

The General Meaning of  
The Secret Commentary, *Dispelling Darkness in the Ten Directions*  
Called  
*Essence of Luminosity*

[210]

Namo Guru Manjughoshaya!

In the inner space of original purity free from elaboration, inseparable from the spontaneous presence of the depth of awareness, your wisdom body is free from aging and decline. May the youthful Manjusri grant auspiciousness!

In the fundamental space of the equality of all phenomena, you have fully perfected the play of the self-manifesting appearances of the three kayas. To the Original Protector Longchenpa, free from obscuration, Drimed Ozer (Stainless Light Rays), please care for me!

The Lion of Speech whose logic is the fire that incinerates all dense forests of perverted speech in this world, Manjusri who attained the body of elixir, [211] may the Omniscient Rongzom Chokyi Zangpo be ever-victorious!

To the Vidyadhara Gurus of the wisdom, symbolic and aural lineages--- the Wisdom Deities of peaceful, magnetizing, and wrathful demeanors, and the Dakinis of the three sacred places as well as the three lineages of protectors, to the all-encompassing deities of the Three Roots I respectfully pay homage!

The great bliss of the original purity and equality of phenomenal existence is the lion's roar of the Supreme Vehicle, which resounds throughout the three realms to terrify the hordes of wild animals that possess perverted speech. This Secret Mantra of the Earlier Translation endowed with the six great features, holds the crucial meaning of the profound and vast Vajra Tantra. By the luminous light<sup>1</sup> of the excellent teachings of the sun and the moon, dispelling darkness in the ten directions, [212] the essence of the general meaning will be discussed in a concise manner.

During the course of the explanation of this great tantra of the *Glorious Magical Matrix Secret Essence Definitive Nature of Suchness*, the mind and wisdom are revealed as self-manifesting appearances. The explanation is twofold; the object to explain the greatness of tantra and the specific explanation of the meaning of this tantra.

First, the general tantra of the *Great Secret Magical Matrix* holds a secret that surpasses all others by illuminating the crucial point of the wisdom of all the oceans of tantras of the vajra vehicle. In general it is stated in the *rdorje sems dp' snying gi me long* (Vajrasattva's Mirror of the Heart Tantra), "Generation stage maha yoga resembles the ground of all phenomena. Completion stage anu yoga resembles the path of all phenomena and the great perfection stage ati yoga resembles the fruition of all phenomena." Thus it is taught. Since maha yoga reveals the entire meaning of the ground, path and fruition of all mantra vehicles, with that as the basis, it is necessary to develop certainty in all mantra practices. Within the inner secret mantra category of maha yoga, if defined, there exist unlimited inner categories. [213] In accord with the disciple's elements, faculties and intentions there are limitless ways of engaging the play of wisdom's magical matrix of deities, mantra and meditation, which cannot be said to be conclusive. Nevertheless, from the point of view of the essential nature (*ngo bo*) there are two divisions, which are *the expansive common varieties of Tantra and the profound uncommon essence of Tantra*.

First, according to the common general approach, the limitless categories of this tantra can be synthesized into the enlightened body, speech, mind, noble qualities and activities of the five buddha families. These are inseparable from the all-pervasive heruka family or the sixth, vajradhara family, which is the synthesis of all six families. From the point of view of the subject, there are three ways of teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> Luminous light (*sprin gyi snang ba*) is an epithet for the sun and moon. It is also reference to the sky as the basis for the appearance of the sun and moon.

Teaching that reveals and emphasizes method, teaching that emphasizes supreme knowledge and teachings that reveal the indivisibility of both method and knowledge to be the display of wisdom. In order these are described as the father, mother, and non-dual tantra's respectively. For example, the Tantra that clearly reveals the illusory body is the Guya samaja (*gsang ba 'dus pa*). That which primarily teaches clear light is Chakrasamvara (*khor lo bde mchog*). That which primarily explains [214] the display of non-dual wisdom is the Kalachakra. (*dus kyi khor lo*). Within the Kalachakra, the teachings that emphasize non-dual illustrative ultimate wisdom are called 'the neutral state of vajrasattva'. Therefore this is taught as the non-dual tantra. Consequently, within the Nyingma tantric scriptures the category of maha yoga is itself divided into three, namely the maha of maha and so forth.

*Second, of the profound uncommon specific Tantra there are two divisions: the Vast Class of Tantra and the Profound Class of Practice.*

The first division is also known as the Eighteen Great Tantras. The essence or basis of all of these tantras is *The Secret Essence Guya gharbha* (*gsang b'i snying po*). If you wonder why it is that these tantras are referred to as uncommon and profound, it is because unmistakable understanding of the crucial pith wisdom of all the categories of the inner tantras of secret mantra depends upon them. Bearing this in mind, throughout unsurpassed mantra, the process of ripening through the four empowerments and striking the pith point through the two stages is similar. Still the majority of tantras merely emphasize methods for the practice of deities and mantra, and the completion stage practice of energy channels, vital energies and essential fluids. [215] In fact the crucial point that all these methods lead to is the view of the great purity and equality of phenomenal existence, and that which illuminates the introduction to illustrative ultimate wisdom. That which is otherwise hidden in the vajra words is clearly revealed in these tantras.

For instance, in the Kalachakra Tantra, since Vajradhara clearly reveals the crucial points of the hidden vajra words the tantra is called 'an open container of the precious Buddha.' This also indicates the essence of the path of Vajrayana, which is the wisdom of the fourth empowerment. In other tantras this is referred to as, 'this resembles the fourth.' The [fourth empowerment] is not mentioned clearly, just merely intimated by the strength of the third. Consequently the propagators of tantra in India, the Indians themselves, came to believe that the fourth wisdom was merely the blissful feeling of union, the mind free from attachment, the theory of emptiness and many other assumptions. These assumptions are clearly refuted in the Commentary on the Seven Aspects of Union (*kha sbyor bdun gyi 'grel pa*), Indrabhuti's Establishing Wisdom (*ye shes grub pa*) and other texts. These days here in the cool land (Tibet), there are those who attempt to defame the pointing out instructions that introduce the fourth wisdom. Likewise there are many who dwell in darkness believing that the feeling of bliss and the [216] cognition that holds to emptiness are a recently unified connate wisdom and so forth. Therefore it states in the Kalachakra, " Unchanging bliss and the completely supreme nature of emptiness are the inseparable enlightened body of wisdom, the ultimate illustrative connate wisdom. Having transcended the phenomena of form and the mind, this is the all-pervasive vajra holder of space. When this tantra and its commentaries establish primordial wisdom, it is so extremely clear that it must be understood that these are the precious pointing out instructions which permeate the wisdom of all other classes of Tantra." Therefore there is the well-known quote, " Tantras must be known through other tantras."

By this great tantra that reveals rather than hides the pith instructions on the view and meditation of unsurpassed mantra, the meaning of the wisdom of all Vajrayana vehicles is precisely ascertained making this the single most precious jewel in the three worlds. Since this is the king of all tantras and the pinnacle of all vehicles, the source of all doctrines, the general explanation of all transmissions, the great swift path of all the buddhas and the most sacred core wisdom of all the sugatas, [217] it is fully endowed with the most astonishingly great noble qualities. Therefore, explanations such as the crucial points found in this tantra cannot be found elsewhere.

Some of the profound cryptic vajra words of the tantras, are interpreted according to the potential of certain individuals minds. Their carelessly written texts are lifeless like a corpse. Understanding that this is far removed from approaching the crucial point, all those fortunate disciples who have supreme aspirations towards the vajrayana should enthusiastically take up the task of teaching and learning a tantra such as this without hesitation in regards to body or life.

*Second, the explanation of the meaning of the Tantra is given according to the two great champion traditions: the way of explaining the common vast path and the way of explaining the uncommon profound path.*

The first of these, the king of all holders of mantra, the astonishingly glorious Zurpa tradition is explained according to the maha yoga scriptures.

The second is explained according to the unsurpassed wisdom of the lion's speech of Long and Rom (Longchenpa and Rongzompa). Of the three divisions of the Great Perfection, since this tantra is the ati of maha it contains the same crucial point as the maha of ati. The Secret Great Perfection is revealed in three ways: through the generation and completion (stages) being inseparable as the naturally manifesting mandala of mind and wisdom, [218] independent of the generation and completion (stage) through knowing that the mind's nature is the natural primordial buddha and through knowing the essential nature of naturally appearing wisdom to be the buddha nature. The explanation to be given here will be in accord with the first of these three. Although the absolute crucial point of these two teaching traditions (Zurpa and Longrom) is the one taste of the wisdom mind, this explanation will be given in accordance with the latter tradition (Longrom) which is endowed with the profound crucial pointing-out instructions.

*For the main topic there are three divisions; an explanation of the meaning of the title which is a limb for comprehending the subject; a synopsis of the crucial points of the meaning of the subject; and an extensive explanation of the meaning of the words of the Tantra.*

First, when you refer to something as a 'vase' you understand it to be a substance with a broad belly. Likewise, by repeating the title, those of superior faculties who understand the meaning of the title will understand the meaning of the tantra, which reveals how all phenomena are the primordial mandalas of the Buddhas. Therefore the title of the text will be explained first. Generally speaking the term tantra is translated as a continuum. This is called a continuum because it refers to the meaning and words, which continuously explain and reveal the various aspects of deity, mantra, samadhi and so forth which are the [219] means for accomplishing the goal of the supreme and common attainments.

Specifically, that which is called, *The Definitive Secret Essence of Suchness* means that all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are inseparable as buddha. This is called *Secret* because the inexhaustible ornamental wheel of enlightened body, speech and mind is primordiality indwelling. To realize this precisely as it is, is the profound wisdom mind of the Victorious Ones. Since obscured and unqualified vessels cannot realize this it is a *secret*. The manner of this secrecy is that although possessing the three kaya nature since it is temporarily obscured then due to that obscuration it is not perceived. Although this nature is revealed through the profound wisdom of the view, being unable to understand it through your own strength, having no one to reveal this or having a teacher and still having a difficult time understanding is the meaning of *concealed*. If the uncommon view, meditation and conduct concerning this nature are not hidden from those who are unsuitable vessels then the secret entranceway will be inappropriately exposed causing disrespect and depreciation. Not revealing this for that reason is the meaning of *hidden*. Therefore the secret that is hidden and concealed in these two ways is what is meant by the term *secret*.

This is called *Essence* because the absolute fundamental nature of all phenomena is the great self-nature of the inexhaustible ornamental wheel of the enlightened body, speech and mind of the primordial buddha great perfection nature of equality. Since this profound and vast subject is the very ground of all phenomena [220] as well as the most supreme state of all it is the *essence*.

This is called *Suchness* because that which is naturally the three kayas free from gathering and dispersing permeates all material things so that everything is itself the nature of *suchness*. Since this is the unmistakable fundamental nature of suchness it is undeceiving. Since a fundamental nature such as this, except for always being just as it is, cannot possibly diminish and is unchanging it is called suchness.

The manner in which this is *Definitive* is that this doctrine is not based on conventional truth as the means through which to enter the path. Because this reveals precisely how it is that the sugatas have realized the absolute meaning it is called definitive or the absolute meaning because fortunate disciples are taught just how it is that they can realize this meaning.

*These four words that constitute the title are four terms each of which indicate the meaning of the noble qualities of the great purity and equality of the primordial buddha nature. This should be understood. Furthermore, that all phenomena are the primordial buddha is the ground of the Secret Essence. Because the generation and completion stages are inseparable here, practicing this is the path of Suchness. The absolute perfection of the resultant spontaneous presence of*

*the three kayas as the ground itself is Definitive. [221] Furthermore, the four words of the title can generally be considered the basis for the engagement of sound. From the standpoint of the subject being discussed, there is the ground, path and result, these three. From the standpoint of the words that form the basis for discussion there is the phenomenon of sound that then becomes the resonance of sound that is heard. This then becomes the symbolic representation of sound as the scriptures or books that contain the words. All of this must be in accord with sound, explanation, and the way of application.*