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, that is, the activities of the four bodies of the Buddha. In this phase of practice, the tantric contemplative imaginatively awakens his consciousness, which has fallen into stupor and is unaware of its true nature, and he stimulates it to engage in enlightened activities. For example, he imagines the female consorts of the four Buddhas, who symbolize the four Immeasurables, the pure aspects of the four bodily elements, as stand-

TABLE 8.2.B The Speech and Body Maṇḍalas within the Individual

Speech- <i>maṇḍala</i>					
Sahajakāya			Sahajakāya		
devīs			flow of <i>prāṇas</i> from the navel- <i>cakra</i>		
yoginīs					
Body- <i>maṇḍala</i>					
Dharmakāya		Saṃbhogakāya		Nirmāṇakāya	
<i>sūryadevas</i>	contraction of the limbs and indistinct speech	<i>nāgas</i>	growth of the first teeth and distinct speech	<i>pracaṇḍās</i>	falling of the first teeth, growth of the new teeth, and the period until death

ing in his four *cakras* and sexually inciting the Buddha Kālacakra, that is, his own mind-*vajra*, with these songs:

I am Locanā, the mother of the world, present in the *yogī*'s seminal emission. O Kālacakra, arise with the nature of my *maṇḍala* and desire me.

I am Māmākī, a sister, present in the *yogīs*' spiritual maturation. O Kālacakra, arise with the nature of my *maṇḍala* and desire me.

I am Pāṇḍarā, a daughter, present in any man among the *yogīs*. O Kālacakra, arise with the nature of my *maṇḍala* and desire me.

I am Tārīṇī, a wife, present in the *yogīs*' purity. O Kālacakra, arise with the nature of my *maṇḍala* and desire me.

Protector of the world, whose intention is the deliverance of the world, upon perceiving the empty *maṇḍala*, expand the *maṇḍalas* of the body, speech, and mind.³⁸

Hearing their songs, one's own mind—the Buddha Kālacakra who is absorbed in emptiness—awakes, perceives that the entire world is like an illusion, and engages in activities for the benefit of all sentient beings.³⁹ This arousing of one's own awareness to engage in enlightened activities is closely related to the mutual union of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*'s female and male deities, which are the wisdom and method aspects, or the mind and body aspects, of the Buddha. The sexual union of the male and female deities, who belong to different families, is pertinent to the Kālacakra tradition's view of the ways in which the mutual pervasion of the four bodies of the Buddha gives rise to their enlightened activities. For example, the union of the deities comprising the Sahajakāya and the body-*vajra* gives rise to Kālacakra's body, just as their phenomenal aspects give rise to the body of the fetus. Likewise, the mutual pervasion of the deities representing the Dharmakāya and the speech-*vajra* is for the sake of teaching the Dharma, just as their phenomenal aspects within the body of the individual give rise to the prattling of a child. The union of the deities symbolizing the Saṃbhogakāya and the mind-*vajra* acts for the well-being of all sentient beings. The union of the deities who comprise the Nirmāṇakāya and the gnosis-*vajra* is said to bring about the liberation of sentient beings, just as their phenomenal aspects in the body of the individual give rise to the capacity for sexual bliss at the age of sixteen.⁴⁰

Upon generating the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* and all its deities in this way, the tantric adept performs a self-empowerment. He first purifies his bodily and mental constituents by invoking the deities that represent the *vajras* of the enlightened body, speech, and mind, and he requests the initiation from the goddess who belongs to the *maṇḍalas* of the body, speech, and mind. This imagined initiation is said to further purify the contemplative's *cakras* and facilitate the actualization of the four bodies of the Buddha. Thus, the eight *divyās* purify his eight-spoked heart-*cakra* and facilitate its transmutation into the Dharmakāya of the Buddha. The four Buddhas and their consorts, who are collectively multiplied by two due to being classified in terms of body and mind, purify the sixteen-spoked *lalāṭa* and facilitate its transmutation into the Sahajakāya. The six Bodhisattvas, their consorts, and the four *krodhas*, who become thirty-two when multiplied by two due to being classified in terms of wisdom and method, purify the thirty-two spoked throat-*cakra* and facilitate its transforma-

tion into the Saṃbhogakāya. Similarly, the sixty-four *yoginīs* purify the sixty-four spoked navel-*cakra* and facilitate its transformation into the Nirmāṇakāya. All other *cakras* in the joints of the contemplative's arms and legs, all the *nāḍīs* in the body, and the psycho-physical aggregates are purified by other deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*.⁴¹ Upon imagining himself being initiated and purified in this manner, the tantric adept identifies himself with the body, speech, mind, and gnosis of all the Buddhas in order to further diminish his grasping onto his ordinary psycho-physical aggregates.

The two aforementioned phases of the stage of generation, the *sevāṅga* and *upāsādhana*, constitute the Kālacakratantra's deity-yoga (*devatā-yoga*), which is believed to give mundane *siddhis*. Therefore, in this tantric system, a *sādhana* on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is referred to as "a mundane *sādhana*" (*laukika-sādhana*). In light of the fact that meditation on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is a conceptual meditation that involves mental visualization and imagination, the *Vimalaprabhā* speaks of the first two types of *sādhana*s of the stage of generation as the *sādhana*s in which the object of meditation lacks duration, for it is characterized by origination and cessation. The *kālacakra-maṇḍala* as the object of a *sādhana* is understood to lack duration in the sense that in the moment in which the tantric contemplative concentrates on the principal deity in the center of the *maṇḍala*, he is no longer aware of the other deities in the *maṇḍala*. Likewise, when the *yogī* concentrates on the blue face of Kālacakra, he is not cognizant of Kālacakra's red, white, and yellow faces, and so on. Since meditation on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is characterized by limited and momentary cognition, it is considered ineffective in directly inducing the state of nonconceptual and imperishable gnosis. From this vantage point, the *Vimalaprabhā* speaks of the *sādhana*s of the stage of generation as inferior *sādhana*s, which are designed for spiritually less mature practitioners. It comments in this regard:

The Bhagavān, who knows reality, upon resorting to conventional truth in accordance with the power of sentient beings' inclinations, taught this truth as dependently originated gnosis—which is the domain of the dependently originated sense-faculties and is limited and capable of limited functions—to simple-minded people who are lacking in courage, who do not seek ultimate reality, whose minds are intimidated by deep and profound gnosis, who are satisfied with *sādhana*s for pacification and other such acts, who are attached to the pleasures of sense-objects and delight in the *sādhana*s for mundane *siddhis*, alchemy, eye-ointment, pills, and the magic daggers.⁴²

On the one hand, the *Vimalaprabhā* acknowledges that there are inconceivable powers in this limited, conceptual meditation, along with the *mantras*, gems, pills, magical daggers, alchemical substances, and similar objects that are of limited functions. On the other hand, it affirms that the mundane knowledge and mundane *siddhis* that one acquires through the practice of conceptual meditation cannot perform the limitless functions of supramundane omniscience and the supramundane *siddhi*.⁴³ The limited knowledge and mundane *siddhis* do not bring about the omniscient language or supernatural powers (*ṛddhi*), because they are not free of mental obscurations. Therefore, the *yogī* who practices conceptual meditation is thought to be unable to bring about the well-being of all limitless sentient beings in the way that the

Jñānakāya, which is free of conceptualizations, is able to do. Since the imagined *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is a reflection of the contemplative's own mind, which is shrouded with obscurations, then the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* is also a manifestation of the contemplative's mental obscurations. The *Vimalaprabhā* explains this in the following manner:

When a phenomenon (*dharma*) that is with obscurations is made manifest, the *yogī* does not become omniscient; when a phenomenon that is free of obscurations becomes manifest, the *yogī* becomes omniscient. The omniscient one has the divine eye and ear, knowledge of others' minds, recollection of former lives, omnipresent, supernatural powers, the destruction of defilements (*āsrava*), ten powers, twelve *bhūmis*, and the like. He who meditates on the *maṇḍala-cakra*, on the other hand, does not become Vajrasattva who has ten powers, but destroying his path to omniscience and being overcome by false self-grasping, he thinks: "I am Vajrasattva who has ten powers."⁴⁴

This assertion not only reveals the *Vimalaprabhā*'s view of the stage of generation practice as inferior to that of the stage of completion, but it also suggests that the stage of generation can be detrimental to the realization of the ultimate goal of *Kālacakratāntra* practice. Further analysis of the text indicates that this is the *Kālacakra* tradition's reaction to some people's belief that due to the power of the *sādhana* using the *maṇḍala*, the contemplative's psycho-physical aggregates will actually become transformed into the aspects of the *maṇḍala* and will thereby directly cause Buddhahood. Therefore, the *Vimalaprabhā* also asserts that the contemplative cannot become a Buddha by the power of the generation stage practice alone and without the accumulation of merit and knowledge, just as a pauper who is devoid of merit cannot become a king by merely imagining that he is the king.⁴⁵ Although it denies the efficacy of the *sādhana* on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* for eliminating all of one's mental obscurations, it never denies that it has certain purificatory powers, if practiced with the understanding that the imagined deities are not ultimate truth and that one's own impure body is not manifestly the pure body of the deity.

The deity-yoga of the stage of generation is followed by two yogic practices: the *yoga* of drops (*bindu-yoga*) and the subtle *yoga* (*sūkṣma-yoga*). The *yoga* of drops and the subtle *yoga* are designed to facilitate the purification of the four drops by inducing an experience of the four types of bliss. The *yoga* of drops directly induces the emergence of the drops of semen, and the subtle *yoga* induces the attainment of bliss caused by the flow of semen. The *Ādibuddhatantra* defines these two types of *yogas* in this manner:

That which makes the ambrosia that is of the nature of semen flow in the form of a drop and that holds the four drops is called the "yoga of drops."

That which, transcending any partition, is partless and holds the highest point of the four *dhyanas* is called the "subtle yoga," because it transcends [seminal] emission.⁴⁶

The practice of the two *yogas* involves a *sādhana* on sexual bliss with a consort who in this stage of practice is commonly an imagined consort, also called a "gnosis-consort" (*jñāna-mudrā*). According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, an actual consort is prescribed for simple-minded practitioners, an imagined consort for medially mature

yogīs, and the *mahāmudrā* consort, who is implemented in the stage of completion, is prescribed for superior *yogīs*.⁴⁷

3. In the *yoga* of drops, during union with a consort, the contemplative visualizes himself as Vajradhara and meditates on the three worlds as being a reflection of the Buddha. Not emitting semen, he generates heat, called "*caṇḍālī*," in his navel-*cakra*. Upon generating *caṇḍālī*, the contemplative imagines that in the left *nāḍī* of his navel-*cakra*, it incinerates the five *maṇḍalas* of the *prāṇas*, which are the phenomenal aspects of the five Tathāgatas, and that in the right *nāḍī* of the same *cakra*, it incinerates the *prāṇas* of the sense-faculties and their objects, which are the phenomenal aspects of the consorts of the five Tathāgatas. The incineration of the consorts of the five Tathāgatas implies here the cessation of activity of the sense-faculties, because the mind apprehends the *dharma-dhātu*. When *caṇḍālī* incinerates the consorts of the five Tathāgatas, semen begins to flow in the form of a drop. The drop of semen (*bodhicitta*) flows to the top of the head, and from there it sequentially flows into the throat, heart, navel, and secret *cakras*, bringing forth the experience of the four types of bliss: bliss (*ānanda*), supreme bliss (*paramānanda*), extraordinary bliss (*viramānanda*), and innate bliss (*sahajānanda*), respectively. When a drop of *bodhicitta* descends into the throat and melts there, it becomes the purified drop of speech (*vāg-bindu*); when it melts in the heart, it becomes the purified drop of the mind (*citta-bindu*); when it melts in the navel, it becomes the purified drop of gnosis (*jñāna-bindu*); and when it melts in the secret-*cakra*, it becomes the purified drop of the body (*kāya-bindu*).

4. In the practice of subtle *yoga*, the drop of purified *bodhicitta* that descends into the secret *cakra* during the practice of the *yoga* of drops, now sequentially ascends into the navel, heart, throat, and *uṣṇīṣa*, bringing forth the experience of the aforementioned four types of bliss, which melt the atomic nature of the four drops and facilitate their transformation into the four bodies of the Buddha.⁴⁸ Thus, in the practice of these last two *yogas*, the path of the sublimation of the four drops is the path of the generation of sexual bliss, and the agent of sublimation is that very bliss. It is said that as the tantric adept purifies the drops of the body, speech, and mind in this manner, he also purifies the desire, form, and formless realms, which he previously imagined as the reflection of the Buddha. Mentally retracting the purified three realms with the light rays of his gnosis, or sexual bliss characterized by seminal non-emission, the tantric contemplative brings forth the gnosis of the three times (*trikāya-jñāna*).⁴⁹

The Transformative Body of the Path of the Stage of Completion

The deity-*sādhana* of the stage of generation is viewed in this tantric system as characterized by ideation or imagination (*kalpanā*). As such, it is considered to induce directly the attainment of mundane *siddhis* and only indirectly to induce the attainment of spiritual awakening as the supramundane *siddhi* (*lokottara-siddhi*) or the *mahāmudrā-siddhi*. The preceding practices of the *yoga* of drops and the subtle *yoga* mark a transitional process from the stage of generation and its conceptualized *sādhana* to the stage of completion and its nonconceptualized *sādhana*s. The practice

of the stage of completion is seen as the most pertinent to the attainment of spiritual awakening, for it is free of ideation and is uncontrived. It is free of ideation because it entails meditation on the form of emptiness (*śūnyatā-bimba*), or empty form, in which one does not imagine the deity's bodily form. Thus, due to the absence of the *yogī*'s imagination of the bodily form, there is no appearance of empty form; and since the tantric *yogī* meditates on the empty form, it cannot be said that there is an absence of appearance of empty form. In this regard, the meditation on empty form is meditation on the nonduality of existence and nonexistence and on cyclic existence as devoid of inherent existence. In light of this, the *Vimalaprabhā* characterizes meditation on empty form as a nonlocal, or nonlimited (*apradeśika*), meditation since it is devoid of all mundane conventions. It also interprets this form of meditation as a tantric implementation of the Mādhyamika doctrine.⁵⁰ Therefore, it is considered here inappropriate for one who wishes to attain the supramundane *siddhi* to imagine the empty form—which is the universal form that has all aspects and holds all illusions—in terms of limited shapes, colors, symbols, and the like. In contrast to the *sādhana* on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, due to the absence of all conceptualizations, meditation on empty form is not characterized by the origination or cessation but by the absence of everything. Just as it excludes the visualization of Kālacakra and other deities, so does it exclude one's self-identification with Kālacakra.⁵¹ Due to these characteristics, meditation on empty form is called the “*sādhana* of supramundane reality” (*lokottara-tattva-sādhana*), the “*gnosis-sādhana*,” or the “*sādhana* on the form of emptiness” (*śūnyatā-bimba-sādhana*).⁵²

Contrary to the *sādhana* on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, the *gnosis-sādhana* of the stage of completion is believed to lead to achieving the *mahāmudrā-siddhi*. The *mahāmudrā* is understood here as the perfection of wisdom, characterized by the absence of inherent existence of all phenomena, the source of all phenomena (*dharmodaya*), which is the Buddha-field, the place of joy (*rati-sthāna*), and the place of birth (*janma-sthāna*). It is not a field of the transmigratory beings' attachment and aversion, nor is it an outlet of the ordinary bodily constituents, because it is the mind of imperishable time (*akṣara-kāla*), free of origination and cessation, embraced by the body that is free of obscurations as its wheel (*cakra*). It is said that whoever frequently and steadily meditates on this sublime emptiness, “the mother of innate bliss, who is a measure of the manifestation of one's own mind and is devoid of ideation with regard to all phenomena, and whoever embraces her, is called the omniscient Bhagavān who has attained the *mahāmudrā-siddhi*.”⁵³ Thus, by practicing a *sādhana* on the *mahāmudrā*, one practices a *sādhana* on the ultimate nature of one's own mind; whereas by practicing the *sādhana* on the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, one meditates on the conventional nature of one's own mind. These defining characteristics of conceptual and nonconceptual types of meditative practices are the most crucial factor in determining their soteriological efficacy with regard to their ability to provide one with the adequate accumulations of merit and knowledge. The Kālacakra tradition strongly affirms that just as the accumulation of merit does not take place without service to sentient beings, so the accumulation of knowledge does not take place without meditation on supreme, imperishable gnosis.

The practice of the stage of completion entails abandoning conceptual meditation, as well as sexual practices with the actual and imagined consorts. The union

with either one of these two consorts is believed to induce perishable bliss only, the bliss characterized by pulsation (*spanda*). In contrast, union with the *mahāmudrā* consort, or the “empty form-consort, who is of the nature of a prognostic mirror and is not imagined,”⁵⁴ is believed to induce supreme, imperishable bliss that is devoid of pulsation (*niḥspanda*).⁵⁵

The *gnosis-sādhana* is divided into four main phases: worship (*sevā*), the auxiliary *sādhana* (*upāsādhana*), the *sādhana*, and the supreme *sādhana* (*mahā-sādhana*). This four-phased *sādhana* describes the six-phased *yoga* (*ṣaḍ-aṅga-yoga*) of the *Kālacakratantra*, which consists of the following six phases: retraction (*pratyāhāra*), meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*), *prāṇāyāma*, retention (*dhāraṇā*), recollection (*anusmṛti*), and concentration (*samādhi*).

The first two phases of the six-phased *yoga*, retraction and meditative stabilization, constitute the worship phase of the *gnosis-sādhana*. They are also called the “tenfold *yoga*,” since by means of these two phases, the contemplative mentally apprehends the ten signs, including smoke, and so on. The subsequent phases of *prāṇāyāma* and retention constitute the *upāsādhana*, which is characterized by perception of the subtle *prāṇic* body. The recollection phase constitutes the *sādhana* stage and is characterized by the experience of the three imperishable moments of bliss within the secret, navel, and heart *cakras*. Finally, the concentration phase of the six-phased *yoga* constitutes the *mahā-sādhana*, which is characterized by the unity of gnosis and its object and is accompanied by imperishable mental bliss.⁵⁶ These four categories of the six-phased *yoga* are said to correspond to the body, speech, mind, and gnosis *vajras* of the Buddha, or to his four faces in the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*, for they bring forth the manifestation of the four bodies of the Buddha.

On the stage of completion, the path of the purification of the four drops is characterized by meditation on the four drops. The final purification of the four drops takes place in the final phase of the six-phased *yoga*. Since the practice of the six *yogas* is believed to bring about the purification of the six aggregates—the aggregates of gnosis, consciousness, feeling, mental formations, discernment, and the body—it is interpreted in this tantric tradition as the way of actualizing the six Tathāgatas: namely, Vajrasattva, Akṣobhya, Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Vairocana.

The Six-Phased Yoga

The *Kālacakratantra*'s *ṣaḍ-aṅga-yoga* begins with the manifestation of the mentally nonconstructed appearances of one's own mind, that is to say, the nighttime and daytime signs, and ends with the manifestation of one's universal form (*viśva-bimba*). In this way, the whole process of the *ṣaḍ-aṅga-yoga* is a meditative process of bringing into manifestation the successively more subtle and more encompassing aspects of one's own mind.

1. The *yoga* of retraction (*pratyāhāra*) involves the meditative practice of retracting the *prāṇas* from the right and left *nāḍīs* and bringing them into the central *nāḍī*. In this phase of practice, the contemplative stabilizes his mind by concentrating on the aperture of the central *nāḍī* in the *lalāṭa*, having the eyes opened with an upward gaze called the gaze of the ferocious deity, Uṣṇīṣacakrī. As a result of that,

the *prāṇas* cease to flow in the left and right *nāḍīs* and begin to flow in the central *nāḍī*. The cessation of the *prāṇa*'s flow within the left and right *nāḍīs* severs the connections between the five sense-faculties and their objects. Consequently, the five sense-faculties and their objects become inactive, meaning, the six types of consciousness cease to engage with their corresponding objects, and bodily craving for material things diminishes. This disregard for the pleasures of the body, speech, mind, and sexual bliss is what is meant here by worship. As the ordinary sense-faculties disengage, the extraordinary sense-faculties arise. Due to that, the ten sequential signs—the signs of smoke, a mirage, fire-flies, a lamp, a flame, the moon, the sun, the supreme form, and a drop—spontaneously appear; but these images are none other than appearances of one's own mind. As the contemplative's mind becomes more stabilized, the ten signs appear more vividly, and the contemplative's perception of external appearances diminishes. Wisdom and gnosis become the apprehending mind, and the ten signs, which are like an image in a prognostic mirror, become the apprehended objects. Thus, gnosis apprehends itself in the same way that the eye sees its own reflection in a mirror. This entering of the apprehending mind (*grāhaka-citta*) into the apprehended mind (*grāhya-citta*) constitutes its nonengagement with external objects.

The first four signs appear during the practice of retraction at nighttime or in a dark and closed space. Their appearance indicates that the *prāṇas* within the *nāḍīs* in the intermediate directions of the heart-*cakra* have entered the *madhyamā*. The other six signs appear during the practice of retraction-*yoga* during the daytime and in open space.⁵⁷ A drop appears as the tenth sign with the form of the Buddha in its center. This Buddha is the *Nirmāṇakāya*, which is devoid of sense-objects due to its freedom from matter and ideation (*kalpanā*). Afterward, the *yogī* hears a sound that is not produced by any impact (*anāhata-dhvani*), which is the *Samḥogakāya*. The appearance of the first four of the six daytime signs indicates that the *prāṇas* within the *nāḍīs* in the cardinal directions of the heart-*cakra* have entered the central *nāḍī*; and the appearance of the last two signs indicates that the winds of *prāṇa* and *apāna* have been dissolved. Due to the spontaneity of this arising of the ten signs, the purified aggregate of gnosis (*jñāna-skandha*) is considered to be uncontrived or nonconceptualized (*avikalpita*).⁵⁸

The *yoga* of retraction is said to induce the state of *Kālacakra* and lead to the attainment of the body of *Kālacakra* by purifying the aggregate of gnosis (*jñāna-skandha*). In terms of mundane results, such a *yoga* can accomplish a *siddhi* by which all one's words come true. This occurs due to the inactivity of the ordinary sense-faculties, which empowers the contemplative's speech with *mantras*.

2. The *yoga* of meditative stabilization (*dhyāna*) refers here to a meditative absorption on the all-pervading form (*viśva-bimba*), which is also practiced with the gaze of *Uṣṇīṣacakrī*. It is designed to unify the five sense-faculties and their objects. Due to the tenfold classification of the sense-faculties and their objects as the apprehending subjects and the apprehended objects, meditative stabilization is considered here to be of ten kinds. It is also interpreted as a mind that has become unified with empty form as its meditative object and is characterized by the five factors of wisdom (*prajñā*), investigation (*tarka*), analysis (*vicāra*), joy (*rati*), and immutable

bliss (*acala-sukha*). According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, wisdom here means observing the empty form; investigation means apprehending its existence; analysis implies ascertainment of that empty form; joy means absorption into the empty form; and immutable bliss is the factor that unifies the mind with empty form.⁵⁹ During the initial practice of the *yoga* of meditative stabilization, the ten signs, which appeared earlier during the retraction phase, spontaneously reappear. During the daytime *yoga*, the tantric *yogī* gazes at the cloudless sky either during the morning or afternoon, with his back turned to the sun, until a shining, black line appears in the center of the drop. Within the central *nāḍī*, the body of the Buddha, which is the entire three worlds, appears. It looks clear like the sun in water, and it has all aspects and colors. It is identified as one's own mind that is free of the sense-objects and not as someone else's mind, because it lacks knowledge of other beings' minds. Thus, in the six-phased *yoga*, one first perceives the appearance of one's own mind with the physical eye (*māṃsa-cakṣu*) of the Buddha, and at the culmination of the *yoga*, one perceives the minds of others with the divine eye of the Buddha.

The *yoga* of meditative stabilization is said to induce the state of *Akṣobhya*, for it purifies the aggregate of consciousness (*vijñāna-skandha*), and to induce the actualization of the five kinds of extrasensory perception (*abhijñā*). In terms of mundane results, it is believed to induce the experience of mental and physical well-being.

3. The *yoga* of *prāṇāyāma* is thought to be effective in unifying the ten right and left *maṇḍalas* by bringing the *prāṇas* into the central *nāḍī*. For this reason, it is said to be of ten kinds. In the practice of this *yoga*, the contemplative stabilizes the *prāṇas* within his navel-*cakra* by concentrating on the center of that *cakra*, which is regarded as the seat of the drop associated with the fourth state of the mind (*tuṛīya*). In this phase of the *yoga*, the tantric adept practices the gaze of the ferocious being *Vighnāntaka*, directing his gaze toward the *lalāṭa*. During inhalation, the contemplative apprehends the arisen form of the *Kālacakra*'s *Samḥogakāya* and brings it from his nostril into the navel, where *Kālacakra* and his consort merge with the drop. As the *Samḥogakāya* descends into the navel and merges into the drop there, the drop disappears, but *Kālacakra* and his consort remain in the navel-*cakra*. During exhalation, *Kālacakra* and *Viśvamātā* rise above the level of the drop that has reappeared and ascend along the central *nāḍī*. When they ascend during *pūraka*,⁶⁰ the tantric adept concentrates first on the lower aperture of the *madhyamā*, wherefrom *Kālacakra* is brought into the navel; during *recaka*,⁶¹ he brings it down into the lower *cakra*. Practicing in this way, the tantric contemplative brings the *prāṇas* into the navel-*cakra* and stabilizes them there. As a result of this, the external breath ceases, and the contemplative engages in the practice of *kumbhaka*.⁶² After perceiving the *Samḥogakāya*, by means of *kumbhaka*, in the drop of the navel-*cakra*, he unifies the wind of the *prāṇa* that flows above the navel with the wind of the *apāna* that flows below the navel until a circle of the rays of light appears surrounded by his own body. After the contemplative stabilizes his mind on that drop in the navel-*cakra*, the abdominal heat (*caṇḍālī*) arises, melts the drop at the top of the *uṣṇīṣa*, and induces the experience of the previously mentioned four types of bliss. When the drop reaches the throat-*cakra*, the tantric adept experiences bliss (*ānanda*); when it reaches the heart-*cakra*, he experiences the sublime bliss (*mahānanda*); when it reaches the

navel-*cakra*, he experiences the extraordinary bliss (*viramānanda*); and when it reaches the secret-*cakra*, he experiences the innate bliss (*sahajānanda*). By melting the four drops, the *caṇḍālī* melts the afflictive and cognitive obscurations.

The *yoga* of *prāṇāyāma* is said to induce the state of Amoghasiddhi, for it purifies the aggregate of mental formations (*saṃskāra-skandha*); and in terms of mundane benefits, it is believed to purify the right and left *nāḍīs* by conveying the *prāṇas* into the central *nāḍī*, and it makes the tantric adept worthy of being praised by Bodhisattvas.

4. The *yoga* of retention (*dhāraṇā*) is also considered to be of ten kinds due to the tenfold classification of the *prāṇa*'s leaving from and arriving to the *cakras* of the navel, heart, throat, *lalāṭa*, and *uṣṇīṣa*. The *yoga* of retention entails the unification of the winds of *prāṇa* and *apāna* in the navel-*cakra* and the practice of the gaze of Vighnāntaka. The unification of these two winds is accompanied by the manifestation of Kālacakra and his consort. In the subsequent stages of this *yoga*, the contemplative continues this practice by sequentially concentrating on the *cakras* of the heart, throat, *lalāṭa*, and *uṣṇīṣa*, which are associated with the elements of water, fire, wind, and space, respectively. As a result of this practice, the four elements sequentially dissolve into one another, and the *yogī* experiences the four types of bliss. As the contemplative's concentration gradually moves from the navel-*cakra* to the upper *cakras*, he experiences the four types of ascending bliss; and as his concentration shifts from the *uṣṇīṣa* to the lower *cakras*, he experiences the four types of descending bliss. After experiencing these types of bliss, due to the cessation of the *prāṇa*'s movements, the contemplative's mind becomes unified, and he apprehends the form of emptiness (*śūnyatā-bimba*), the spontaneously arisen appearance of Kālacakra and Viśvamātā.

The *yoga* of retention is said to induce the state of Ratnasambhava, since it purifies the aggregate of feeling (*vedanā-skandha*). Due to the power of this *yoga*, it is said that the tantric adept attains the ten powers (*bala*) and is purified of Māras and mental afflictions, due to unifying his mind and destroying the flow of *prāṇa*.

5. The *yoga* of recollection (*anusmṛti*) implies here the union of the mind with empty form, the state of freedom from all conceptualizations.⁶³ In the *yoga* of recollection, the contemplative perceives in his navel-*cakra* the form of Kālacakra and Viśvamātā as innumerable rays of light consisting of five colors. The *yoga* of recollection is said to induce the state of Amitābha, since it purifies the aggregate of discernment (*saṃjñā-skandha*). In terms of immediate results, it is said to induce the realization of the form of gnosis (*jñāna-bimba*), or the empty form. Due to the power of that form, one is purified to the point that one appears as a stainless disc of light.

6. The *yoga* of *samādhi* is also classified into ten kinds, due to the cessation of the ten winds of *prāṇa*.⁶⁴ It is said to induce the state of Vairocana, since it purifies the aggregate of form (*rūpa-skandha*). According to the *Vimalaprabhā*, the contemplative who becomes purified by the *yoga* of *samādhi* attains the Sahajakāya within a period of three years and three fortnights.⁶⁵

In the *samādhi* phase, the object of gnosis (*jñeya*) and gnosis (*jñāna*) itself become unified and give rise to supreme, imperishable bliss. For that reason, the *samādhi* that is practiced here is defined as "a meditative concentration on the form of gnosis (*jñāna-bimba*)."⁶⁶ It is also interpreted as the imperishable bliss that arises

from the union of the apprehended object (*grāhya*) and the apprehending subject (*grāhaka*).⁶⁷ This sixth phase of *yoga* is characterized by the simultaneous stacking of red and white drops in inverted order within the individual *cakras* and by the resultant experience of the 21,600 moments of immutable bliss. In this phase of the *yoga*, the tantric adept stacks 3,600 white drops of *bodhicitta*, starting at the tip of the sexual organ and ending at the *uṣṇīṣa*; and he stacks the same number of red drops of *bodhicitta*, beginning at the *lalāṭa* and ending at the tip of the sexual organ. As the bliss courses through the six *cakras* during the 3,600 moments, it manifests two *bodhisattva-bhūmis* within each of the six *cakras*, due to the destruction of *prāṇas*. This stacking of 3,600 drops within the six *cakras* brings about the experience of 21,600 moments of immutable bliss. By the efficacy of these moments of immutable bliss, 21,600 *karmic prāṇas* cease; and consequently, 21,600 material elements of the *yogī*'s body transform into a body having the aspect of emptiness (*śūnyatākāra*). Accordingly, the material aspects of the four drops also vanish, together with a cessation of the states of the mind of waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and the fourth state; for the drops are the supports of *bodhicitta*, which is this fourfold mind of transmigratory beings. Due to the melting of the material nature of the four drops, which is their obscuration (*āvaraṇa*), pure gnosis, or the self-awareness of imperishable bliss, arises, and it becomes of four kinds, corresponding to the four bodies of the Buddha. The manner in which imperishable bliss transforms the elements of the body is likened to the manner in which a stainless jewel transforms stone and other elementary substances into a gem by merely touching them, without shattering them.⁶⁸ It is said that from the moment that one's material nature becomes transformed into empty form, its earth aspect is not perceived as solid, its water aspect is not perceived as liquid, its fire aspect is not fiery, nor does its wind aspect move anywhere. Because of the absence of matter, it has an empty aspect, the aspect of space. Likewise, although endowed with colors, it is colorless, due to the absence of matter; and though endowed with all aspects, it is invisible to the foolish.⁶⁹ As one's own body transforms into empty form, one's mind pervades space and abides in the gnosis of the minds of others; the body pervades the mind, and speech pervades the body. In this way, the four mutually pervading aspects of the Buddha become actualized as the four bodies of the Buddha that dwell in all sentient beings who are born from the womb. It is said that from that point on, being compelled by supreme compassion, the Śūddhakāya of the Buddha enters the realm of *karma* (*karma-bhūmi*) for the sake of liberating sentient beings, is conceived in the womb, teaches Dharma, and creates the limitless illusions of his Nirmāṇakāya.⁷⁰

One may conclude here that within the methodological framework of the Kālacakra system, meditative concentration (*samādhi*) is given special attention in every stage of practice. It is in meditative concentration that the tantric adept finally attains the supramundane psycho-physical aggregates and supreme, imperishable bliss. As in the stage of generation, so too in the stage of completion, meditative concentration is characterized by the union of quiescence (*śamatha*), or bliss, and insight (*vipaśyanā*), or gnosis of that bliss.

The path of actualizing the four bodies of the Buddha in all stages of Kālacakratāntra practice—initiation, generation, and completion—is the path of utilizing one's own bliss and gnosis in order to completely and permanently manifest these

two aspects of one's own mind. Thus, in this tantric tradition, the innate purity and blissfulness of one's own mind is the transformative agent, the transformative means as the body of the path, and the transformed body of Buddhahood. That is to say, the empty and blissful gnosis is both the *agent* that actualizes gnosis and the *object*, the actualized gnosis itself. This perspective on the gnosis of imperishable bliss as the cause and result of Buddhahood is based on the previously discussed view of the *Kālacakratāntra* on gnosis as the essential nature (*tattva*) and the support (*ādhāra*) of all phenomena. For as soon as gnosis is asserted to be the ground of reality, it inevitably plays a central role in the soteriology of the *Kālacakratāntra*.

The role of gnosis in the *Kālacakratāntra*'s soteriology parallels the salvific role of the *tathāgata-garbha* in the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition. For example, one reads in the *Śrīmālāsūtra* that the *tathāgata-garbha* is the support (*ādhāra*) of all conditioned (*saṃskṛta*) and unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) phenomena; and "if the *tathāgata-garbha* would not exist, there would be neither aversion to suffering nor longing, earnestness, and aspiration for *nirvāṇa*."⁷¹ This and other previously discussed parallels between the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition and the *Kālacakratāntra* tradition point to the influences of the earlier Mahāyāna interpretations of the inherent purity of the mind and its role in the path of the individual's spiritual awakening on the formulations of gnosis in the Kālacakra tradition and other tantric systems of the *anuttara-yoga* class.

As demonstrated earlier, in *Kālacakratāntra* practice, the process of bringing forth the pure and blissful nature of gnosis starts with inducing many moments of immutable bliss, or the bliss of seminal nonemission, and ends with the actualization of a single moment of supreme, immutable bliss. Thus, the mind of bliss that is characterized by nonemission purifies itself from its adventitious defilements by means of its own bliss; and due to the absence of defilements, it cognizes itself as such. It is in light of this view of the nonduality of gnosis and bliss, of the cause and effect of spiritual awakening, that the Kālacakra system identifies supreme, imperishable bliss as the gnostic *yoga* (*jñāna-yoga*), a unique peace.⁷² Therefore, in the context of the *Kālacakratāntra*, the multifaceted process of actualizing the gnosis of imperishable bliss, or Kālacakra, is seen as the nondual transformative body of the path of gnosis. This transformative body, which is characterized by the nonduality of the basis, agent, means, and result of transformation is Kālacakra, the nondual *tantra* of the wheel of time.

Appendix

Table B.1 illustrates the *Kālacakratāntra*'s fourfold classification of the deities of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*.

TABLE B.1 Deities of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala as the Four Bodies of the Buddha

Gnosis-maṇḍala	Mind-maṇḍala	Speech-maṇḍala	Body-maṇḍala
Sahajakāya	Dharmakāya	Sambhogakāya	Nirmāṇakāya
Kālacakra & Viśvamātā	Buddhas: Amoghasiddhi Ratnasambhava Amitābha Vairocana	Devīs: Carcikā Khagapatigamanā, or Vaiṣṇavī Śūkarī, or Vārāhī Ṣaṇmukhī, or Kaumārī Vajrahastā, or Aindrī Abdhivaktrā, or Brahmāṇī Raudrī Mahālakṣmī	Nairṭyas: Danuka, or Nairṭya Cala, or Vāyu Yama Pāvaka Ṣaṇmukha Yakṣa Śakra Brahmā Rudra Samudra Gaṇapati Viṣṇu
Divyās: Dhūmā Mārīci Khadyotā Pradīpā Pīṭadīptā Śvetadīptā Kṛṣṇadīptā Śaṣikālā	Vidyās: Tārā Pāṇḍarā Māmakī Locanā	Sixty-four Yoginīs: Bhīmā Ugrā Kāladamṣṭrā Jvaladanalamukhā Vāyuvagā Pracaṇḍā Raudrākṣī Sthūlanāsā	Sūryadevās: Mārīci Bhṛkuṭī Śrīkhalā Cundā Raudrekṣaṇā Atinilā Nīladaṇḍā Acala Anantavīrya Takṣirāja Sumbha Uṣṇīṣa Nāgas: Padma Karkoṭaka Vāsuki Śaṅkhaṇḍa Kulika Ananta Takṣaka Mahābja Jaya Vijaya
	Satarusakalāsās: goddesses with wish-fulfilling trees and pitchers filled with feces, urine, blood, and marrow	Śrī Māyā Kīrti Lakṣmī Suparamavijayā Śrījyā Śrījayanī Śrīcakrī Kaṅkāli Kālamatrī Prakupitavadanā Kālahīhvā Karālī	

(continued)

TABLE B.1 (continued)

Gnosis-maṇḍala	Mind-maṇḍala	Speech-maṇḍala	Body-maṇḍala
	<i>Krodhendras:</i>	Kālī	<i>Pracandās:</i>
	Atibala	Ghorā	Śvānavakatrā
	Jambhaka	Virūpā	Śūkarāsyā
	Stambhaka	Padmā	Vyāghravaktrā
	Māṇaka	Anaṅgā	Jambhukāsyā
	Uṣṇīṣa	Kumārī	Kākavaktrā
		Mṛgapatigamanā	Gṛdhravaktrā
	<i>Krodhinīs:</i>	Ratnamālā	Khagapativadanā
	Stambhakī	Sunetrā	Ulūkavaktrā
	Mānī	Klīnā	Vajrākṣī
	Jambhakī	Bhadrā	Atinilā
	Anantavīryā	Vajrābhā	
		Vajragātrā	
		Kanakavatī	
		Urvaśī	
		Citrālekḥā	
		Rambhā	
		Ahalyā	
		Sutārā	
		Savitṛī	
		Padmanetrā	
		Jalajavatī	
		Buddhi	
		Vāgīśvarī	
		Gāyatrī	
		Vidyut	
		Smṛti	
		Gaurī	
		Gaṅgā	
		Nityā	
		Turitā	
		Totalā	
		Lakṣmaṇā	
		Piṅgalā	
		Kṛṣṇā	
		Śvetā	
		Candralekhā	
		Śāśadharadhavanā	
		Haṃsavarṇā	
		Dhṛti	
		Padmeśā	
		Tāranetrā	
		Vimalaśāśadharā	

TABLE B.1 (continued)

Gnosis-maṇḍala	Mind-maṇḍala	Speech-maṇḍala	Body-maṇḍala
	<i>Bodhisattvas:</i>	<i>icchās:</i>	<i>Pratīcchās</i>
	Vajrapāṇi	Vidveṣecchā	
	Khagarbha	Stobhaneccchā	
	Kṣitigarbha	Pauṣṭīkeccchā	
	Lokeśvara	Stambhaneccchā	
	Viṣkambhī	Māraṇecchā	
	Samantabhadra	Utpādanecchā	
		Vādyecchā	
	<i>Vajrās:</i>	Bhūṣaṇecchā	
	Śabdavajrā	Bhojaneccchā	
	Sparśavajrā	Gandheccchā	
	Rūpavajrā	Aṅśukeccchā	
	Rasavajrā	Maithuneccchā	
	Gandhavajrā	Kaṇḍūyaneccchā	
	Dharmadhātuvajrā	Vadanagataka- photsarjaneccchā	
	<i>Pūjadevīs:</i>	Maleccchā	
	Gandhā	Nṛtyecchā	
	Mālā	Āsaneccchā	
	Dhūpā	Plāvaneccchā	
	Dīpā	Majjaneccchā	
	Lāsyā	Saṃtāpeccchā	
	Hāsyā	Bandhaneccchā	
	Vādyā	Mṛdūvacaneccchā	
	Nṛtyā	Śoṣaneccchā	
	Gītā	Uccātaneccchā	
	Kāmā	Sparṣecchā	
	Naivedyā	Ākṛṣṭecchā	
	Amṛtaphalā	Bandheccchā	
		Sarvāṅgakṣodha- necchā	
		Mūtraviṭsrāva- necchā	
		Vaṅcaneccchā	
		Bahukalaheccchā	
		Ucchiṣṭabhakt- ecchā	
		Samgrāmeccchā	
		Ahibandheccchā	
		Dāraḥākrośa- necchā	

Table B.2 demonstrates the manner in which the Kālacakra tradition identifies the thirty-seven *yoginīs* of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* as the sublimated aspects of the bodily constituents.

TABLE B.2 Yoginīs of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala and the Bodily Constituents

<i>Vidyās</i>	Bodily constituents
Locanā	the left and right sides of the back, and
Pāṇḍarā	
Māmakī	the female and male sexual organs
Tārā	
<i>Viśvamātā</i>	the spine (<i>kula-pīṭha</i>)
<i>Vajrās</i>	
Śabdavajrā	the joints of the right upper arm and
Sparśavajrā	the right hip,
Rūpavajrā	the six sense-bases (<i>āyatana</i>) of men
Gandhavajrā	the joints of the left upper arm and the
Rasavajrā	left hip,
Dharmadhātuvajrā	the six sense-bases (<i>āyatana</i>) of women
<i>Devīs</i>	
Carcikā	the joints of the right lower arm and
Vaiṣṇavī	the right knee,
Māheśvarī	the eight <i>samāna</i> -winds of men
Mahālakṣmī	
Brahmāṇī	the joints of the left lower arm and the
Aindrī	left knee,
Vārāhī	the eight <i>samāna</i> -winds of women
Kaumārī	
<i>Sūryadevīs</i> and <i>Krodhinīs</i>	
Atinīlā	the joints of the right hand and the
Atibalā	right foot,
Vajraśṛṅghalā	the men's base of the tongue, the two
Mānī	hands and feet, the right and left
Cundā	<i>nāḍīs</i> of the anus, and the <i>nāḍīs</i>
	of urine and feces
Stambhī	
Marīcī	the joints of the left hand and the left
Jambhī	foot,
Bhṛṅkuṭī	the women's base of the tongue, the
Raudrākṣī	two hands and feet, the right and left
	the <i>nāḍīs</i> of the anus, and the <i>nāḍīs</i>
	of urine and feces
<i>Pracandās</i>	
Śvānāsyā	the nails of the right and left fingers,
Kākāsyā	the eight bodily apertures
Vyāghrāsyā	
Ulūkāsyā	
Jambukāsyā	
Garuḍāsyā	
Śūkarāsyā	
Gṛdhrāsyā	

Tables B.3 illustrates the Kālacakra tradition's identification of the aforementioned thirty-seven *yoginīs* with the thirty-seven factors of spiritual awakening (*bodhi-pāṣṭika-dharma*). On this tantric path of sublimation, the bodily constituents that are represented by the following thirty-seven *yoginīs* become transformed into the thirty-seven factors of spiritual awakening. Thus, once the purification takes place, these bodily constituents are said to bear the characteristics of the Dharmakāya.¹

TABLE B.3 Yoginīs of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala and the Factors of Enlightenment

Yoginis	Factors
<i>Vidyās</i>	The four applications of mindfulness (<i>smṛtyupasthāna</i>)
Locanā	the mindfulness of body (<i>kāyānusmṛtyupasthāna</i>)
Pāṇḍarā	the mindfulness of feeling (<i>vedanānusmṛtyupasthāna</i>)
Māmakī	the mindfulness of the mind (<i>cittānusmṛtyupasthāna</i>)
Tārā	the mindfulness of dharmas (<i>dharmaṇusmṛtyupasthāna</i>)
<i>Viśvamātā</i> and <i>Vajrās</i>	The seven limbs of enlightenment (<i>sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Viśvamātā, or Rūpavajrā	equanimity (<i>upekṣā-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Śabdavajrā	mindfulness (<i>smṛti-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Sparśavajrā	the investigation of Dharma (<i>dharma-pravicaya-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Rūpavajrā	enthusiasm (<i>vīrya-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Gandhavajrā	love (<i>prīti-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Rasavajrā	repose (<i>prasrabdhi-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
Dharmadhātuvajrā	meditative concentration (<i>samādhi-sambodhyaṅga</i>)
<i>Devīs</i>	The four abandonments (<i>prahāṇa</i>)
Carcikā	the abandonment of nonarisen nonvirtues (<i>anutpannānāṃ pāpānāṃ prahāṇa</i>)
Vaiṣṇavī	the abandonment of arisen nonvirtues (<i>utpannānāṃ pāpānāṃ prahāṇa</i>)
Maheśvarī	a generation of virtues as the abandon- ment of nonarisen nonvirtues (<i>kuśalotpādana</i>)
Mahālakṣmī	a transformation into Buddhahood as the abandonment of arisen nonvirtues (<i>buddhatva-parināmanā</i>)
<i>Devīs</i>	The four bases of extraordinary powers (<i>ṛddhipāda</i>)
Brahmāṇī	the basis of the extraordinary power of aspiration (<i>chandhardhipāda</i>)
Aindrī	the basis of the extraordinary power of enthusiasm (<i>vīryardhipāda</i>)
Vārāhī	the basis of the extraordinary power of the mind (<i>cittardhipāda</i>)
Kaumārī	the basis of the extraordinary power of analysis (<i>mīmāṃsardhipāda</i>)

(continued)

TABLE B.3 (continued)

Yoginis	Factors
Sūryadevās and Krodhinīs	The five powers
Atinīlā	the power of faith (<i>śraddhābala</i>)
Atibalā	the power of enthusiasm (<i>vīryabala</i>)
Vajraśṅkhalā	the power of mindfulness (<i>smṛtibala</i>)
Mānī	the power of meditative concentration (<i>samādhibala</i>)
Cundā	the power of wisdom (<i>prajñābala</i>)
Sūryadvās and Krodhinīs	The five faculties (<i>indriya</i>)
Stambhī	the faculty of faith (<i>śraddhendriya</i>)
Marīcī	the faculty of enthusiasm (<i>vīryendriya</i>)
Jambhī	the faculty of mindfulness (<i>smṛtīndriya</i>)
Bhṛkuṭī	the faculty of meditative concentration (<i>samādhīndriya</i>)
Raudrākṣī	the faculty of wisdom (<i>prajñendriya</i>)
Pracandās	The eightfold noble path (<i>aṣṭāryāṅga-mārga</i>)
Śvānāsyā	the right view (<i>samyagdr̥ṣṭi</i>)
Kākāsyā	the right thought (<i>samyaksamkalpa</i>)
Vyāghrāsyā	the right speech (<i>samyagvāc</i>)
Ulūkāsyā	the right action (<i>samyakkarmānta</i>)
Jambukāsyā	the right livelihood (<i>samyagājīva</i>)
Garuḍāsyā	the right effort (<i>samyagvyāma</i>)
Śūkarāsyā	the right concentration (<i>samyaksamādhi</i>)

Table B.4 illustrates the manner in which the Kālacakra tradition identifies the universe with the fetus. This form of identification is characteristic of the stage of the generation practice, in which one visualizes the origination of the universe as the mother's body.

TABLE B.4 The Universe and the Fetus

The universe	The fetus
the wind- <i>maṇḍala</i>	the <i>lalāṭa</i>
the fire- <i>maṇḍala</i>	the throat- <i>cakra</i>
the water- <i>maṇḍala</i>	the heart- <i>cakra</i>
the earth- <i>maṇḍala</i>	the navel- <i>cakra</i>
Mt. Meru	from the navel- <i>cakra</i> to the secret <i>cakra</i>
sun, moon, and Rāhu	the <i>nāḍīs</i> carrying feces, urine, and semen

Conclusion

We have seen that the *Kālacakratantra* incorporates several literary genres, for its various parts display the distinctive features of tantric yogic, gnostic, prophetic, and medical literature. Its inclusion of different genres can be seen as yet another expression of a Buddhist tantric interpretation of a *tantra* as an expansion.

As a prophetic literary work, the *Kālacakratantra* shows features that are characteristic of prophetic literature in general. As we have seen in chapter 6 on the "Social Body," the *Kālacakratantra*'s eschatological prophecies serve as a political justification for tantric practices that defy the prescribed norms of social conduct. Their function also lies in supporting and legitimizing the power of a future universal monarch (*cakravartin*). The *Kālacakratantra*'s prophecies are concerned with both religious and sociopolitical legitimations. Since their audience consists not only of monastic and lay Buddhist communities but also of all other religious and political communities existing in India at that time, their religious and political functions are not entirely separated.

Like other Buddhist tantric and gnostic literary works, the *Kālacakratantra* engages in the reformulation of some common Indian Buddhist tenets. However, its reformulation cannot be accused of having no boundaries. In fact, one can clearly see that in all of the *anuttara-yoga-tantras* there is some consensus with regard to the boundaries of tantric reformulation. For example, in all such *tantras*, the radical break with the conventional rules of monastic celibacy, which is expressed in tantric hermeneutics and in tantric yogic practices, is seen as ascetic for as long as one's engagement in sexual tantric practices complies with the given guidelines for practice.

The reformulation of common Mahāyāna Buddhist tenets in the *Kālacakratantra* is based on exegesis. Accordingly, exegetical issues form the basis for the *Kālacakratantra*'s refutation of certain Mahāyāna interpretations of Buddhist teachings. Like gnostic and tantric texts of other religious traditions, the *Kālacakratantra* resorts to historical realism, pointing to the proximity of the earliest holders and practitioners of this tantric tradition to Buddha Śākyamuni as evidence of the validity of its reformulation of the conventional interpretations of Buddha's teachings. We have

12. The *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā* of Vajragarbhadāśabhūmīśvara, National Archives, Kathmandu, C 128, Mf., C 12/6.

13. See the *Vajrapādasārasaṃgrahapañjikā* of Nāḍapāda (Nāropā), Peking ed. of *The Tibetan Tripitaka*, #2070, p. 148, 4b/1.

14. See G. Orofino, 1994, p. 23, and J. Newman, "Outer Wheel of Time," 1987, p. 112.

15. *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, 1990, p. 440.

16. *Blue Annals*, p. 797.

I. The Broader Theoretical Framework of the Kālacakratantra

1. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 234, and 1986, Ch. 1, p. 19.

2. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 19.

3. *Ibid.* *Sekoddeśa*, 1994, vs. 3–6.

4. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 243.

5. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 18.

6. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 19.

7. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

8. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

9. *Ibid.*

10. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, vs. 238–240, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

11. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 2.

12. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 2.

13. *Aśvaghōṣa's Gurupañcāśikā* and the *Ḍākārṇavayoginītantra* give similar characterizations of a bad spiritual mentor.

14. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 3, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

15. A list of the ten principles, which is given in the last chapter of the *Vajrahḍaya-lamkāraṇatantra*, includes the ten inner and ten outer principles. The ten inner principles are: two rituals of warding off danger, the secret and wisdom empowerments, the ritual of separating the enemies from their protectors, the offering cake (*bali*) and *vajra*-recitation, the ritual of wrathful accomplishment, blessing the images, and establishing *maṇḍalas*. The ten outer principles are: the *maṇḍala*, meditative concentration (*samādhi*), *mudrā*, standing posture, sitting posture, recitation, fire ritual, applying activities, and conclusion. For the explanation of the ten outer principles, see *Prāśāntamitra's Māyājālatantrapañjikā*.

16. The *Gurupañcāśikā*, also known as the *Gurusevādharmapañcāśāḍgāthā*, traditionally ascribed to *Aśvaghōṣa*, vs. 7–9, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 3. The Sanskrit version of the *Gurupañcāśikā* was published in the *Journal Asiatique*, Paris, 1929, vol. 215: 255–263.

17. The *Ācāryapañikā*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 3:

Due to his complete knowledge (*parijñāna*) of the ten truths (*daśa-tattva*), among the three, a fully ordained monk (*bhikṣu*) is superior (*uttama*). A wondering ascetic (*śrāmaṇera*) is said to be middling (*madhyama*); and a householder (*gṛhastha*) is inferior (*adhama*) to the two.

Cf. the *Gurupañcāśikā*, vs. 4–5.

18. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 3.

19. Cf. the *Vajramālā-guhyasamāja-vyākhyā-tantra*, which also distinguishes three types of *vajrācāryas*, asserting that the best *vajrācārya* is a fully ordained monk, the middling *vajrācārya* is a Buddhist novice, and the lowest one is a householder who took tantric vows.

20. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 4.

21. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 4, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

22. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 214. See also Bu ston's annotations [201].

23. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 216.

24. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 2, and Ch. 2, v.

13.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 13.

28. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 4.

29. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 43.

30. See the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, v. 4, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

31. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 18.

32. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

33. *Ibid.*

34. Cf. the *Hevajratantra*, part 2, Ch. 4, vs. 97–99, and the *Guhyasamājantra*, Ch. 18, v. 36.

35. Cf. the *Hevajratantra*, part 1, Ch. 5, vs. 2–7, and part 2, Ch. 11, vs. 5–7.

36. For the sixfold classification in the *Hevajratantra*, see Snellgrove, *Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, 1976, p. 38.

37. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 1.

38. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 166–167, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

39. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 168–169, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

40. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 170.

41. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 171.

42. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 172.

43. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 174, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

44. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 175.

45. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 176, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

46. The *Jñānasārasamuccaya*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 173.

47. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 173, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

48. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 200.

49. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 178.

50. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 179.

51. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 1.

52. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 18.

53. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

54. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 18.

55. *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* of *Nāḍapāda*, 1941, p. 7, states: "The word 'ādi' means without beginning or end (*ādi-sabdo 'nādinidhānārthaḥ*). The Buddha means one who perceives all true phenomena (*aviparītān sarva-dharmān buddhavān iti buddhaḥ*); and this Buddha is primordial, the Primordial Buddha. He is devoid of origination and cessation, meaning, he is omniscient (*utpādāvyaya-rahitaḥ savajña ity arthaḥ*)."

56. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 18 and the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, 1941, p. 7, cite this line from the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* in order to substantiate their interpretation of the *Ādibuddha*.

57. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 234.

58. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 234.

59. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 2.

60. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 19.

61. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 1.
 62. The *Nāmasaṃgīti*, v. 54:
saṃsārapāraḥkoṣṭhaḥ kṛtakṛtyaḥ sthale sthitaḥ
kaivalyajñānaniṣṭhyūtaḥ prajñāśastro vidāraṇaḥ.
 63. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
 64. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 1, and Ch. 5, v. 127.
 65. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
 66. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 5, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.
 67. The *Nāmasaṃgīti*, 176. 1. 7, 176. 2. 8, Taishō, 2532, from the *Peking Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, vol. 74, pp. 171. 1. 1–184. 4. 8. For the complete list of the ten truths, see Ronald Davidson, 1981, p. 24, fn. 69.
 68. The *Ārya-nāmasaṃgīti-ṭīkā-mantrārthāvalokini-nāma*, 196. 5. 5., 197. 2. 1, Taishō 2533, from the *Peking Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, vol. 47, pp. 184. 4. 8–226. 2. 1.
 69. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 114.
 70. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, v. 1.
 71. Ibid.
 72. Ibid.
 73. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 133.
 74. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 51, Ch. 5, v. 127, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.
 75. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
 76. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 105, and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.
 77. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 5; the *Āyusmannandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśanāmama-trāyānasūtra*, *Peking ed. of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, vol. 23, #760.
 78. See Bu ston's annotation [315] on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 8.
 79. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 8. For the *Amṛtahiḍdayāṣṭaṅgaguhyopadeśatantra*'s assertion, see the *Encyclopaedia of Tibetan Medicine*, vol. 2, 1994, p. 17.
 80. The *Āyuspariyantasūtra*, *Peking ed. of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, vol. 39, #973.
 81. The *Nandagarbhāvasthā* (Tib. *dga' bo mngal gnas*), cited in Bu ston's annotation [313] on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 4.
2. A History of the *ṣaḍ-aṅga-yoga* of the *Kālacakratantra* and Its Relation to Other Religious Traditions of India
1. The *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad*, Ch. 6, v. 18: *tathā tatprayogakalpaḥ prāñyāmaḥ pratyāhāro dhyānaḥ dhāraṇa tarkaḥ samādhiḥ ṣaḍaṅga ity ucyate.*
 2. See Günter Grönbold, *The Yoga of Six Limbs: An Introduction to the History of Ṣaḍaṅgayoga*, 1996, p. 11.
 3. See Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, 1969, p. 125.
 4. The *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 10, v. 76 reads:
prāñyāmas tathā dhyānaḥ pratyāhāro 'tha dhāraṇa
smaraṇaḥ caiva yoge 'smin pañcadharmāḥ prakīrtitaḥ.
 5. A six-phased *yoga* that contains contemplative inquiry (*tarka*) as the fifth phase is also mentioned in the *Dakṣa-smṛti*, Ch. 7, v. 3; the *Atri-smṛti*, Ch. 9, v. 6; the *Mṛgendrāgama*, Ch. 7, v. 5; Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka*, Ch. 4, v. 15, etc.
 6. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 116.
 7. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 116.

8. See Abhinavagupta, *A Trident of Wisdom*, tr. by Jaideva Singh, 1988, p. 196.
9. See N. Rastogi, *The Krama Tantricism of Kashmir*, 1996, pp. 59–60. Cf. the *Mālinivijayottaratantra*, Ch. 17, v. 16, 1922, p. 114, which reads: “contemplative inquiry is the highest phase of *yoga*” (*tarko yogāṅgam uttaram*).
10. For the explanation of *niyama* in the context of the *Kālacakratantra*, see the *Vimalaprabhā*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 117, the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 70, 138, and 147, together with the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.
11. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 70.
12. G. N. Roerich, tr., *Blue Annals*, 1988, p. 764.
13. The *Ṣaḍaṅgayogaṭīkā* was translated into Tibetan by Vibhūticandra and included in the *Peking edition of the Tibetan Bstan 'gyur*, vol. 47, #2084: 238.2.5–242.4.2. It has been translated into German by Günter Grönbold, 1969. See also the *Guṇabharanānāma-ṣaḍaṅgayoga-ṭippaṇī*, half of which was initially translated into Tibetan by Vibhūticandra and is included in the *Peking edition of the Tibetan Bstan 'gyur*, vol. 47, #2103: 283.1.5–294.4.8.
14. Roerich, *Blue Annals*, p. 764; *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, 1990, pp. 307–308; Padma dkar po's 'Brug pa'i chos 'byung and Dpe med 'tsho'i lugs kyi mal 'byor yan lag drug pa'i khrid rdo rje'i tshig 'byed in the *Collected Works of Padma dkar po*, vols. 2 (*kha*) and 17 (*tsa*); and Bu ston's *Sbyor ba yan lag drug gi sngon 'gro'i rim pa* in the *Collected Works of Bu ston*, pt. 3 (*ga*), 1965, p. 348.
15. Several Tibetan authors such as Nag tsho, Sum pa, and others mention Vikramapura in Bengal as the birthplace of Atīśa. They speak of Vikramapura as a prosperous city with a large population. For more details see Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Atīśa and Tibet*, 1996, pp. 57–66.
16. *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, 1990, p. 316.
17. Ibid., pp. 307–308.
18. See Roerich, tr., *Blue Annals*, 1988, p. 764.
19. Anupamarakṣita's *Ṣaḍaṅgayoga* is preserved in Tibetan translations and included in the *Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, *Peking edition of the Tibetan Bstan 'gyur* (Vibhūticandra's and Gnyal Lotsaba Mi myam zang po's translation), vol. 47, #2083: 234.2.4–238.2.5; (Dpal Lo tsa ba Dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa's translation), vol. 47, #2102: 274.3.7–283.1.5.
20. Roerich, tr., *Blue Annals*, p. 800.
21. Several works belonging to the *Kālacakra* corpus are ascribed to Śrīdharanandana, known also as Sādhuputra. See the *Derge edition of Tibetan Bstan 'gyur*, *rgyud* section: the *Sekoddeśaṭippaṇī*, #1352, the *Śrīkālacakrasādhana-nāma*, #1356, and the *Śrīkālacakramāṇḍala-vidhi*, #1359.
22. *Collected Works of Padma dkar po*, vol. 17 (*tsa*), 1974, p. 213.
23. *Collected Works of Bu ston*, vol. 16 (*ma*), 1965, p. 4.
24. Padma gar dbang's *Zab chos sbaḥ pa mig 'byed kyi chos bskor las paṇ che sha wa dbang phyug gi snyan rgyud rdo rje sum gyi bla ma rgyud pa'i mam that dad pa'i mnga chen*, 24 a. For the full reference, see Cyrus Stearns, “The Life and Tibetan Legacy of the Indian Mahā-panḍita Vibhūticandra,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19.1, 1996, pp. 129, fn. 9, and 169.
25. Śākyaśrībhadrā wrote several commentarial works on the *Kālacakratantra*, which are preserved in Tibetan. The *Derge edition of the Tibetan Bstan 'gyur*, *rgyud* section, contains the following works: the *Śrīkālacakra-gaṇanopadeśa-nāma*, #1384, the *Sūryacandragrahaṇaganāṭa*, #1385, and the *Pañcagrāha-prthaggaṇanopadeśa-nāma*, #1386.
26. Padma gar dbang's *Zab chos sbaḥ pa mig 'byed kyi chos bskor las paṇ che sha wa dbang phyug gi snyan rgyud rdo rje sum gyi bla ma rgyud pa'i mam that dad pa'i mnga chen*, 24 a.
27. The *Ṣaḍaṅgayoganāma* is preserved in the Tibetan translation. See the *Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, vol. 47, #2091, 258.4.2–258.5.1.

28. Tāranātha, *Rdo rje'i rnal 'byor gyi 'khrid yig mthong ba don ldan gyi lhan thabs 'od brgya 'bar*, 707.5–6, 456. See Stearns, "The Life and Tibetan Legacy of the Indian *mahā-paṇḍita* Vibhūticandra," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19.1, 1996, p. 139. For a biographical sketch of Śavaripa, see *ibid.*, pp. 139–141, fn. 46.

29. Tshong kha pa, *Collected Works*, vol. 17, 1976, pp. 49–50.

3. The Nature of Syncretism in the Kālacakratantra

1. The *Paramādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 24.

2. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 177, lines a–b.

3. *Ibid.*, lines c–d. This analogy of the mind's impressionability to that of a crystal is most likely borrowed from the *Yoginīsaṃcāratantra*, Ch. 11, v. 2, which is cited in a different context in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 47:

yena yena hi bhāvena manaḥ saṃyujyate nṛṇām
tena tanmanyatām yāti viśvarūpo maṇir yathā.

4. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 176.

5. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 66.

6. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 86.

7. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 86.

8. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 161, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

14. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 85, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

15. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 86, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

16. The *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, vs. 22, 28.

17. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 83, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

18. See *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, v. 23.

19. According to Sāṃkhya, the functions of the mind (*manas*) are: analyses and conceptualization (*vikalpa*), and decision and determination (*saṃkalpa*).

20. One can encounter a similar procedure in the *Bhagavad Gītā*'s exposition of the universal validity of the Kṛṣṇa doctrine, where it often uses its terms with overlapping meanings. Cf. Edgerton's essay (Ch. 10), accompanying his translation to *The Bhagavad Gītā*, 1972, p. 179.

21. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 83, 85.

22. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 93.

23. See M. Dyczkowski, tr., *The Aphorisms of Śiva: The Śiva Sūtra with Bhāskara's Commentary, the Vārttika*, 1992, Ch. 1, v. 11.

24. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 86, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

25. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 61, 65, 86.

26. See Dyczkowski, tr., *The Aphorisms of Śiva*, pp. 43, 138, 140; J. Singh, tr., *The Yoga of Delight, Wonder, and Astonishment: A Translation of the Vijñāna-Bhairava*, 1991, pp. 71, 79–80.

27. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 7, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

28. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 8.

29. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

30. *Ibid.*

31. For further information on the *Kālacakratantra* cosmology, see chapter 5 on the "Cosmic Body."

32. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 169.

33. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 169.

34. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 167–168.

35. *Ibid.*

36. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

37. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 5.

38. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 48.

39. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 40.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

41. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 173.

4. The Concept of Science in the Kālacakra Tradition

1. See Romila Thapar, *A History of India*, vol. 1, 1966, 253–254.

2. Verses 128–147 of the first chapter of the *Kālacakratantra* give a detailed instruction on building the different types of weapons that should be used by the Kalki's army in the final battle with the Barbarians in the land of Mecca.

3. This view of the theological knowledge and scientific learning as complementary is dominant in the Vajrayāna, whereas in the writings of Mahāyāna they are simply compatible rather than complementary.

4. See the *Samaññaphalasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, *Thus Have I Heard*, 1987, pp. 68–91.

5. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 1995, Ch. 5, v. 100.

6. The *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, 1970, Ch. 11, v. 60.

7. See E. Obermiller, *The Jewels of Scripture by Bu-ston*, 1987, p. 29.

8. The *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, Ch. 12, v. 3.

9. This is not unique to the *Kālacakratantra*. The earlier medical treatises of Āyurveda—the *Suśrutasaṃhitā* (first to second centuries CE) and the *Carakasamhitā* (c. fourth century CE)—assert that the five elements that are present in the body—earth, water, fire, wind, and space—form the entire universe.

10. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, p. 43.

11. The *Nettipakaraṇa*, 1962, [76].

12. If one were to ask, "How is introspection scientific in the context of Buddhism?" an answer would be that just as physical phenomena are to be scientifically studied for as far as possible by means of direct observation, similarly, it is true for the first-person mental phenomena. Introspection is widely recognized in Buddhism as the sole means of observing one's own conscious states.

13. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.

14. *Ibid.*

15. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 192.

16. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 44.

17. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 88.

18. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 96.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Already in the early Buddhist Pāli literature, the Buddhist Dhamma was referred to as the verifiable teaching, as the Dhamma that involves one's "coming and seeing" (*ehi-passika*).

21. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 48–50.

22. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 96, with the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.

23. The *Discourses of Gotama Buddha: Middle Collection*, 1992, "With Māgandiya," "Major Discourse on the Destruction of Craving."

51. The *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra*, 1974, Ch. 7, pp. 32, 79. Cf. the *Guhyasamājantra*, Ch. 5, vs. 2–3, 6–7.
52. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
53. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 83.
54. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 98, together with the *Vimalaprabhā*.
55. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
56. Ibid.
57. The *Paramādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 7.
58. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 221.
59. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 208.
60. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 118.
61. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 198.
62. The *Paramādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 119.
63. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 98.
64. See the *Bodhipathapradīpa* of Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna, 1995, vs. 63–65, p. 98.
65. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 86.
66. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 138, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
67. The *Bṛhaddharma Purāṇa*, II. 13–14, also mentions thirty-six mixed castes in India.
68. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, vs. 125–127, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
69. See Ibid., vs. 157–168, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
70. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 154.
71. According to the *Vedavyāsasmṛti*, among others, the cobblers (*carmakara*), Bhillas, washermen (*rajaka*), dancers and actors (*naṭas*), and *Caṇḍālas*, which are included in the *Kālacakratāntra*'s *gaṇa-cakra*, are listed as outcasts (*antyaja*). See Kane, *The History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 1, part 1, p. 71.
72. *Ḍombas* and *Caṇḍālas* are used interchangeably in the *Vimalaprabhā*. According to Albiruni's (1020 CE) report from his travels in India, *Ḍombas* and *Caṇḍālas* were considered as a single social class and were distinguished only by their occupations.
73. See the *Hevajratāntra*, Part 1, Ch. 5, v. 18, and the *Yogaratnamālā*.
74. In the *Hevajratāntra*, *Nairātmyā*, or the *Bhagavatī*, the principal female deity is identified as *Ḍombī*.
75. For the translation of Kāṇha's songs, see Sh. Bh. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, 1962, pp. 96–106.
76. The *Kulāṇavatantra*, Ch. 14, v. 91.
77. Ibid., Ch. 8, v. 101.
78. The *Paramādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 3.
79. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 105.
80. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 3, cites the *Ācārya-parīkṣā*, which states:

Owing to the complete knowledge of ten principles, among the three, a monk is superior, a so-called wandering ascetic is middling, and a householder is inferior to these two.

81. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 4, and the *Vimalaprabhā*. The five ethical precepts refer to the first five Buddhist precepts common for all Buddhists, lay and monastic, namely, abstinence from killing, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, and from taking intoxicants.

82. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, vs. 50–51.
 83. See also R. Lingat, *The Classical Law of India*, 1973, p. 30.
 84. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 156, Ch. 5, vs. 48–49, 52.
 85. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 161, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 86. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, vs. 201–204.
 87. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, vs. 129–130.
 88. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 211.
 89. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, vs. 217–219.
 90. The *Hevajratāntra*, Part 2, Ch. 8, v. 45.
 91. Ibid., Ch. 2, v. 44.
 92. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 1, vs. 1–2.
 93. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 47, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 94. According to the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 7, and the *Vimalaprabhā*, the white soil of the *Brāhmaṇa* class has a divine smell, the red soil of the *Kṣatriya* class has a lotus-scent and a hot taste, the yellow soil of the *Vaiśya* class has a pungent smell and a sweet and saline taste, the black soil of the *Sūdra* class has a putrid smell and a sour taste, and the green soil of the *Ḍomba* class incorporates all colors, smells, and tastes.
 95. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 43, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 96. For the classification of the *yoginīs* of the *kālacakra-maṇḍala* in terms of social groups, see the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, vs. 144–147.
 97. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 51, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
7. The Gnostic Body
1. Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity*, 1963, p. 32.
 2. The *Gospel of Thomas*, 45. 30–33, cited in Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, 1979, p. 126.
 3. The *Trimorphic Protennoia*, 36. 12–16, cited in Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, p. 55.
 4. The *Apocryphon of John*, II 31, 3–9, cited Michael A. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*, 1996, p. 121.
 5. The *Gospel of Thomas*, 42. 7–51, cited in Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, p. 128.
 6. *Book of Thomas the Contender*, 138. 13, cited in *ibid.*, p. 131.
 7. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 196.
 8. *The Testimony of Truth*, 44. 2, 43. 26, cited in Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, p. 132.
 9. The *Dialogue of the Savior*, 134. 1–2, in Nag Hammadi Library 234, cited in Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, p. 126.
 10. The *Gospel of Thomas*, 37. 20–35, cited in *ibid.*, p. 129.
 11. For example, in the *Adversus Haereses*, 1.24.4–5, Irenaeus accuses Basilideans of eating meat that was offered to idols, of treating all sorts of behavior as morally neutral, and of resorting to magic, incantations and other occult practices.
 12. Ugo Bianchi, ed., *Le Origini Dello Gnosticismo: Colloquio de Messina*, 13–18 Aprile 1966, *Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to Numen)*, vol. 12, 1970, p. 27.
 13. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 13, Ch. 3, v. 1: *mantram jñānam iti manastrāṇabhūtatvāt*. Cf. the *Guhyasamājantra*, 1965, vs. 69cd–70ab.
 14. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism"*, p. 41.
 15. Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, p. xxi.
 16. See E. Conze, "Buddhism and Gnosis," 1996.
 17. Helmut Hoffmann, "Kālacakra Studies I: Manicheism, Christianity and Islam in the *Kālacakratāntra*," *Central Asiatic Journal* (13: 52–73, 1969). H. Hoffmann, *Tibet: A Handbook*, 1975.

18. See Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*, 1993, p. 3.
19. The army's four divisions are: the elephants, horses, chariots, and footmen.
20. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 48–50 and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
21. See the *Kephalaia*, 70, 175. 6–14, 38, 96. 13–27, 96. 27–97. 22, cited in Jason Beduhn, "Metabolism of Salvation: The Manichean Body in Asceticism and Ritual," 1995, pp. 203, 206–207.
22. The *Kephalaia*, 38, 100. 1–6, cited in *ibid.*, p. 207.
23. The *Vimalaprabhā*, 1986, Ch. 1, pp. 18, 19: *vajradharajñānakāyasākṣibhūṭayā nāmasaṃgityāliṅgitam iti*.
24. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 234.
25. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, vs. 51–52, which indicates that the male and female deities of the *Māyājālatantra* and the *Samājatantra* are included in the *kālacakra-maṇḍala*. It also categorizes the *Māyājālatantra* as being of three kinds and the *Samājatantra* as being of six kinds.
26. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, vs. 7, 13.
27. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 144, line b: *pañcākṣaro mahāśūnyo binduśūnyaḥ śaḍākṣaraḥ*. Ronald Davidson's edition of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* incorrectly reads the "one hundred syllable" (*śatākṣaraḥ*) instead of the "six syllable" (*śaḍākṣaraḥ*). The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 33: *pañcākṣaram mahāśūnyaṃ binduśūnyaṃ śaḍākṣaram*.
28. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 42: *iṣṭārthaphaladaḥ phalam akṣarasukhaṃ jñānacittam*.
29. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 44. Cf. the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 100, where the *Ādibuddha* is said to be without partiality (*nīranvaya*). Ronald Davidson translates the term *nīranvaya* as "without causal connection" on the basis of the explanation of the term in commentaries on this verse of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* and the Tibetan translation of it as "causeless" (*rgyu med*).
30. *Ibid.*
31. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 44.
32. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
33. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 43.
34. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127, supports this view of gnosis as self-aware with verse 155 of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, which describes *Vajrasattva* as self-knowing (*ātma-vid*) and knowing others (*para-vid*). Cf. the *Hevajatantra*, Part 1, Ch. 8, v. 46, which characterizes the supreme bliss (*mahā-sukha*) as self-aware (*sva-saṃvedya*), and v. 51, line a, which states: "Self-awareness is this gnosis, which is beyond the scope of words." The *Yogaratanmālā*, 1976, p. 129, commenting on this line from the *Hevajatantra*, explains that self-awareness implies that gnosis cannot be described by someone else, but that it is to be known by oneself.
35. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
36. *Ibid.*
37. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 43.
38. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 55.
39. This is a translation of the Sanskrit text cited in Matsumoto Shirō's article, "The Doctrine of *Tathāgata-garbha* is not Buddhist," in *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm over Critical Buddhism*, 1997, p. 171:

*anādikāliko dhātuḥ sarvadharmasamāśrayaḥ
tasmīn sati gatiḥ sarvā nirvāṇādhigamo 'pi ca.*

40. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 3, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
41. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 20, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
42. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 3-c: *śūnye jñānaṃ vimīśraṃ bhavati samarasam cākṣaram śāsvataṃ ca*.
43. According to the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127, a sprout does not arise from a nonperished seed nor does it arise from a perished seed. Likewise, it neither arises from abandoning its own nature, nor from the unconscious element, nor from the absence of annihilation.
44. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
45. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 3.
46. The *Sekoddeśa*, 1994, v. 148.
47. *Ibid.*, v. 151, line b.
48. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 106.
49. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 2, v. 2, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
50. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 43: *ataḥ saṃvṛtiḥ śūnyatārūpiṇī śūnyatā saṃvṛtirūpiṇī*.
51. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 6, lines a–b.
52. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 47.
53. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 1, p. 43. Cf. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 99, line a: *vijñānadharmatāṭīto jñānam advayarūpadhṛk*.
54. The *Paramādibuddha* cited in the *Vimalaprabhā*, 1986, Ch. 1, pp. 17, 32, 43.
55. The *Paramādibuddha* cited in the *Vimalaprabhā*, Ch. 1, p. 32: *kāyavācittarāgātmā va-jrasattvo adhidevatā*. Cf. the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 166, line a:
- Foremost as the inherent nature of all phenomena, he maintains the inherent nature of all phenomena.
56. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 17: *paramādibuddhaḥ ekakṣaṇapañcākāraviṃśatyākāramāyājālābhisambodhilakṣaṇo 'kṣarasukhaḥ paramaḥ*.
57. *Ibid.*, Ch. 1, p. 44: *yadā kṣaṇadharmarahitaṃ cittaṃ niḥsvabhāvaṃ ity ucyate*.
58. *Ibid.*, Ch. 1, p. 45: *ekānekakṣaṇarahitaṃ jñānaṃ tattvaṃ ity ucyate jinaiḥ*.
59. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 223.
60. *Ibid.*, Ch. 4, v. 228.
61. The *Prajñāpāramitāpīṇḍārtha* (Tangyur, mdo, vol. 14), v. 1:
- prajñāpāramitā jñānam advayaṃ sa tathāgataḥ
sādhyaṭādārthayogena tācchabdyam granthamārgayoḥ*

The Sanskrit version of the verse is taken from Th. Stcherbatsky and E. Obermiller, eds., *Abhisamayālaṃkāra-Prajñāpāramitā-Upadeśa-Śāstra: The Work of Bodhisattva Maitreya*, Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series, vol. 99, 1992: vi.

62. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 65.
63. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 45.
64. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 109: *vajrendu-vimala-prabha*.
65. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 124. The cited description of *Mañjuśrī* as one who knows the reality with sixteen aspects (*ṣoḍaśākāra-tattva-vid*) is given in v. 133 of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*.
66. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 123–124, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
67. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 99.
68. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 109: *vajra-sūryo mahālokaḥ*.
69. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 124.
70. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 56.

71. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 27, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
72. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 45.
73. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 62.
74. *Ibid.*, Ch. 5, vs. 56–57.
75. *Naḍapāda, Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, 1941, pp. 6–7.
76. *Ibid.*
77. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
78. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, vs. 102–103.
79. *Ibid.*, Ch. 5, v. 98.
80. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
81. *Ibid.*
82. The five indestructibles (*pañcākṣara*) refer to the five Buddhas.
83. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
84. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, vs. 60–61. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 92 and the cited *Ādibuddhatantra*.
85. See the *Nāmasaṃgīti*, Peking ed. of the *Tibetan Tripiṭaka* 1956, ed. by D. T. Suzuki, vol. 74, pp. 171.1.1–184.4.8. The sixteen types of emptiness are listed in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 21, as the emptiness of the five aggregates (*skandha*), which is classified under the category of *śūnyatā*; the emptiness of the five elements (*dhātu*), which is classified under the category of *mahāśūnyatā*; the emptiness of the five sense-faculties, which is classified under the category of *paramārthaśūnyatā*; and as emptiness having all aspects (*sarvākāra*), which is the sixteenth emptiness.
86. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 114. Verse 133 of the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* speaks of the omniscient Buddha knowing the reality with twelve aspects, the reality with sixteen aspects, and the reality with twenty aspects.
87. *Naḍapāda, Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, 1941, pp. 6–7.
88. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 45.
89. *Naḍapāda, Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, 1941, pp. 6–7.
90. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 45.
91. *Ibid.*
92. *Naḍapāda, Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, 1941, pp. 5–6.
93. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 46; the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 98.
94. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 234.
95. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 97; Ch. 2, v. 15.
96. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, vs. 14–16 with the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 97.
97. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
98. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 43.
99. *Ibid.*
100. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 46; Ch. 3, p. 80; Ch. 4, p. 149.
101. The *Abhisamayālaṃkāraprajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstra*, 1992, Ch. 1, v. 18.
102. For the excellent discussion on the Yogācāra's and Abhidharma's interpretations of the Svābhāvikakāya of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, see John Makransky's *Buddhahood Embodied: Sources of Controversy in India and Tibet*, 1997.
103. The *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, Ch. 8, v. 1.
104. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 23: *buddhatvaṃ nāma saṃsāravāsanārahitaṃ cittam/ tathā ca bhagavān āha prajñāpāramitāyām asti tac citam*

yac citam acittam iti/ prakṛtiprabhāsvaraṃ tad eva saṃsāravāsanārahitaṃ ato māraḥ samalaṃ cittam buddho vigatamalaṃ cittam.

105. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 42.
106. See Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, p. 261. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 39.
107. See Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, p. 266.
108. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 149.
109. *Ibid.*, Ch. 1, p. 35.
110. *Ibid.*, Ch. 1, p. 39.
111. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 173 with the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary.
112. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 66, line a:

sattvā buddhā na buddhas tv अपरा iha mahān vidyate lokadhātāu.
113. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 66.
114. The *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 138:

*sarvasattvamano'ntasthas taccittasamatāṃ gataḥ
sarvasattvamanohlādi sarvasattvamanoratiḥ.*
115. The *Hevajatantra*, 1976, Part 2, Ch. 4, vs. 74–75.
116. The *Lakṣābhīdhāna*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 1, v. 1:

*rahasye sarvadūtīnāṃ sarvasattvātmani sthitaḥ
sarvadūtīmayaḥ sattvo vajrasattvo mahāsukhaḥ.*
117. The *Yogānuvīddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 1, v. 1, has a somewhat corrupt reading:

*ḍākinīvajrapadmasta eko 'asāv adhidevatā
sahajānandarūpeṇa saṃsthitās tribhavātmani.*
118. See *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*, 1997, p. 127, or the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* of Śāntideva, 1960, where the mentioned statement belongs to verse 104, pp. 244–245.
119. Taishō, no. 666, 16: 457b28–457c3.
120. The *Saddharmalaṅkāvatārasūtra*, 1963, 2: 33.
121. The *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, 1970, Ch. 9, v. 37, line b reads: *tad garbhā sarvadehinaḥ* (the embryo of that [Tathāgatahood] is all embodied beings). This statement is explained in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*, Ch. 9, v. 37, in the following way: "Hence, all sentient beings are called the wombs of the *tathāgata*" (*ataḥ sarve sattvās tathāgatagarbhā ity ucyate*).
122. See the Tibetan translation of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* in the Peking ed., no. 788: 99ab-7.
123. See the *Hevajatantra*, 1976, Part 2, Ch. 4, v. 73, line a, which reads: "There is not a single sentient being that is not spiritually awakened due to perfectly awakening to its own nature."
124. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 91, lines c-d.
125. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 55, line d.
126. The *Ratnagotravibhāga*, Takasaki, 1966, Ch. 9, pp. 268, 277.
127. The *Śrīmālādevī*, 1974, Ch. 3, 106: *kṣaṇikam bhagavan kuśalaṃ cittam na kleśaiḥ saṃkliṣyate / kṣaṇikam akuśalaṃ cittam na saṃkliṣṭam eva tac citam kleśaiḥ/ na bhagavan kleśās tac citam sprṣanti.*
128. The *Sekoddeśa*, 1994, vs. 129–133.
129. The *Sekoddeśa*, vs. 122–123.

130. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
 131. Ibid.
 132. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 91.
 133. Ibid.
 134. Cf. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, 1961, p. 12: "Thus, when there is a spiritual ignorance, attachment, hatred, and delusion arise with regard to the sense-objects." A similar view is also held by the Sarvāstivāda school. E.g., the *Abhidharmakośa*, 1988, vol. 2, p. 402, reads: "All defilements accompany ignorance and are activated through ignorance." On the other hand, in the earliest Buddhist literature, one invariably encounters craving (*taṇhā*) and spiritual ignorance as the direct and primary causes of mental afflictions.
 135. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 44.
 136. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 3, v. 2 reads: *rāga dveṣa mahānēraśyā mātē sāryasamūhaḥ kaluṣam*. Cf. The Book of Analysis: Vibhaṅga, 1969, 232, 249: "Defilements are named this way because they make the body and mind to be afflicted and suffer"; the *Abhidharmakośa*, 1991, vol. 3, p. 113: "Mental afflictions (*kleśa*) are secondary mental afflictions (*upakleśa*) because they defile the mind."
 137. The *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 2, v. 23, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 138. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 143, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 139. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 65.
 140. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 19, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 141. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 19.
 142. Ibid.
 143. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 76; Ch. 1, p. 23.
 144. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 68.
 145. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 67.
 146. According to the *Vimalaprabhā* on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127, the obscurations of the body are the Skandha Māra; the obscurations of the mind are the Mṛtyu Māra; the obscurations of speech are the Kleśa Māra; and the prevalence of spiritual ignorance with regard to the world is the Devaputra Māra.
 147. The *Vimalaprabhā* on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
 148. Ibid.: "Due to the cessation (*nirodha*) of the habitual propensity of the perishable [moment], there is a cessation of attachment, hatred, delusion, anger, and spiritual ignorance. Likewise, there is a sequential cessation of the twelve limbs [of dependent origination]. Due to the cessation of the twelve limbs, there is a cessation of the cycle of existence (*bhava-cakra*). Due to the cessation of the cycle of existence, there is Buddhahood, which is free of obscurations."
 149. Ibid.
 150. See Nāgārjuna's *Śūnyatāsaptatikārikā*, v. 37, in C. Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana*, 1982, p. 51.
 151. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 2, v. 82.
 152. Ibid., Ch. 2, v. 83, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 153. See ibid., Ch. 2, vs. 86–88, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 154. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 219, line d: *tasmād eṣaḥ svakāyaḥ samasukho nilayo rakṣaṇīyaḥ parasya*.
 155. The *Sekoddeśa*, 1994, v. 134.
 156. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 70.
 157. So far, I have been unable to identify the original source of this verse cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 124. It is possible that it is taken from the *Ādibuddhatantra*.
 158. The *Vimalaprabhā* on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1976, Ch. 1, p. 4. Cf. the *Hevajatantra*, 1976, Part 2, Ch. 2, v. 50, which states that just as those who are burnt by fire treat the burn

with fire, so too those who are burnt by the fire of passion cure themselves by the fire of passion.

159. The *Sekoddeśa*, v. 135.
 160. See the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 110, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
 161. The *Sekoddeśa*, vs. 139–140.
 162. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, pp. 5–6.
 163. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 71:

The grape does not come from the *nimba* tree, nor ambrosia from poison, nor a lotus from the *udumbara* tree, nor the bliss of *nirvāṇa* from space, nor virtue from the power of non-virtue, nor *siddhis* from harming living beings, nor heaven from sacrificing animals, nor the supreme state of Śiva from restraining the sense-faculties, nor the omniscient language from the Vedas, nor the indestructible, immovable bliss from the mind that is not purified from the perishable [bliss].

164. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 199, line c.
 165. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
 166. Cf. the *Hevajatantra*, Part 2, Ch. 2: 51, which states: "The world is bound by passion, and it is also released by passion."
 167. The *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 4, v. 224. Cf. the *Paramārthasevā*, cited by Bu ston [311], which reads:

Fire and mercury are always enemies. Without fire there is no cohesiveness of mercury. Because it is non-cohesive, it does not transmute metals. Because metals are not transmuted, they do not become gold. Because they have not become gold, a substance is not improved. Due to the low quality of a substance, there is a lack of enjoyment in it. . . ."

168. According to the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127, there are five states of mercury: vapor (*dhūma*), *ciṭi-ciṭi* [sound], the jump of a frog, tremor, and motionlessness.

169. Ibid.
 170. Ibid. Cf. the *Vajrasekharamahāguhyayogatantra*, Peking ed., no. 113, vol. 5, 4.3.7–8, which interprets the meaning of Vajrasattva in this way: "Gnosis of supreme spiritual awakening is called 'vajra.' He who arises from the gnosis-vajra is called 'Vajrasattva.'" According to Nāḍapāda's *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, 1941, p. 73, the term *vajra* in the compound Vajrasattva refers to the indivisible (*abheda*), empty form (*śūnya-bimba*), and the term *sattva* designates him "who is called the unity of the *rūpa-kāya*, speech, and mind in the desire-realm (*kāma-dhātu*), etc."
 171. This verse from the fifth chapter of the *Ādibuddhatantra* is cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, Ch. 5, v. 127. Cf. the *Hevajatantra*, Part 1, Ch. 1, v. 4:

Vajra is said to be indivisible (*abheda*), and a being (*sattva*) is the unity (*ekatā*) of the three worlds. By means of this wisdom, it is known as Vajrasattva.

The *Yogaratanmālā*, commenting on this verse, identifies the *vajra* with emptiness, and it interprets a being (*sattva*) as a phenomenon consisting of the five psycho-physical aggregates.

172. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratāntra*, 1986, Ch. 1, pp. 16–17. Cf. the *Yogaratanmālā* commentary on the *Hevajatantra*, 1976, Part 1, Ch. 1, v. 1, pp. 103–104, which interprets the word *evaṃ* in two ways: (1) as the union of the two sexual organs, the letter *e* designating the female sexual organ (*bhaga*), and the syllable *vaṃ* denoting the male sexual organ (*vajra*); (2) and as the unity of two elements, two *mudrās*, and two *cakras*, the letter *e* being the earth-element, the *karma-mudrā*, and the *nirmāṇa-cakra*, and the syllable *vaṃ* being the water-element, the *dharma-mudrā*, and the *dharma-cakra*.

8. The Transformative Body

1. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 115.
2. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 1.
3. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, vs. 111–112, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
4. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 5 and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
5. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 96, the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 99–100, and the *Vimalaprabhā*. According to the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 97, in other related *tantras*, such as the *Guhyasamājatantra*, the first five initiations are designed to purify the five psycho-physical aggregates, respectively.
6. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 96.
7. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 96–97, 99–100, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
8. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 96–97, 99, and the *Vimalaprabhā*. Cf. the *Sekoddeśa*, vs. 10–14.
9. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 13–14 mentions the following twenty-five vows: (1) the avoidance of killing (*hiṃsā*), lying (*asatya*), adultery (*para-śrī*), stealing (*para-dhana*), and drinking liquor (*madya-pāna*); (2) the avoidance of gambling (*dyūta*), unwholesome food (*sāvadya-bhojya*), negative speech (*kuvacana-paṭhana*), and the religious teachings of the “demons” (Hindus), and *asuras* (Barbarians); (3) the avoidance of five types of killing: the killings of cows (*go*), children (*bāla*), women (*śrī*), men (*nara*), and the Buddha, the teacher of thirteen men (*tri-daśa-nara-guru*), and the avoidance of harm (*droha*) to the five: friends (*mitra*), masters (*prabhu*), Buddhas (*tri-daśa-nara-guru*), the Buddhist community, and spiritual mentors (*viśvāsin*); (4) and avoidance of attachment to the objects of the five sense-faculties. According to the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 101–102, and the *Vimalaprabhā*, the fourteen root downfalls are: (1) causing mental grief to one’s own spiritual mentor by engaging in the ten nonvirtues, (2) transgressing the spiritual mentor’s injunctions, even behind the spiritual mentor’s back, (3) anger toward one’s own [*vajra*] brothers, regardless of their age or seniority, (4) abandoning loving kindness in four degrees: minimally, medially, strongly, and excessively, (5) releasing one’s semen, (6) reviling the *siddhāntas*, or the system of perfections (*pāramitā-naya*), (7) giving a secret offering of sublime bliss to an immature person, that is, to a person established on the path of the Śrāvakas, (8) causing injury to the body by cutting it, etc., (9) aversion toward the “pure Dharma,” that is, toward the Dharma of emptiness, (10) a false loving kindness, (11) a contrived ideation (*kalpanā*) with regard to the reality (*tattva*) of the Tathāgatas, which gives bliss and is devoid of name and the other attributes, (12) offending a pure being, such as a *yoginī*, (13) abandoning the received tantric pledges (*samaya*) during the tantric feast, and (14) aversion (*jugupsā*) toward women.
10. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 100, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
11. Ibid.
12. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1994, Ch. 3, v. 100.
13. Bliss (*ānanda*), supreme bliss (*paramānanda*), special bliss (*viramānanda*), and innate bliss (*sahajānanda*).
14. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 105, and the *Vimalaprabhā*. Cf. the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, v. 81:
trailokyaikakumārāṅgaḥ sthaviro vṛddhaḥ prajāpatiḥ
dvātriṃśatsalakṣaṇadharāḥ kāntas trailokyasundarāḥ.
15. The *Sekoddeśa*, 1994, vs. 11–23.
16. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, vs. 118–124, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
17. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, quoted in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 120.

18. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 100, Ch. 5, v. 13.
19. Ibid., Ch. 4, v. 110.
20. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 6, lines a–b:

śūnyam bhāvād vihīnam sakalajagad idaṃ vasturūpasvabhāvaṃ
tasmād buddho na bodhiḥ parahitakarūṇā cānimittapratijñā.

21. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 48.
22. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 8, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
23. The mindfulness of the body, feelings, mind, and mental objects.
24. According to Bu ston [16], the eight corporeals are the four that consist of earth, water, fire, and wind, and the four that consist of form, smell, taste, and touch.
25. According to Bu ston [16], the eight qualities are great and small external forms, large and small, blue, yellow, red, and white.
26. According to Bu ston [16], the ten powers are: life and so on.
27. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 9.
28. The *ālīḍha* posture is a standing posture in which the right leg is stretched forward and the left leg is retracted.
29. The *pratyālīḍha* posture is a standing posture in which the left leg is stretched forward and the right leg is retracted.
30. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, vs. 106, 14.
31. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, vs. 90–91, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
32. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 54.
33. See the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 18.
34. Ibid., v. 20.
35. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 96, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
36. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, vs. 97–98, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
37. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 51.
38. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 49.
39. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 51.
40. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, vs. 98–99, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
41. Ibid., vs. 101–106, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
42. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
43. It affirms that a so-called white meditation, which is characterized by peace, induces pacification and makes poison nontoxic; and a black meditation, which is characterized by wrath, induces killing and transports poison in the body, etc.
44. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
45. Ibid.
46. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 110.
47. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 110.
48. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 111, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.
49. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 111.
50. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 64.
51. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127.
52. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 120.
53. Ibid.
54. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, 1986, Ch. 1, p. 21.

55. The *Ādibuddhatantra*, cited in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 127, states:

After leaving the *karma-mudrā* and the conceptualized (*vikalpita*) *jñāna-mudrā*, one should meditate on the *mahā-mudrā* by means of the supreme, imperishable yoga.

56. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 120, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

57. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 115, asserts that the Buddha taught in the *Samājatantra* that the ten signs appear during the nighttime yoga, and in the *Nāmasaṃgīti* that they arise during the daytime yoga.

58. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 115, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

59. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 117.

60. *Piraka* designates closing of the right nostril and inhalation through the left nostril.

61. *Recaka* designates the closing of the left nostril and exhalation through the right nostril.

62. *Kumbhaka* is a breathing technique in which one holds the breath by closing the mouth and nostrils.

63. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 118.

64. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 116, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

65. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 119.

66. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 117, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

67. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 119.

68. See the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 133, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

69. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 119, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

70. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 5, v. 193:

*eteṣāṃ muktihetoḥ sasutajinapatiḥ karmabhūmyāṃ praviśya
garbhādhānaṃ hi kṛtvā paramakarūṇayā bodhim utpādayitvā
mārakleśān nīpātya kṣititalanilaye dharmacakraṃ pravṛtṭya
kṛtvā nirmāṇamāyāṃ punar api bhagavān śuddhakāyaḥ sa eva.*

71. The *Śrīmālāsūtra*, Ch. 3: *tasmād bhagavaṃs tathāgatgarbho nīśraya ādhāraḥ pratiṣṭhā
saṃbaddhānām avinirbhāgānām amuktajñānām asaṃskṛtānām dharmānām/ asaṃbaddhānām api
bhagavan vinirbhāgadharmaṇām muktajñānānām saṃskṛtānām dharmānām nīśraya ādhāraḥ pratiṣṭhā
tathāgatagarbha itī/ tathāgatagarbhaś ced bhagavan na syān na syād duḥkhe' pi nirvān na nirvāṇecchā
prārthanā praṇidhir veti vistaraḥ.*

72. The *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 4, v. 120, and the *Vimalaprabhā*.

Appendix

1. The *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Ch. 3, v. 168.

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The Inner Kālacakratantra

A Buddhist Tantric View of the Individual

Vesna A. Wallace

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Preface

The *Kālacakratantra* and its commentarial literature are a rich textual source for the study of diverse but mutually related fields of South Asian studies in general and of South Asian Buddhism in particular. The works that belong to the Kālacakra literary corpus warrant careful research for several reasons. They express the doctrinal and social theories and the relevant tantric practices that were characteristic of north Indian Buddhism in its final stages. A study of those theories and practices reveals the ways in which the Indian tantric Buddhists from the early eleventh century on interpreted and further developed earlier Buddhist ideas and their practical applications. The *Kālacakratantra* literature also sheds light on the religious and social conditions of eleventh-century India in general and on the social standing and role of Indian tantric Buddhism of that era in particular.

For these reasons, a main focus of this book is on the Kālacakra tradition as an Indian Buddhist tradition. Although the Kālacakra tradition has been a significant component of Tibetan Buddhism to this day and has produced a large body of tantric literature in Tibet, for a number of reasons the intended task of this book is not to provide a detailed analysis of the Indo-Tibetan Kālacakra tradition as a whole. The Kālacakra tradition as a whole includes a plurality of texts and interpretative perspectives, some of which are not in agreement with each other; and it deals with an extensive variety of topics, which deserve separate scholarly analyses. Likewise, the diverse and complex historiographical, textual, and philosophical problems surrounding the Kālacakra literature of both India and Tibet, which should be addressed in great detail, require a collaborative effort of scholars who are willing to undertake such a task.

The central topic of this book is the *Kālacakratantra*'s view of the nature of the individual and one's place in the universe and society. Accordingly, a primary theme of the book is a textual, historical, and philosophical analysis of the second chapter of the *Kālacakratantra*, called the "Chapter on the Individual" (*adhyātma-ṭṭāla*), and its principal commentary, the *Vimalaprabhā*. However, since the Kālacakra tradition's theory of the human being permeates all the chapters of the *Kālacakratantra*, the sec-