

MAHA MUDRA

The Yoga of the Great Symbol

[From the book *Tibetan Yoga*, p. 115-154. See: <http://selfdefinition.org/tibetan/Evans-Wentz-Tibetan-Yoga-and-Secret-Doctrines.pdf>]



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THE COLOPHON

MAHA MUDRA

The Yoga of the Great Symbol



The Obeisance and Forward

Obeisance

The Obeisance to the Precious White Dynasty [of Gurus]!

Foreword

Herein, in the expounding of this Guide, called 'The Yoga of the simultaneously-born Great Symbol', intended for setting the ordinary continuity of the Knower face to face with the pure Divine Wisdom, are the preliminary instructions, the essential subject-matter, and the conclusion.

PART ONE

The Preliminary Instructions

The preliminary instructions are both temporal and spiritual. The temporal instructions, which come first, are made clear elsewhere.

In the spiritual instructions, which come next, the initial steps are to begin with the Refuge and the Resolution and to lead up to the Communion with the Gurus.

The seven bodily postures

Then, as hath been written in The Realizing of Vairocana,

'Straighten the body and assume the Dorje-Posture; One-pointedness of mind is the path leading to] the Great Symbol.'

Accordingly, place the feet in the Buddha-Posture. Place the hands level and equipoised below the navel. Straighten the spinal column. Throw out the diaphragm. Bend the neck to the shape of a hook, the chin just pressing against the Adam's apple. Place the tongue upward against the roof of the mouth.

Ordinarily the intellect is controlled by the senses. It is the sight, which chiefly controls it. [Therefore], without winking the eyes, or moving, focus the gaze to the distance of about five and one-half feet.

These are called the "Seven Methods of Vairocana". They constitute the fivefold method of inducing deep meditation by physical means.

The crossed-leg posture regulates the inspiration. The posture of equilibrium equalizes the vital-heat of the body. The straightening of the spinal column together with the expanding of the diaphragm regulates the nervous fluid pervading the body.

The bending of the neck regulates the expiration. The placing of the tongue against the roof of the mouth together with the focusing of the gaze cause the vital-force to enter into the median-nerve.

The five 'airs' thus having been made to enter into the median-nerve, the other function-controlling 'airs' also enter into it, and there dawns the Wisdom of Non-Cognition, otherwise known as bodily tranquility, or immobility of body, or the body abiding in its natural state.

The observing of silence, after having cast out the dead breath [of expiration], is called the tranquility or immobility of speech, or the speech abiding in its natural state.

Think not of the past. Think not of the future. Think not that thou art actually engaged in meditation. Regard not the Void as being Nothingness.

At this stage do not attempt to analyze any of the impressions felt by the five senses, saying, 'It is; it is not.'

But at least for a little, while observe unbroken meditation, keeping the body as calm as that of a sleeping babe, and the mind in its natural state [i.e. free of all thought-processes].

The Tranquility of Mind

It hath been said,

'By entirely refraining from forming thoughts and mental visualizations, by maintaining the bodily calmness of a sleeping babe, and endeavouring meekly and zealously to follow the guru's authorized teachings There will undoubtedly arise the Simultaneously-born State.'

Tilopa hath said,

'Do not imagine, do not think, do not analyse,
Do not meditate, do not reflect;
Keep the mind in its natural state.'

The Master of Doctrines, Gampopa, hath said,

'Undistractedness is the Path followed by all the Buddhas.'

This is what is called mental tranquility, immobility of mind, or the mind abiding in its natural state.

Nagarjuna hath said,

'O mighty one, the Four Recollections
having been shown to be unmistakably the sole Path
traversed by the Buddhas,
Do thou maintain zealous watchfulness over them at all times;
Through carelessness herein, all spiritual efforts become fruitless.'

The mental state of this recollecting is undistractedness. It hath been defined in the Abhidharma thus: 'Recollecting is the non-forgetting of things with which one hath been familiar.'

PART TWO

The Essential Subject-Matter

This hath two parts: the Ordinary Practices [or Teachings], and the Extra-ordinary Practices.

THE ORDINARY PRACTICES

The first, the Practice of the Ordinary [Teachings], also hath two parts:

Seeking Experience of the State of Quiescence [of Body, Speech, and Mind], which is the aim of meditation, through practicing the Yoga of One-pointedness;

Analyzing the Essential Nature of the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving', through practicing the Yoga of the Uncreated, and thus realizing supra-mundane consciousness.

The Yoga of One-Pointedness

The first of these two parts, namely, Seeking Experience of the State of Quiescence, which is the aim of meditation, through practicing the Yoga of One-pointedness, may be practiced either with or without an object [upon which to concentrate]. If an object be used, it may be a breathing or a non-breathing object.

Two classes of non-breathing objects are prescribed: a. ordinary objects, like a small ball or a small bit of wood; b. holy objects, like [symbolizations of] the bodily form, the speech [or word], and the mind [or thought] of the Buddha.

The method of using those of the former class, namely, an ordinary object like a small ball or a small bit of wood, now follows.

Place a small ball, or a small bit of wood, in front of thee as an object upon which to concentrate thy thought. Do not permit the 'Knower' either to stray from or attempt to identify itself with it; but fix thy gaze upon the object one-pointedly.

Meditate upon thy guru as being [seated] upon the crown of thy head. Regard him as being, in reality, the Buddha. Pray to him, using the Manam-khama Prayer.

[And add this request to thy prayer]: 'Vouchsafe me Thy "gift-waves" that I may attain the highest boon of the Great Symbol'.

Then, having prayed for the boon-conferring 'gift-waves', absorb them into thyself. Think that thy mind is blended with the Divine Mind [of the Gurus] And remain in that state of [mental] at-one-ment as long as possible.

Whatever experiences the mind hath from moment to moment report to the guru [at regular intervals], and continue meditating.

If oppressed [with drowsiness], steady the gaze, meditating in a place from which a vast expanse of country may be seen. If the mind be sluggish, also make use of this method [to freshen it], and discipline it with undistracted concentration. If the mind be restless [or wandering], sit within the hermitage, lower the gaze, and make [bodily and mental] relaxation the chief aim [for the time being].

The representations employed for the second class of non-breathing objects, namely, symbolizations of the bodily form, of the speech, and of the mind of the Buddha: for the bodily form, an image [of the Buddha]; for the speech, syllables; for the mind, a seed-like form [or a dot].

In making use of the first of these objects, the bodily form, one may have either a metallic [or other] image or a picture [of the Buddha]. Or [one may employ] a visualization of the Buddha's bodily form, yellow like unto burnished gold, beautified with all the signs and graces [of spiritual perfection], enhaloed in radiance, and robed in the three robes of the Order, thought of as being ever present in front of thee.

In making use of the second of these objects, a syllable, as symbolizing the principle of speech [of the Buddha], visualize in front of thee an image of a lunar disk about the size of a finger-nail and upon it the syllable HUM (ह्रुं), as finely depicted as a hair.

In making use of the third of these objects, a seed-like form, as symbolizing the mind [of the Buddha], visualize a seed, oval in shape like an egg, about the size of a pea, emitting rays of light, and marvelous to behold, and mentally concentrate upon it.

In the second method [of attaining mental concentration], by using breathing objects, there are employed the Dorje Recitation, and the 'Pot-shaped'. The first procedure, in employing the Dorje Recitation, is:

While maintaining bodily and mental tranquility, concentrate the mind upon each inhalation and exhalation of breath to the exclusion of all else. Count [inaudibly] from one and two up to twenty-one thousand six hundred breathings. This will enable one to attain expertness in knowledge of the number of exhalations and inhalations [per day].

Next, take note of when the breathing begins [so many seconds after the exhalation] and in what manner the breath enters. And consider whether the breath enters at more than one part of the body.

In virtue of these practices, the mind follows the entrance and exit of the breath [and, like the breathing, becomes rhythmically attuned]. Thus doth one become well acquainted with the nature of the process of breathing.

Then, keeping the mind concentrated upon the breathing process, observe how the breath passes from the tip of the nose [through the nostril openings] to the bottom of the lungs, how it originates [or cometh in], and how long it is retained [before being exhaled].

By this practice, one cometh to know, just as they really are, the colors, the duration, and the retention-period of each breathing.

Then, by observing the condition of the five fundamental elements [in the body, namely, earth, water, fire, air, and ether], each by itself, unblended with another, the increase or decrease of the number of inhalations and exhalations is to be noted.

Now, by visualizing each expiration as the syllable AUM [or OM], white in color, and each inspiration as the syllable HUM, blue in color, and the retention period [of the breathing] as the syllable AH, red in color, one cometh to know, [intuitively, or without mental process], the time required for each part of the breathing-process.

Next, in employing the 'Pot-shaped', the procedure is to expel completely the dead air from within, making three efforts in expelling it. Inhale gently the outer air through the nostrils. Draw up into the 'Pot-shaped' the air inhaled and retain it so as long as possible.

In virtue of these practices, that thing called mind, - so difficult to control, because of its inability normally to function apart from the breathing-process which causes it to shift constantly from one thought to another, - is disciplined, and becomes freed from this dependence on the breath.

In employing the second method of concentrating the mind, namely, that in which no objects are used, there are three processes: the instantaneous cutting off of a thought at the root the very moment, as in a flash, it arises; the leaving unshaped whatever concept or idea appears; and the art of letting the mind assume its natural condition [of absolute quiescence, unmoved by the disturbing process of thought].

The cutting-off of a thought at the root the very moment, as in a flash, it arises, is practiced as follows:

In meditating, in the manner above explained, one finds that, because of the mind responding to stimuli, thoughts crop up continuously. Knowing that the birth of even a single idea should be prevented, one must try to inhibit this continuous cropping up of thoughts, by exercise of mental alertness. Thus, as soon as a thought sprouts, try to chop it down, root and all, and continue meditating.

By prolonging, during the meditation, the period of time in which the effort is made to prevent the arising of thoughts, one finally cometh to be aware of thoughts following close on the heels of one another so numerous that they seem interminable. This is the recognizing of thoughts, which equals the knowing of the enemy. It is called 'The First

Resting Place', the first stage of mental quiescence attained; and the yogin then looks on, mentally unperturbed, at the interminable flow of thoughts as though he were tranquilly resting on the shore of a river watching the water flow past.

Once the mind attains the tranquil state, for even the briefest moment, it understands the arising and the cessation of thoughts. This understanding makes one to feel as though thoughts were becoming more and more numerous, but, really, thoughts are always arising, and there is neither increase nor decrease of them. Thoughts are born instantaneously. That which is apart from and capable of immediately arresting this birth of thoughts is the Reality.

In the next practice, the leaving unshaped whatever concept or idea appears, the procedure is to be indifferent to the thought, allowing it to do as it likes, neither falling under its influence, nor attempting to impede it. Let the mind act as its shepherd [or watchman]; and go on meditating. Thereby thoughts will cease to arise and the mind will attain the state of passive tranquility and one-pointedness.

Again, thoughts are apt to have motion, like that of a meteorite [flashing across the heavens instantaneously yet unbrokenly].

By meditating as before, the duration of the state of quiescence is prolonged. This is called 'The Middle State of Quiescence', likened [in its unperturbed tranquillity] to a calm flowing river.

The practice of keeping the mind in this relaxed condition, precipitates the sediment in the mind.

The Master of Doctrines, hath said,

If the mind be left relaxed, it attains the tranquility;
If water be left undisturbed, it attains clearness.

And the Great Lord of Yogins [Milarepa] hath said,

'When the mind is left in the primordial,
unmodified condition, knowledge dawns;
When this condition is maintained,
comparable in its calmness to the flow of a calm river,
Knowledge in its completeness is attained.
Wholly abandon all directing and shaping of thoughts;
Ever maintain quiescence of mind, O yogin.'

The Great Saraha hath summarized the essence of the teachings concerning this dual process, which is concomitant with meditation, in the following verses:

'When bound [or unrelaxed], the mind tries to wander in each of the ten directions;
When freed, it remains firm and motionless.
I have come to understand that it is a stubborn thing like a camel.'

The third process, the art of letting the mind assume its natural condition, consists of four parts.

a. The Spinning of the Brahmanical Thread

The first part concerns maintaining evenness of mind, as carefully as evenness is maintained in the spinning of a Brahmanical thread. The thread must be spun neither too

tightly nor too loosely, but evenly. Likewise, in meditating, one must not strain the mind too much; otherwise loss of control over the thoughts will ensue.

Through too much laxity, one falls into slothfulness. Therefore one must meditate evenly.

At the outset, the beginner is apt to strain his mind through using the Instantaneous Chopping-down Process. But when fatigued with this process, relax by [changing over to that of] letting the thoughts roam at will.

This method of alternating the tensing with the relaxing process, which is employed in our School, hath now been considered. And the tensing and relaxing of the mind, being like the tensing and relaxing during the spinning of a brahmanical thread, hath come to be called 'Keeping the mind in condition like that of the spinning of a brahmanical thread.'

b. The Sundering of a Straw-Rope

The second part, called the art of keeping the mind as sundered from thoughts as one portion of a straw-rope, when snapped, is sundered from the other portion, is dependent upon indomitable resolve to maintain undistracted alertness. For the previous attempts at inhibiting thoughts have created thoughts.

Because the above-described processes of inhibiting thoughts have not been employed without using the cognizing faculty and thus creating fresh thoughts, the meditation hath been marred.

The abandoning of both the cognizing faculty and the cognizer, and the allowing the mind to rest in the passive tranquil state, is known as the art of keeping the mind sundered from all mental functioning and exertion, the process of the sundering being compared to the snapping of a straw-rope.

c. The mentally alert Child

The third part is called 'Keeping the mind like that of a little child looking [with intensest mental alertness] at [the frescoes on] a temple'.

By tying the elephant of the mind to the pillar of the cognizing faculty and the cognizer, each of the vital-airs is kept in its own channel.

Through the effects produced by this practice there come smoke-like or ethereal shapes, and ecstatic bliss whereby one almost swoons.

In experiencing the non-cognizing state of body and mind and having a feeling as if floating in the air, whatever visions or apparitional appearances may arise, are neither to be held on to through showing liking for them nor inhibited through dislike. Hence this non-holding on to and non-inhibiting of any vision hath been called 'Keeping the mind like that of a little child looking [with intensest mental alertness] at [the frescoes on] a temple'.

d. The Indifference of an Elephant]

The fourth part concerns keeping the mind in the state which hath been likened to that of an elephant when pricked with thorns.

When cognitions arise while the mind is quiescent, consciousness of them is concomitant with their arising. The 'Preventer' [i.e. the consciousness yogically trained to that intense alertness above described, which controls thoughts] and the thing to be prevented [i.e. the process of thought-formation], having been brought face to face, one thought is prevented from giving way to another thought.

Because the 'Preventer' hath come of itself without one's needing laboriously to seek it, this condition is called 'Being in the state wherein the unbroken current of consciousness functions automatically'.

The art of keeping the mind in that state wherein there is neither inhibition of nor reaction to thoughts, when thoughts are perceived, hath been compared to the state of indifference which an elephant shows when pricked with thorns, and it hath been named accordingly.

This [condition] hath been designated as the final state of quiescence, and likened [in its calmness] to an ocean without a wave.

Although while thus quiescent there is cognition of the [mental] motion [of thoughts arising and vanishing], nevertheless, the mind having attained its own condition of rest or calmness and being indifferent to the motion, the state, is called 'The state wherein falls the partition separating motion from rest'.

Thereby one realizes one-pointedness of mind.

That which recognizes the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving' [or motion and rest, as being one and inseparable], is called, when it be rightly understood, 'The All-Discriminating Wisdom, or the Supra-mundane Intellect.'

As the Elegant Sutra says,

'The stage now reached, in virtue of the body and mind having acquired excellent training by these practices, is called "The Stage of Reflection and Analysis".'

The Yoga of the Uncreated

The second part of the Ordinary Practices, - the Analyzing of the Essential Nature of the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving', through practicing the Yoga of the Uncreated, and thus realizing supra-mundane consciousness, - hath three divisions: the Analyzing of the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving'; the Realizing of the Supra-mundane Consciousness; the Meditating upon the Yoga of the Uncreated.

In the first practice, the Analyzing of the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving', the following analytical processes are required:

With the Intellect of the All-Discriminating Wisdom, born of the quiescent state of non-cognition [or the indifference to the arising and vanishing of thoughts], one observes:

What the real nature of the 'Non-Moving' [or mind] is when it is motionless;
How it remains motionless;
How it moves from the state of motionlessness;
When moving whether it maintain its tranquility of motionlessness;
Whether it move any at all while maintaining the state of motionlessness;
Whether the 'Moving' is other than the 'Non-Moving';
What the real nature of the 'Moving' [or thought] is;
How the 'Moving' becomes the 'Non-Moving'.

One cometh to know that neither is the 'Moving' other than the 'Non-Moving', nor the 'Non-Moving' other than the 'Moving'.

If the real nature of the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving' be not discovered by these analyses, one is to observe:

Whether the Intellect, which is looking on, is other than the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving';
Or whether it is the very self of the 'Moving' and the 'Non-Moving'.

Upon analyzing, with the eyes of the Self-Knowing Intellect, one discovers nothing; the observer and the thing observed are found to be inseparable.

And because the real nature of this inseparableness cannot be cognized, the stage thus attained is called 'The goal beyond mind.' It is also called 'The goal beyond all theories.'

The Lord of Conquerors hath said,

'Mind-made goals, however noble, end in disillusionment, And the mind-transcending Thatness cannot thus be called a goal;
Ever inseparable the thing that sees is from the thing that's seen;
'This by the guru's kindly guidance that this truth disciples glean.'

That method of analyzing (as above described), hath been referred to by the Pandit Shantideva thus:

'While holding fast to the state of samadhi [perfected quiescence],
Without in any way being distracted even for the briefest moment,
And exercising the analytical powers of mind,
Each mental process is to be examined separately.'

Of the metaphor of fire and fuel, in the Sutra entitled *Kasyapa's Questioning*, it is written,

'By the rubbing of one stick against another, fire is produced;
By the applying of that fire, both sticks are burnt up.
Similarly, the Super-Intellect is born of the union of the
"Moving" and the "Non-Moving";
And by That, to which they give birth, both are consumed.'

This introspective analysis, conducted by the Super-Intellect, is known as 'The Analytical Meditation of the Hermit'. It is not like the analytical meditation of the intellectualist, for the intellectualist's analysis is external [or dependent upon sensuous experiences].

The second practice, the realizing of the Supra-mundane Consciousness, is thus: Whatever thoughts, or concepts, or obscuring [or disturbing] passions arise are neither to be abandoned nor allowed to control one; they are to be allowed to arise without one's trying to direct [or shape] them. If one do no more than merely to recognize them as soon as they arise, and persist in so doing, they will come to be realized [or to dawn] in their true [or void] form through not being abandoned.

By that method, all things, which may seem to be obstacles to spiritual growth can be made use of as aids on the Path. And, therefore, the method is called 'The utilizing of obstacles as aids on the Path'.

This art of attaining Liberation by merely recognizing the thoughts, whereby one acquires understanding of the inseparable nature of the abandoner [i.e. the mind] and of the thing to be abandoned [i.e. the thought], is called 'The Essence of the Practice of the Sublime Path', or 'The Reverse Method of Meditation'.

After having attained Liberation, there cometh infinite compassion for all those sentient beings who have not as yet recognized the true nature of their own mind.

Although one's time should be fully devoted to practicing mental dedication of body, speech, and mind to the good of all sentient beings, nevertheless, seeing that in virtue of

the above intellectual processes belief in the reality of things hath been corrected, one cannot be adversely influenced [by such apparently egotistical dedication], just as one cannot be affected harmfully by taking charmed poison.

Through taking into consideration this sort of practice [of seemingly egotistical dedication], there hath been formulated the prayer, of which the first verse is,

'Whatever dawneth on the Path may I neither abandon nor adopt.'

The third practice, the Meditating upon the Yoga of the Uncreated, hath three divisions: the Analyzing from the Standpoint of the Three Times [the Past, the Present, and the Future]; the Analyzing from the Standpoint of Substance and Non-substance [or of Matter and Non-matter]; the Analyzing from the Standpoint of Singleness and Plurality [or of the One and the Many].

The first, the Analyzing from the Standpoint of the Three Times, is [according to the following meditations]:

The past thought hath vanished;
The future thought, being as yet unborn, hath not come into existence;
The present thought cannot be fixed [or identified] as being the present.

By carrying on observations [or meditations] in this manner, the character of all [sangsaric] things cometh to be realized as like that of the Three Times.

All things have no existence in themselves; it is the mind which gives them being.

The realization that birth, death, and time have no existence in themselves, hath been referred to by Saraha thus:

'Birth in matter having been made neutral like the sky,
What remains to be born when matter hath been left aside!
The natural state from beginningless time hath been the Unborn State;
To-day is this truth realized, by its having been demonstrated by my guru, the protector.'

The meditative analysis is to be carried on in accordance with this reference [by Saraha].

The second method, the Analyzing from the Standpoint of Substance and Non-substance, is according to the following meditations:

Is one's mind a thing which 'Is', as being composed of matter; or is it a thing which 'Is not', as not being composed of matter?

If material, of what material substance is it?

If an objective thing, of what shape and color is it?

If a cognizing faculty, is it merely an ephemeral thing like a thought?

If non-material, how doth it assume various aspects?

And who made it?

If the mind were a material thing, one would be able, after having meditated upon it in this manner, to regard it as something substantial. But from the standpoint of the observation of the Super-Intellect, it is found to be something, which cannot be called anything; so one is unable to classify it as being a thing composed of matter. As being the subject of analysis for the Super-Intellect, neither can it be classified as being non-material nor as being non-existent. Accordingly, since it is neither a material thing nor a non-

material thing, it cannot be placed at either of two extremes; and, therefore, this method is called 'The Middle Path'.

This accepted conviction [or truth] hath not been arrived at merely by the processes of deduction and induction, but essentially because of the gurus teachings, which have made one to see the Priceless Gem lying unnoticed within one's reach. Therefore have these teachings been [also] called 'The Great Truth',

It hath been said,

'He into whose heart the guru's teachings have entered,
Is like unto one who hath been made to see a treasure lying unnoticed within his reach.'

The third method, the Analyzing from the Standpoint of Singleness and Plurality, is according to the following meditations:

Is the mind a single thing?
Or is it a plural thing?
If it be a single thing, how doth it come to be such, seeing that it manifests itself variously?
If it be a number of things, how can it be so, since all of them must necessarily be inseparably one in their true nature?

Observing thus, one finds the mind not to be a number of things; and, as it is free of the extremes [of singleness and plurality], it is called 'The Great Symbol', that which doth not abide in absolute rest [or finality].

In the quiescent state of samadhi, for the yogin who thus attains realization, the All-Discriminating Wisdom of the Transcendental Intellect alone dawns, and nothing else. Therefore, the Great Symbol, the Reality, is called 'That which is devoid of characteristics'.

As a result of these meditations, all attachment to the belief in the reality of things is purged away, and everything appears illusory, like magically-produced phantasmagoria.

That being so, it hath been said,
'In front of me and behind me, and in the ten directions,
Wheresoever I look, I see only the Thatness;
To-day, O Protector [or Guru] the illusion hath been broken.
Henceforth I shall ask nothing of any one.'

THE EXTRAORDINARY PRACTICES

The second part of Part II, the Extra-Ordinary Practices, consists of two parts: the Yoga of Transmuting all Phenomena and Mind, which are inseparable, into At-onement [or Unity]; and the Yoga of Non-Meditation, whereby all things are transmuted into the Dharma-Kaya, by the Simultaneously-born Immaculate Mind [or Great Symbol].

The Yoga of transmuting all Phenomena and Mind into At-One-Ment

First cometh the practice of the Yoga of Transmuting all Phenomena and Mind, which are inseparable, into At-onement [or Unity]:

By means of the simile of sleep and dreams, recognize all phenomena to be mind. By means of the simile of water and ice, recognize noumena and phenomena to be a unity. By means of the simile of water and waves, transmute all things to the one common state of at-one-ment.

Of these three, the first, the Recognizing of all Phenomena to be Mind, by means of the simile of sleep and dreams, is according to the following meditation:

Whatever be seen during sleep is not something apart from mind.

Similarly, all phenomena of the waking-state are but the dream-content of the Sleep of Obscuring Ignorance. Apart from the mind [which gives them illusory being] they have no existence.

By allowing the relaxed mind to rest upon whatever ideas [or visions] arise, all external phenomena and one's own mind [with all its internal phenomena] are realized as being inseparable, one from another; and are transmuted into atone-ment.

The Lord of Yogins [Milarepa], hath said,

'The dream dreamt last night,
Wherein phenomena and mind were seen as one,
Was a teacher; didst thou not [O disciple] so understand it?'

It hath also been said,

'Transmute the Three Regions, omitting from them nothing, Into the essence of the One Great Passion, [Universe embracing Love Divine].'

The second practice, the Identifying of Phenomena as Noumena, by means of the simile of water and ice, is according to the following meditation:

Since all phenomena [or phenomenally appearing things] which arise present no reality in themselves, they are said to be of the noumena. Though not formed into anything, yet they give shape to everything. Thus it is that phenomena and noumena are ever in union, and said to be of one nature. They are, for example, like ice and water [two aspects of a single thing].

By that means, one cometh to know that the three dualities, the bliss and the voidness, the Clear Light and the Voidness, Wisdom and the Voidness, are unities; and this is called 'The Realization of the At-one-ment of all Spiritual Experiences'.

It hath been said,

'If one hath fully understood, all things are the Thatness;
None will discover anything other than the Thatness.
What is read is the Thatness, what is memorized is the Thatness,
And what is meditated upon is also the Thatness.'

The third process, the Transmuting of all Things to the One Common State of At-one-ment, by means of the simile of water and waves, is according to the following meditation:

As waves are produced from water itself, so, in like manner, is to be understood how all things are the offspring of the mind, which, in its own nature, is Voidness.

Saraha hath said,

'Since all things are born of the mind,
Therefore is the mind itself the guru.'

This teaching is called 'The One Truth pervading the Realm of Truth'; and, therefore, known as the Oneness manifesting itself in the Many. The yogin who hath mastered it, realizes the Voidness in every state [of consciousness], as the fruit of Knowledge.

The Yoga of non-Meditation

Next cometh the practice of the Yoga of Non-Meditation, whereby all things are transmuted into the Dharma-Kaya [or Body of Truth] by the Simultaneously-born Immaculate Mind [or Great Symbol]:

When the Ignorance which was to be overcome hath been dispersed, the effort to overcome it ceaseth, and the Path cometh to an end and the Journey is completed.

The Journeying having ceased, there is no place beyond the ending of the Path to explore; and one obtaineth the Supreme Boon of the Great Symbol, the Unabiding State of Nirvana.

In the complete versions of The Transmutation, [Naropa quoteth his illustrious guru, Tilopa, thus]:

'All hail! this is the Wisdom of the Intellect of him who knoweth himself;
It is indescribable by use of speech, and is not an object of the mind.
I, Tilopa, have [beyond this] nothing [further] to reveal.
'Act so as to know thyself by means of symbols in thine own mind,
Without imagining, without deliberating, without analysing,
Without meditating, without introspecting; keeping the mind in its natural state.'

Herein, in these verses, is contained the essence of all that hath gone before.

PART THREE The Conclusion

Part III, the Conclusion, consists of recognizing the Great Symbol, and setting oneself face to face with It; analyzing the impediments [or obstacles] and errors [or straying away from the Truth] while treading the Path; differentiating experiences, and practical knowledge [or convictions resulting from yogic practices] from theoretical knowledge [or mere mental understanding of verbal definitions].

In the first, recognizing the Great Symbol, and setting oneself face to face with It, the process is [fourfold]: to attain the state of quiescence; to utilize the experiences on the Path; to differentiate the various experiences, and the degree of fervor, and the stages reached on the Path; to possess knowledge of having realized the fruits of any of these attainments.

These constitute the four classes of yogic attainment.

In the second, analyzing the impediments and errors while treading the Path, the process is thus:

The impediments arising from phenomena becoming inimical [or mentally disturbing or confusing] are cleared away by the knowledge of the oneness of phenomena and mind. The impediments arising from thoughts becoming inimical are cleared away by the knowledge of the oneness of thoughts and the Body of Truth [or Dharma-Kaya]. The impediments arising from noumena becoming inimical are cleared away by the knowledge of the oneness of noumena and phenomena.

The three errors arising from over-fondness for the quiescence born of meditation are to be overcome [or avoided] by the directing of one's spiritual development towards the state wherein is experienced the Transcendental Vision.

There are four states in which one can go astray on the Path:

The going astray in the state of the Voidness is overcome by meditating upon the Voidness as being Compassion. The going astray in the state of sealing [the mind to further ingress of truth] is overcome by realizing the True Nature of things as they are. The going astray in the state of the 'Preventer' [trying to prevent the arising of thoughts] is overcome by realizing the inseparable union of the 'Preventer' and that which the 'Preventer' tries to prevent. The going astray on the Path itself is overcome by realizing the Simultaneously born Great Symbol and attaining Liberation.

In the third, differentiating experiences and practical from theoretical knowledge, the process is thus: Intellectual comprehension of the True State of the mind, by having heard and pondered concerning it, is theoretical knowledge. To understand it in terms of Oneness is Experience. Actual mastery of it up to the Uncreated is Conviction. But the term Complete Knowledge is not amiss when applied to its Complete Realization.

The Colophon

The King of Zangkar, named Zhanphan Zangpo, having desired that the text of this treatise on The Great Symbol, and also that on The Six Doctrines be put into standardized compilations, presented more than twenty measures of saffron [to me, the compiler, who was his gurn, named Padma-Karpo]. Seeing that unauthorized interpolations, purporting to be extracts from various portions of the Scriptures [which had crept into the text], were, in most instances, unreliable, I, Padma-Karpo [expurgated them]: and [as a result of my labours] hereby hand this Book on for the benefit of future devotees.

I compiled it while living in the essence of devotional practices, in the southern mountains of Karchu, at the place known as Essence of Perfection. May it prove to be auspiciously beneficial.

In order to multiply the gift of religion, Chogyal-Sodnam-Gyaltshan donated one silver coin for the carving of each block-type [of this Book].