

RICE UNIVERSITY

Magical Movements ('phrul 'khor): Ancient Yogic Practices in the Bön Religion and Contemporary Medical Perspectives.

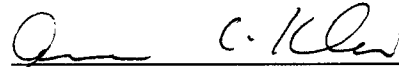
by

Marco Alejandro Chaoul

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Doctor of Philosophy

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:



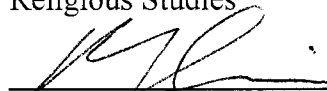
Anne C. Klein, Professor, Chair
Religious Studies



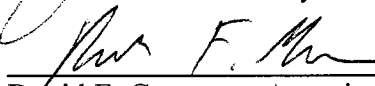
Jeffrey J. Kripal, J. Newton Rayzor
Professor and Chair
Religious Studies



William B. Parsons, Associate Professor
Religious Studies



Richard J. Smith, George and Nancy Rupp
Professor
Humanities and History



David F. Germano, Associate Professor
Religious Studies, University of Virginia

HOUSTON, TEXAS
MAY 2006

UMI Number: 3216682

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI Microform 3216682

Copyright 2006 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ABSTRACT

Magical Movements (*'phrul 'khor*): Ancient Yogic Practices in the Bön Religion
and Contemporary Medical Perspectives

by

Marco Alejandro Chaoul

Magical movement is a distinctive Tibetan practice of physical yoga in which breath and concentration of the mind are integrated as crucial components in conjunction with particular body movements. Present in all five spiritual traditions of Tibet—in some more prevalent than others—it has been part of their spiritual training since at least the tenth century C.E.

Focusing on the magical movement from the ancient Bön tradition's *Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung* and its contemporary representatives and lineage-holders, this dissertation will include textual translation and analysis as well as ethnographical research reporting how it is used in Bön lay settings and monastic curricula today. In particular I will use a commentary by the famous Bönpo scholar and meditator Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, who allegedly attained the rainbow body in 1934 (a sign, in the tradition, of the highest contemplative state). He was also part of the non-sectarian (*ris med*) Tibetan movement of his time. Although this aspect does not transpire in his *Commentary*, I feel that Shardza's example is present as an inspiration to the spirit in which I relate to the context of the practice and material contained in his text.

Examining the use of the subtle body in magical movement and the understanding of “magic” in that context, I propose that here magic can have the external meaning of magic, the internal meaning of medicine and the most internal or secret meaning of mysticism. Thus, these magical movements provide the yogin or practitioner an opportunity to break through or go beyond the limitations of the body and to bring forth the mystical experiences together with the magical and healing aspects.

Finally, tracing the migration of this practice to the West, both in *dharma* or Buddhist centers and the contemporary Western medical settings, I report some of the benefits of using these mind-body techniques as part of a CIM (Complementary and Integrative Medicine) treatment for people with cancer. This may allow magical movement to participate in a larger dialogue, one that extends the conversation to the fields medical humanity and integrative medicine, among others.

Attempting contemplative practices without clear understanding of the body...
is like trying to milk an animal by tugging at its horns.¹

¹ Drapa Gyaltzen (*Grags pa rgyal mtshan*), an eminent master from the Sakya School, in Frances M. Garret, "Narratives of embryology : becoming human in Tibetan literature," Ph. D. dissertation, Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1994, p. 56.

Preface and Acknowledgements

My interest in the Bön² magical movement practices began during a trip to Nepal in 1993. Staying at the Bönpo monastery of Tritan Norbutse (*Khri brtan nor bu rtse*), I was able to observe, and later learn, these movements under the guidance of Tibetan lamas who followed the teachings of the *Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung* (*Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*, hereafter *ZZ Oral Transmission*), which are central to this study. In 1994, under the guidance of the Tibetan lama and scholar Geshe (*dge shes*) Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, who had recently moved to the U.S.A., I studied and started translating a well-known commentary on the *ZZ Oral Transmission's* magical movements, written by Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen (d. 1934).³

The Indo-Tibetan program at The University of Virginia gave me my first training in Tibetan language, classical systems of Buddhist philosophy, and the historical context that I needed for this task. However, my M.A. thesis was on the severing ritual (*gcod*),⁴ so I could not give focused attention to this magical movement text. In 1996, I continued my academic studies at Rice University, under the guidance of Dr. Anne C. Klein. A year later, I took a research trip to

² Bön is considered the ancient spiritual tradition of Tibet. More on Bön will be explained as the topic of this dissertation unravels.

³ Gyaltsen, Shardza T. *Byang zab nam mkha' mdzod chen las Snyan rgyud rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor* In: *NAM MKHA MDZOD* Vol. I-III, ed. by Sonam N, Gyaltsen PLS, Gyatso K, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre: New Thobgyal, 1974, pp. 321-346.

⁴ "Tracing the origins of chö (*gcod*) in the Bön tradition: a dialogic approach cutting through sectarian boundaries." M.A. Thesis, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, 1999.

Nepal and Tibet under the auspices of a fellowship from the Rocky Foundation for Buddhist Studies. The original intent of my trip was to investigate the possibility of a dissertation on pilgrimage. However, I quickly realized that traveling to pilgrimage sites in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, where the masters of the *ZZ Oral Transmission* lived and practiced, was burdened with political obstacles. Upon my return to Nepal, and then back to the U.S.A., I understood that I had to re-direct my research to the inner landscapes of the subtle body. When I told Professor Klein, her face brightened, and we both laughed as we had failed to see the obvious. The topic was there all along: *'phrul 'khor*, magical movement.

Along the long road to finishing this project, many people have helped me. Certainly, it would have been totally impossible to do if it were not for the teachers and protectors of these teachings, passed on both in written and oral forms. Especially, I would like to thank the Menri Trizin Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, the Menri Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Khenpo Nyima Wangyal, Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, and last, and certainly not least, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. There are no words to express how extremely grateful I am to all of them for such precious gifts, and I hope that this dissertation becomes a viable medium to share some of those benefits.

Many other people were also crucial in this long and winding road. I would like to thank Anne Klein, Edith Wyschogrod, William Parsons, Richard

Smith, and Jeffrey Kripal from Rice University and David Germano from The University of Virginia, who served as readers and advisors, helping me polish my dissertation in many ways. All the tarnish left is mine.

I would also like to thank Lorenzo Cohen from The University of Houston M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, who was vital in my work of applying these practices with cancer patients in a clinical research environment and helped me include them in this dissertation. I am grateful to Steve Lewis, Jeffrey Kripal, and Gary Wihl, who played an important role in helping me finish what seemed like an endless project. And a special thanks goes to Deb Blakely, who came into this process at the precise moment I needed her, to help me refine my English (a second language for me after my native Spanish). Her help and Simone Rieck's, her assistant, were invaluable.

I am very grateful to my family: parents, sister, children and in-laws, for their faithful support. And of course the biggest THANK YOU goes to my wife, Erika De la Garza. Her loyal support and understanding were unsurpassable. And so, in case I do not get you the t-shirt, I will say it here: "you have survived your husband's dissertation."

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Moving into the Magic

I. Overview	1
II. Historical Context: The Bön Religion	5
III. Defining Magical Movement	16
A. Mind-Energy-Body	21
B. Origin of Magical Movement from the <i>ZZ Oral Transmission</i>	29
C. Magical Movement in Western Translations	30
D. Importance of Orality	31
IV. Practice and Practical Applications of Magical Movement	33

Chapter 2. Understanding Bodies 40

I. Theoretical Framework	40
A. Asceticism and the Body	41
II. A Brief History of Yoga and Tantra	44
A. Indian Yoga	51
B. Mind-Energy-Body in Tibet	53
C. Buddha Nature	57
III. The Landscapes of the Subtle Dimension(s)	58
A. Elements of the Subtle Dimension(s)	64
1. Channels	64
2. Energetic Centers	67
3. Vital Breath Currents	69
B. Inner Landscapes: Charting the <i>Maṇḍala</i>	71
C. <i>Vajra</i> Hermeneutics	74
D. <i>Mahāyāna</i> Ethics	75
E. <i>Maṇḍalas</i> as Buddha Dimensions	77

IV. The Yogi's Dynamism	79
A. Maṇḍala-Dynamics	83
B. Moving the Gears	83
C. Radiating Maṇḍalas	87
Chapter 3.	
Texts and Lamas: Interweaving Textual and Oral Wisdom	93
0. <i>ZZ Oral Transmission</i> Text(s) and Interpretations	97
A. Preparation: Channels, Vital Breath Currents and Magical Movement	98
I. Cycle 1: Foundational Magical Movement Cycle	102
A. The Foundational Magical Movement Set	104
i. Purification of the Head	105
• About Concluding with <i>Ha</i> and <i>Phat</i>	106
ii-v. Purification of the Legs, Arms, Torso, and Lower Body	108
ii. Purification of the Legs	109
• Breathing	109
iii. Purification of the Arms	110
iv. Purification of the Upper Torso	111
v. Purification of the Lower Body	112
A1. Benefits	112
II. Cycle 2: Root Magical Movement Cycle	115
A. Root Magical Movement Set	116
i. Striking the Athlete's Hammer to Overcome Anger	117
ii. The Skylight of Primordial Wisdom that Overcomes Mental Fogginess	118
iii. Rolling the Four [Limbs like] Wheels, to Overcome Pride	119
iv. Loosening the Corner Knot to Overcome Attachment	119
v. Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel to Overcome Jealousy	120
vi. The Stance of a Tigress' Leap to Overcome Drowsiness and Agitation	120
A1. Benefits	121
• Benefits in Quintessential Instructions	122
i. Striking the Athlete's Hammer	123
ii. The Skylight of Primordial Wisdom	124
iii. Rolling the Four Limbs Like A Wheel	125
iv. Loosening the Corner Knot	126
v. Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel	127
vi. Stance of a Tigress' Leap	127

B. Root Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles	129
i. Duck Drinking Water	130
ii. Wild Yak Butting Sideways	131
iii. Female Donkey [reclining] to Sleep	132
iv. Holding the Breath Like a Sparrow-Hawk	133
v. Rolling Up the Limits of the Four Continents	134
vi. Extending the Limits of the Four Continents	135
B1. Benefits	136
III. Cycle 3: Branch Magical Movement Cycle	138
A. Main Branches Set	138
i. Natural Descent of the Four Elements	139
ii. Peacock Drinking Water	139
iii. Collecting the Four Stalks	140
iv. Rolling the Four Upper and Lower	141
v. Striking the Four Knots	142
A1. Benefits	143
B. Branch Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles	144
i. Great Garuda Flapping its Wings	145
ii. Peacock Shaking Water	145
iii. Collecting the Four Limbs Clearing Away the Limitations	146
iv. One-Sided Gallop of the Antelope	146
v. One-Sided Pulse of the <i>Sha ri</i> Deer	147
B1. Benefits	148
IV. Cycle 4: Special Magical Movement Cycle	150
A. Special Magical Movement Clearing Set that Clears Away Individual Obstacles & General Obstacles Sets	150
i. Clearing Away [obstacles] from the Head	151
ii. Swinging the Binding Chains of the Torso	152
iii. Grasping [like] the Raven's Claws, [clearing away the obstacles of] the Arms	153
iv. Adamantine Self-Rotation of the Stomach	154
v. Camel's Fighting Stance	154

A1. Benefits	155
B. Special Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Common Obstacles	157
i. Stirring the Depths of the Ocean	158
ii. Freeing the Nine Knots	158
iii. Training and Freeing the Channels	159
B1. Benefits	162
iv. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk	164
a. First Part	165
b. Second Part	166
c. Third Part	167
B2. Benefits	168
v. Bouncing Jewel	171
B3. Benefits	173
V. Concluding Section: Colophon to the Text(s)	175
Chapter 4: Moving into the Twentieth Century	184
I. Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen and Magical Movement	186
A. Magical Movement Curricula and Practice	188
II. Magical Movement Reaches to the West	195
A. Ligmincha <i>Trul khor</i> Training Course	198
III. From <i>Dharma</i> to Medicine	200
A. A CIM Application with Cancer Patients	200
i. The Study	201
ii. Results	202
IV. Looking Into the Future	204
Chapter 5: Let the Magic Continue	207
Appendix Section	215
Appendix I	
Annotated Bibliographical Sources	216
I. Tibetan Sources	216
II. Magical Movement in Western Translations	217

III. Scientific Studies on Mind-Body Practices	219
Brief List of Scientific Studies of Asian Mind-Body Practices	220
Appendix II	
I. The Three Channels	221
II. Channels-Breaths Correlation Chart	222
III. The Nine Kinds of Vital Breath Currents	223
Appendix III	
I. Translation: Shardza's <i>Commentary</i>	224
II. Preparatory Breaths Posture	253
III. Exhalation Posture	254
IV. Correlations of Root Magical Movement Set	255
V. Rolling The Four Limbs Like a Wheel	256
VI. Female Donkey Reclining to Sleep	257
VII. Extending the Limits of the Four Continents	258
VIII. Correlations of both Root Magical Movement Sets	259
IX. <i>Tsakli</i> of the <i>ZZ Oral Transmission</i> masters	260
X. Tibetan Text: Shardza's <i>Commentary</i>	262
Appendix IV	
I. <i>Cancer Journal</i> article	271
Bibliography	279

Chapter 1. Moving into the Magic

I. Overview

Tibetan religious traditions have employed “magical movements” (*‘phrul ‘khor*) as part of their spiritual training since at least the tenth century CE.¹ Contemporary Tibetans refer to them as yoga or yogic practices,² and in the West they are sometimes also referred to as yoga. Particularly in the complementary and integrative medicine (CIM) field, however, they are considered a “mind-body” technique.

Magical movement is a distinctive Tibetan practice of physical yoga in which breath and concentration of the mind are integrated as crucial components in conjunction with particular body movements. Although magical movement is

¹ The religions of Tibet include Buddhism as well as Bön. This is important to this dissertation, and it is an issue that I will expand upon below, since the main texts I will be working with come from the Bön tradition (see Giuseppe Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, Tr. by Geoffrey Samuel, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980). Following His Holiness the Dalai Lama and others, I will consider that the Tibetan religious traditions include the native Bon religion and the four sub-traditions of Tibetan Buddhism: Nyingma (*rnying ma*), Kagyu (*bka’ brgyud*), Sakya (*sa skya*) and Gelug (*dge lugs*).

² We will see how Namkhai Norbu uses its Sanskrit equivalence, *Yantra yoga*, and many lamas and Tibetans in general describe magical movement as a form of “yoga.” I believe this is related to the fact that, although the term “yoga” is clearly of Indian origin, its use has been adopted to encompass practices from various other traditions, including mind-body practices of Tibet and China (see, for example, the description of “Taoist yoga” in Paper, Jordan & L. Thompson, *The Chinese Way in Religion*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company (I.T.P.), 1998, pp. 89-114). As Eliade states:

side by side with this ‘classic’ Yoga, there are countless forms of ‘popular,’ non-systematic yoga; there are also non-Brahmanic yogas (Buddhist, Jainist); above all, there are yogas whose structures are ‘magical,’ ‘mystical,’ and so on.

(Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958 (rp.1990). In the next chapter, I will amplify on Eliade’s presentation of yoga as well as on the concepts of yoga as magical and as mystical.

found in all five Tibetan spiritual traditions, it is most prevalent in the Kagyu (*bka' brgyud*), Nyingma (*rnying ma*) and Bön.³ Despite some claims in favor of roots in Indian esoteric Buddhism, its history is yet to be written.⁴ Contemporary Tibetan religious leaders and scholars describe magical movement practices as

³ Tsongkhapa (*Tsong kha pa*), the founder of the Gelug (*dge lugs*) tradition, wrote an important commentary on the famous *Naro'i chos drug* "Six Doctrines or Yogas of Naropa" from the Kagyu tradition, which includes magical movements as part of the yoga of inner heat or *gtum mo*. Tsongkhapa's commentary is called *A Book of Three Inspirations: A Treatise on the Stages of Training in the Profound Path of Naro's Six Dharmas* (*Zab lam na ro'i chos drug gi sgo nas 'khrid pa'i rim pa yid ches gsum ldan zhes bya ba*), and according to Glenn Mullin, who has done extensive work on the Six Yogas of Naropa tradition, the Gelug school "received its transmission of the Six Yogas primarily from the Zhalu (Sakya [*sa skya*]) school" (*Readings on the Six Yogas of Naropa*, Tr., ed., and introduced by, Glenn H. Mullin, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publication, 1997, p. 14). This leads me to believe that most of the magical movement texts within the Modernists (*gsar ma*) schools, namely Kagyu, Sakya (*Sa skya*) and Gelugpa, are derived from the Six Yogas. At this point, this remains as a mere assumption on my part that needs further investigation.

⁴ There seems to be a general tendency in the academic study of Tibetan Buddhism to see India as the sole authority in Tibet. This probably arose from the famous 'encounter' known as the 'Council of Lhasa' or Samye (*bsam yas*) debate which purportedly took place between the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist tradition—represented primarily by the ch'an monk Hvasang Mahāyāna (in Chinese *Ho-shang Mo-ho-yan*)—, and the Indo-Tibetan counterpart—represented mainly by Kamalasīla, a scholar from the Indian University of Nālanda. Most known accounts concur that the Tibetan King Tritson Deutsen (*Khri srong lde brstan*), who appears as the organizer and arbiter of this encounter, decided in favor of the Indo-Tibetan party {For more in-depth studies of this debate see Paul Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952), Luis O. Gómez, "Indian Materials on the Doctrine Of Sudden Enlightenment," pp. 393-434, and David S. Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: University of London Press, 1989), among others}.

Scholars such as Dan Martin and Toni Huber have pointed out how this bias also affects the relationship between Bön and Buddhism. As Toni Huber states, "Indic doctrinal explanations for what Tibetans do and say has drawn the analytical focus away from a closer investigation of the assumed *emic* categories" (Toni Huber, "Putting the *gnas* back into *gnas-skor*: Rethinking Tibetan Buddhist Pilgrimage Practice," *The Tibet Journal*, XIX, 2, 1994, p. 24. See also Dan Martin, "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition." Ph. D. dissertation, Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991 and; as well as my own follow up on their steps in Chaoul, M.A., "Tracing the origins of chö (*gcod*) in the Bön tradition: a dialogic approach cutting through sectarian boundaries," M.A. Thesis, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1999).

I would like to call attention to the need for more research in regards to the Chinese influence in Tibetan practices and schools of thought. Samten Karmay, in *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1988), touches upon this question regarding the origins of the Dzogchen (*Rdzogs chen*) school. However, he does not reach any definite resolution on the Chinese influence, or lack of it, in Dzogchen.

dating back to at least the eighth century.⁵ In fact, they claim that different kinds of magical movement were practiced much earlier than that and preserved only as an oral tradition.⁶ Certainly by the eleventh century, many Tibetan texts point to the existence of the practice of magical movement, especially within the traditions mentioned above.⁷ Although more research is needed to discover precisely how this practice was articulated originally and how it changed over time, it is clear that its roots were well established in Tibetan religious traditions over a thousand years ago, as the texts studied here will attest.

Focusing on the magical movement as presented in the Bön *Great Completeness Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung* (*Rdzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud*, hereafter *ZZ Oral Transmission*),⁸ I have two distinct yet

⁵ Norbu states that “the great acarya Vairocana (8th century)...developed this tradition of Trulkhor Nyida Khajor or Yantra, known as the Unification of Sun and Moon” (Namkhai Norbu, *Yantra Yoga*, p. 11). The extant Tibetan text contains the root text by Vairocana and a commentary by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche himself (Be ro tsa na and Nam mkha'i nor bu, *'Phrul 'khor nyi zla kha sbyor gyi rtsa 'grel*, Cheng-tu: mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1993, hereafter *Sun and Moon*).

⁶ In the section of “Sources,” within this chapter, I will comment on the importance of orality in the Tibetan traditions.

⁷ Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros, *Rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor* (Cheng tu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1995); Vairocana's *Sun and Moon*, mentioned earlier; some of the texts related to the *Six Yogas* (or *Doctrines*) of Naropa such as Tilopa (Til li pa)'s *Oral Instructions of the Six Yogas* (Chos drug gi man ngag zhes bya ba), and Naropa (Na ro pa)'s *Vajra Verses of the Whispered Tradition* (*Snyan rgyud rdo rje'i tshig rkang*)—both in Glenn Mullin's *Readings on the Six Yogas of Naropa--*; and the Bon text that is part of this study and is mentioned right below, among others.

⁸ “The Great Perfection Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung.” *History and Doctrines of Bönpo Nispanna Yoga*. Ed. Lokesh Chandra and Tenzin Namdak. Satapitaka Series Vol. 73. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1968. Usually translated as “Oral Transmission,” and lately too as “Aural Transmission” (Per Kvaerne, *The Bon Religion of Tibet: Iconography of a Living Tradition*, Boston: Shambhala, 1996, and following him, Donatella Rossi, *The Philosophical View of the Great Perfection in the Tibetan Bon Religion*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1999). Although I am using “oral transmission” for *snyan rgyud*, I find “aural” or “listening” to be more accurate renderings of *snyan*. However, since it has been used and known in this way and I also feel that “aural” and “listening” could be seen as somewhat cumbersome, I will follow the usual

complementary objectives in this dissertation. The first and more central to the field of religious studies is to present this tradition of magical movement in its cultural context, including how it is used in Bön lay settings and monastic curricula today. The second is to provide a bridge to the field of medicine and the medical humanities, consequently determining the possible benefits of using these mind-body techniques as part of a CIM treatment for people with cancer.

In the present chapter, I introduce the reader to magical movement concepts and practices in Tibet by providing a historical and religious context to them in the Bön tradition. In chapter two, I discuss theoretical framework(s) of yogic practices and compare them to Indian yoga and its dynamics. I propose a variant that I feel is more applicable to understand Tibetan magical movement. In chapter three, I follow the actual magical movement texts of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, describing them as well as interpreting them based on the theory proposed in chapter 2 and my own experience. In chapter four, I report the

rendering. It is important to note that “oral” is not wrong either, since it is a tradition that was transmitted orally from the mouth of the master to the ear of the disciple, usually through a bamboo cane. Glenn Mullin, probably to capture this sense, translates the term as “an ear-whispered tradition” (Glenn Mullin, *Readings on the Six Yogas of Naropa*, p. 17), although all oral traditions are not whispered, as will become clear in the discussion of “oral genres” later in this chapter.

Also, following Anne Klein, who takes this from Sogyal Rinopche, I chose to translate “Great Completeness” rather than “Great Perfection” for the Dzogchen school of thought and practice. “Perfection” has the connotation of perfecting that state of mind whereas ‘completeness’ emphasizes the sense of ‘fullness’ that, in my understanding, is more in accordance with the way this state is described in Dzogchen texts. David Germano, although finally opting to use ‘Great Perfection,’ acknowledges that ‘completeness’ captures a better sense of *rdzogs*. In fact his more literal translation would be ‘super-completeness’ (David Germano, “Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia,” Charlottesville, VA: UVA: 1994, p. 683—unpublished). However, others such as

curriculum that twentieth-century Tibetans follow and trace the migration of this practice to the West, both in *dharma* or Buddhist centers settings and the contemporary Western medical environment. Chapter five is my conclusion.

II. Historical Context: The Bön Religion

The magical movement practice that is the center of this study belongs to the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, one among three Bön Dzogchen lineage teachings.⁹ It is, therefore, essential to be acquainted with the Bön religion in order to provide the historical and religious context for this discussion.

The Bön religion is proclaimed to have been well established in Tibet by the time Buddhism arrived there in the seventh century CE.¹⁰ The question of the origins of Bön has undergone lengthy discussions among both Tibetan and Euro-American scholars. However, the prominence of Buddhism over Bön produced "religious polemical work quite hostile to Bon [Bön]."¹¹ Dan Martin, who has studied this topic extensively, writes, "[s]tatements about the 'primitive animism of Bon' and its later 'transformation' or 'accommodation' (or 'plagiarism') have

Dan Martin use "Great Perfectedness" following Sogyal and Klein (see Dan Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2001), p. 14.

⁹ The other two are The instructions on the A (*A khrid*) and the Dzogchen itself.

¹⁰ S. Karmay, "A General Introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon," *The Memoirs of Toyo Bunko*, #33, 1975, pp. 180-187.

¹¹ D. Martin, *Mandala Cosmogony: Human Body Good Thought and the Revelation of the Secret Mother Tantras of Bon*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994, p.6. For a study of the polemical tradition in greater detail, see also D. Martin, "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition" (Ph. D. dissertation. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991).

been repeated so often that they have achieved a status of cultural Truth."¹²

Martin, among others, proposes that,

Bon [Bön] as it existed during the last millennium represents an unusual, yet quite legitimate transmission of Buddhist teachings ultimately based on little-known Central Asian Buddhist traditions.¹³

The relationship between Bön and Chös, both being equivalents for the Sanskrit word *dharma* (in the sense of Teachings about the true nature of phenomena and persons) for Bönpos and Buddhists respectively, is still controversial today. Some scholars, like Per Kvaerne, consider Bön to be a non-Buddhist religion. Their claim is based on "concepts of religious authority, legitimization and history"¹⁴ related to Tonpa Shenrab Miwoche (*sTon pa gshen rab mi bo che*) instead of Buddha Shākyamuni. But others, such as Martin, Snellgrove, and Kvaerne in his earlier publications,¹⁵ describe Bön as a Buddhist sect—albeit an unorthodox one—based upon practice and doctrinal similarities of “rituals, metaphysical

¹² D. Martin, "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition," p.3. In this dissertation, I will only briefly discuss these polemics and re-direct the interested reader to Martin's works cited here.

¹³ D. Martin, *Mandala Cosmogony*, p. 5.

¹⁴ Per Kvaerne, *The Bon Religion of Tibet: The Iconography of a Living Tradition*, Boston: Shambhala publications, 1996, p. 10. See also Dan Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, pp. 30-39. His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama states, "[t]he Bon tradition, which had existed in Tibet before the arrival of Buddhism, also came to possess a complete set of the Buddha's teachings" The Dalai Lama, *A Flash of Lightning in the Dark of Night: A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 1994) p. 7.

¹⁵ See P. Kvaerne, "Aspects of the Origin of the Buddhist Tradition in Tibet," *Numen* 19,1:22-40, 1972.

doctrine and monastic discipline."¹⁶ For the present, I do not entirely endorse any of these stands but rather acknowledge these different perspectives as teachings that share similar traits. I also believe that further historical research is needed. It seems that, in the past, both Tibetan and Euro-American scholars have neglected to examine Bön texts, thereby silencing the Bön tradition by way of their "*docta ignorantia*, which considers the Bön texts unworthy of their interest."¹⁷ Some doorways, like the Eastern Tibetan "non-sectarian" (*ris med*) movement of the nineteenth century and the present Dalai Lama's recognition of Bön as the fifth Tibetan School, may be helpful in building a broader acceptance and understanding of the Bön tradition as a whole.¹⁸

Kvaerne states that the term Bön has the same range of connotations for its adherents (Bönpos) as Chös has for the Buddhists.¹⁹ This echoes an earlier conciliatory—and courageous—position by the Great Vairocana (*Be roi drag bag Chen mo*), shared presumably by a slim group in eighth-century Tibet, who is attributed to have written, "Bön and Dharma differ only in terms of their

¹⁶ Per Kvaerne, *The Bon Religion of Tibet: The Iconography of a Living Tradition*, p. 10. See also D. Martin, "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition," and *Mandala Cosmogony*; and D. Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon*, and *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan Successors* (London: Serindia Publications, 1987).

¹⁷ D. Martin, "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition," p. 86.

¹⁸ The Tibetan Government in exile at Dharamsala has had Bön representatives as part of their Assembly since the early 1970's (Rinchen Dharlo, former Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Americas, personal communication, August 1998). Also, the 1991 Kalachakra teachings and initiation by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in New York city marked quite a historical event when leading teachers from all five traditions gave teachings on the nature of mind from their perspectives. Yongdzin Lopon Tenzin Namdak gave those teachings from the Bön tradition's point of view.

disciples, their meaning is inseparable, a single essence."²⁰ Furthermore,

Reynolds claims:

[f]or the Bonpos especially, the Dharma, whether it is called "chos" or "bon" in Tibetan, is not something sectarian, but it truly represents a Primordial Revelation, which is again and again revealed throughout time and history. It is not only primordial, but perennial. The Dharma is not simply the unique product of a particular historical period, namely, sixth century [BCE] North India.²¹

Interestingly, "[t]here is no word for 'Buddhism' in Tibetan."²² Both the Bönpos and the Buddhists (followers of Chös) utilize the term "insider" (*nang pa*) for the followers, and Buddha (*sangs rgyas*) to define he who is enlightened or awakened. Germano explains:

Sangs rgyas etymologically refers to how in this enlightenment experience the Buddha "clears away" (*sangs*) the sleep of ignorance, and thus "unfolds" or "expands" (*rgyas*) the enlightened qualities (*yon tan*) of pristine awareness previously obscured by the clouds of ignorance enveloping it.²³

In other words, Bön and Chös can be seen as different ways of expressing the teachings of a Buddha, accepting too, as is common belief among Tibetans, that

¹⁹ P. Kvaerne, *The Bon Religion of Tibet*, p. 11.

²⁰ Vairocana, *Authenticity (Glan tshigs Gal mdo rig pa's tshad ma)* 128.4 In Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Unbounded Wholeness: Dzogchen, Bon, and the Logic of the Nonconceptual* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2006), p. 198.

²¹ J. Reynolds, "Yungdrung Bon, The Eternal Tradition: The Ancient Pre-Buddhist Religion of Central Asia and Tibet: Its History, Teachings, and Literature." Freehold, NJ: Bönpo Translation Project, 1991, p. 7.

²² D. Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon*, p. 1.

²³ David Germano, "Dzogchen Mini Encyclopaedia," Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1994, p. 660. Change of Tibetan capitalization is mine.

there are as many Buddhas as stars in the sky. Martin points to the fact that it is important to study the historical development of Bön, when he says:

[i]t may indeed be best to leave the question of origins to one side, and go on to try and learn as much as possible about the various aspects of this very old tradition as it existed in historical times until the present. If this brings no immediate conclusions about the questions of origins, it will certainly bring us a clearer picture of the entity whose origins we might wish to trace.²⁴

Traditional Bön history claims that 18,000 years ago the Buddha Tonpa Shenrab Miwoche came to a region of central Asia known as Olmo Lungring (*'Ol mo lung ring*).²⁵ The teachings he gave there spread throughout all Central Asia, first to the regions of Tazig (*sTag gzig*) and Zhang Zhung (*Zhang zhung*), and then to Tibet, Kashmir, India and China. "According to Tibetan Bonpo tradition, the major part of its literature has been translated from the sacred language of Zhang zhung,"²⁶ with many Bönpo texts containing Zhang Zhung words interspersed with Tibetan.²⁷ As Martin explains:

²⁴ D. Martin, *Mandala Cosmogony*, p. 11.

²⁵ Some consider Olmo Lungring to be the same as Shambhala in Buddhist accounts. In both cases, it has been difficult for scholars to determine whether this land actually existed on the face of our planet or if it is a mythical land. For a brief discussion on this, please see Samten Karmay, "A General Introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon" (in *The Memoirs of Toyo Bunko*, #33, 1975), pp. 171-5, Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, pp. 10-15, and the forthcoming Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Unbounded Wholeness*, pp. 171-179.

²⁶ Giacomella Orofino, "The State of the Art in the Study on the Zhang zhung language" in *Annali*, 50 fasc. I, Italy: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1990, p. 83. I will use Zhang Zhung—both words beginning with capital Z- for the place and Zhang zhung for the language.

²⁷ For more information on the Zhang zhung language, please refer to Lopon Tenzin Namdak "Dictionary of the Zhang zhung language," and H. Haar, *The Zhang-Zhung language: A Grammar and Dictionary of the Unexplored language of the Tibetan Bonpos* (Acta Jutlantica, XL, 1, Kobenhavn, 1968).

The Bön traditions' own accounts of the history of their scriptures have them undergoing triple or even quadruple translations between the language of origin and the present Tibetan versions. The triply translated (*sum 'gyur*) texts generally went from Tazig to Zhang zhung to Tibetan, while the quadruply translated texts generally went from 'divine language' (*lha'i skad*) to Sanskrit to Tazig to Zhang zhung to Tibetan.²⁸

In these accounts, Tonpa Shenrab was Shākyamuni Buddha's teacher during two consecutive incarnations.²⁹ In the first of these, Tonpa Shenrab was called Chime Tsugphu (*'Chi med gtsug phud*, "Immortal Crowned One"),³⁰ and Shākyamuni Buddha, as his disciple, was called Sangwa Dupa (*Gsang ba 'dus pa*, "Essential Secret").³¹ In the following life, now as Tonpa Shenrab, Shākyamuni Buddha was again one of his main disciples, called Lhabu Dampa Karpo (*Lha'i bu dam pa dkar po*, "White Pure Son of the Gods").³² Lhabu Dampa Karpo asked his teacher what could he do to help sentient beings, and Tonpa Shenrab told him that he should help the people in India who were following a wrong view. For that purpose, Tonpa Shenrab gave Lhabu Dampa Karpo an initiation so he would not forget the teachings in his future lives. Thus, the next life he was born in India as Prince

²⁸ D. Martin, "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition," p. 92. The lack of hyphenation in Tibetan phonetic is mine.

²⁹ In the renowned nineteenth century chronology (*bstan rcis*) by Nyima Tenzin, Tonpa Shenrab's dates are 16.016-7, 816 B.CE (See Kvaerne, 1971). Martin mentions that a fourteenth century source dates Tonpa Shenrab in 974 BCE (D. Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, p. 10, ft. 1).

³⁰ *'Chi med*, meaning "no death" or "immortal," is "an epithet of Buddha" (Chandra Das, *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, compact edition, Delhi: Book Faith India, 1992, p. 444).

³¹ This is one way in which Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche translated it (personal communication, November 1998); it could also be rendered as "Secret Gathering."

³² Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak explained Lhabu Dampa Karpo's purity as that of a crystal, and referred to him as "Crystal Boy," oral teachings, Mexico, June 1998.

of the Shakya clan and taught following the instructions previously given to him by his teacher, Tonpa Shenrab, thereby benefiting many sentient beings.³³

Reynolds states, "it was principally in Zhangzhung [Zhang Zhung] and Tibet that the earlier version of Buddha's teachings called Bön have been preserved."³⁴ Both Reynolds and Martin mention the probable connection between the term "Bön" and Central Asia, in particular Tazig (today's Iran).

Reynolds writes:

Although some scholars [like Snellgrove] would derive the word *bon* from an old Tibetan verb '*bond-pa*', meaning to 'invoke the gods,' corresponding to the Zhangzhungpa word *gyer*, it appears rather to come from the Tazigpa or Sogdian/Iranian word *bwn* meaning 'the Dharma.' This is another indication that the origin of Yungdrung Bön, or the Swastika Dharma, 'the Eternal Tradition,' is to be found in the vast unknown spaces of Central Asia rather than historical Tibet.³⁵

Martin, inspired by works of Christopher Beckwith, under whom he studied at Indiana University, suggests, "the Tibetan word *bon* might be a borrowing from Iranian Buddhists."³⁶ Martin himself does not support or reject this theory, but

³³ Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, oral teachings, Mexico, June 1998. Martin points out that Tonpa Shenrab's medium length biography in two volumes (*Gzer mig*) and long biography in twelve volumes (*Gzi rjid*) not only have certain similarity to Buddha Shākyamuni's and Guru Rinpoche's lives, but also to the epics of Gesar and the Indian Rā mā yana (D. Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, p. 33). Martin also suggests that "the Bon parallels may actual precede the versions of the Gesar epic that have come down to us" (Ibid, p. 33, ft. 11).

³⁴ J. Reynolds, "The Threefold Practice of the Primordial State of the Mother Tantra," "The Threefold Practice of the Primordial State of the Mother Tantra. "San Diego and Amsterdam: Vidyadhara Publications, 1996, p. 1.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 1.

³⁶ D. Martin, *Mandala Cosmogony*, p. 9. He refers to a "privately circulated draft" in which Beckwith describes this relationship between the *bwn* and *dharma* while analyzing a famous

instead asserts that "it does fit nicely with the Bon claim that their religion originated in sTag gzig (Tazig)."³⁷ At this stage, it is difficult to determine how much Bön and Chös encompass one another or to determine the extent and locus of this overlapping. Shardza, in his work on Bön history, *Treasury of Good Sayings*, writes:

Enlightened Ones in their unceasing efforts and compassion as they labor for the welfare of sentient beings have made manifest temporary revelations of both *Bön* and *Chös*. We follow different doctrines to achieve different purposes.³⁸

Klein and Wangyal gloss Shardza's quote stating that "[d]ifferent purposes' arise through different doctrines being engaged, but their motivation and profundity are consonant."³⁹ This is in agreement with Reynold's earlier citation that the Dharma is not simply the unique product of a particular historical period, but it takes different forms according to the needs of the audience. Traditional Bön accounts claim that Tonpa Shenrab's main teachings were the cycles of the Nine Ways or Nine Vehicles (*theg pa dgu*), and the Five Doors (*sgo lnga*).⁴⁰ The Nine Ways, being more popular, consists of four causal vehicles

Iranian cosmological work, *Bundahisn*, in which the term *bwn* means "construct," which is another meaning of *dharma* or *chos*.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 9 (change of capitalization and lack of hyphenation in the Tibetan transliteration is mine).

³⁸ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *The Treasury of Good Sayings (Legs bshad mdzod)*, translated by Samten Karmay (Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972) IN Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, p. 199.

³⁹ Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, p. 199.

⁴⁰ The Nine Ways will be discussed just below. As for a list of the Five Doors, also called Four Doors and the Treasure, see J. Reynolds, "Yungdrung Bon," p. 7, and p. 6 of his appendix.

(*rgyu'i bon*, sometimes called "Shamanic" by Euro-American scholars) that include medicine, astrology, divination; the subsequent result vehicles (*'bras bu'i bon*), of the sūtras and tantras; and the culminating Dzogchen (*rdzogs chen*, "Great Completeness").⁴¹ Additionally, Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, widely considered the most respected contemporary scholar and lama from the Bon tradition, states that because, all nine vehicles were taught by Tonpa Shenrab, they are all considered legitimate paths to enlightenment.⁴²

Bönpos themselves distinguish three kinds of Bön, namely Bön (which retrospectively is qualified as early or primitive), Yungdrung (*g.yung drung*) or eternal Bön, and new Bön (*bon gsar*). Early Bön is seen as an *ensemble* of the

⁴¹ See D. Snellgrove, *Nine Ways of Bon*, because of whom this cycle became the first Euro-American translation of a Bön teaching. It is also important to note that the system of Nine Vehicles in the Buddhist Nyingma tradition is different from the Bön, only similar in the number of vehicles into which they divide the teachings. There are also three different versions of the Nine Ways within the Bön tradition, the most popular one--the one that Snellgrove translated--is according to the Southern treasure (*lho gter*), or the rediscovery found in the South of the country. There are also the versions of the Northern treasure (*byang gter*), and of the Central treasure (*dbus gter*). See S. Karmay, "A General Introduction to the Bon Doctrine," pp. 178-9, and Katsumi Mimaki, "A Fourteenth Century Bon Po Doxography. The *Bon sgo byed* by Tre ston rgyal mtshan dpal--A Preliminary Report toward a Critical Edition" (in *Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* [Fagernes 1992], Vol. 2, Oslo, Norway: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), pp. 570-79. For a listing of the vehicles in all three treasures, see J. Reynolds, "Yungdrung Bon," p. 7, and p. 5 of his appendix.

Shardza Rinpoche did a study of the three nine-way classifications in *Lung rig rin po che'i mdzod blo gsal snying gi nor* (see S. Karmay, *A Catalogue of Bönpo Publications*, pp. 171-2). The Nine Ways system, together with the Five Doors, are the base of what is called Yungdrung Bön (*g.Yung drung bon*), which is the old Bön system that Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak follows and which will be briefly discussed below.

⁴² Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, oral communication, Sunrise Springs, New Mexico, August 1998, and in other occasions.

popular religions, similar to what Stein calls "the nameless religion."⁴³ Yungdrung Bön is the religion that claims its origin in the Buddha Tonpa Shenrab and sees itself as a separate religion from Buddhism, even when acknowledging similarities. New Bön is a movement that surfaced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It arose from the interaction and amalgamation between Yungdrung Bön and Nyingma, the earlier Buddhist tradition in Tibet.⁴⁴ Euro-American scholars usually doubt the veracity of the dating of the Yungdrung Bön claims of their structure of the nine vehicles, usually pushing the date no earlier than the eighth or even tenth century.⁴⁵ Buddhists, even in the cases when they classify their teachings in nine vehicles, do not claim the causal vehicles as part of their teachings, much less as a separate

⁴³ R. A. Stein, *La Civilisation Tibétaine*, in P. Kvaerne, "The Bön Religion of Tibet: A Survey of Research" (in *The Buddhist Forum*, Vol. III, Ed. by T. Skorupski & U. Pagel, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1994), p. 134.

⁴⁴ Klein and Wangyal state, "Dranpa Namkha [*Dran pa rnam kha*'] and Vairocana are among the main persons who integrated old and new Bon for the first time" (Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, p. 179). However, they add that it was not practiced until the seventeenth century with the impulse of the four masters also known as "the four tulkus," which are Sangye Lingpa (*Sangs rgyas gling pa*, b. 1705), Loden Nyingpo (*Blo ldan snying po*, b. 1360), Kundrol Drakpa (*Kun grol drags pa*, b. 1700), and Mishik Dorje (*Mi shig rdo rje*, b. 1650). They also refer the reader to Karmay's translation of Shardza's *The Treasury of Good Sayings*.

⁴⁵ In particular there is discussion about the origin of the Dzogchen teachings, both in Bön and Buddhism. Karmay talks of the three Dzogchen systems (*A rdzogs snyan gsum*) within the Bön tradition, dating the earliest, the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*, to the eighth century, and the other two, *A khrid* and *Rdzog chen*, to the eleventh century—for the latter, 1088 was the date of re-discovery (see S. Karmay, "A General Introduction to the Bon Doctrine," p. 215). Namkhai Norbu also discusses the origin of the Dzogchen teachings, claiming that these teachings came from Tazig and were propounded by the Buddha Shenrab Miwo (N. Norbu, *The Necklace of gZi*, pp. 15-18).

vehicle.⁴⁶ In fact, even though Buddhists in Tibet have incorporated some of these practices, they appear to have a protective feeling of exclusivity toward what in Yungdrung Bön are called the result vehicles. Euro-American scholars, in particular Snellgrove, Martin and Kvaerne, who accept the idea that Bön is an unorthodox form of Buddhism, see the Bön teachings coming from the same source as Buddhism (namely Shākyamuni), but arriving in Tibet at different times and through different routes. Snellgrove believes that the teachings that were later called Bön were a form of Buddhism (mainly tantric) that began first in Zhang Zhung and then spread to Central Tibet. There, these teachings clashed with the Buddhist teachings that came directly from India.⁴⁷ It is clear that there was a Bön religion existing in Tibet before the arrival of Buddhism around the seventh to eighth centuries CE, but it is hard to determine what teachings it was comprised of then. Today, Yungdrung Bön consists of nine vehicles. Therefore, this study will not support the common misunderstanding of limiting the Bön religion to solely causal or "shamanic" vehicles, nor the equally problematic identification of all Bön practitioners with "result vehicles."⁴⁸ Kvaerne writes:

⁴⁶ As mentioned in footnote 41, the Nyingma school also has a system of Nine Ways. In fact their system is similar to that of the Bönpo Central Treasure (see Katsumi Mimaki, "A Fourteenth Century Bon Po Doxography").

⁴⁷ See D. Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon*, and P. Kvaerne, "The Bon Religion of Tibet." In the latter article, Kvaerne also explains the understanding of the Bön religion by Euro-American scholars and its development particularly around the issue of pre- and post-Buddhist Bön, which this dissertation will not discuss.

⁴⁸ It is also important to bear in mind, as David Germano warns, that "bön was also a rubric right into the twentieth century for shamanic type practitioners who had little interest or concern with

Bön was not a sinister perversion of Buddhism, but rather an eclectic tradition which, unlike Buddhism in Tibet, insisted on accentuating rather than denying its pre-Buddhist elements.⁴⁹

III. Defining Magical Movement

“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic” (Sir Arthur C. Clarke, *Profiles of the Future*)⁵⁰

Over the last five years, I have worked extensively to refine my understanding of the Bön magical movement by studying with Ponlob Thinley Nyima, the current principal teacher (*dpon slob*) at Menri (*Sman ri*) monastery in India. I traveled to Menri twice during this time, and he has traveled to the U.S. once a year over the past five years. During each visit, I met with him for in-depth discussions regarding the present work. It was within those conversations that the translation of “magical movement” for *‘phrul ‘khor* arose. *‘Phrul*, which is usually translated in dictionaries and common parlance as “magic” or “magical,” can also take on the meaning of “machine” or “mechanics” when combined with *‘khor*, as in the compound *‘phrul ‘khor*.⁵¹ *‘Khor* literally means “wheel” but also “circular movement” or just “movement,” and thus *‘phrul ‘khor* can be translated as “magical movement(s)” or “magical wheel.” Some interesting idiomatic

such sophisticated bön movements [like Yungdrung Bön]" (D. Germano, electronic correspondence, August 1998).

⁴⁹ P. Kvaerne, "The Bon Religion of Tibet," p. 135.

⁵⁰ Sir Arthur C. Clarke, *Profiles of the Future*, 1973.

phrases containing the term *'phrul 'khor* are: *'phrul thab kyi 'khor lo*, "wheel or movement of the magical method;" *mngon shes brda thabs 'phrul 'khor*, "the *'phrul 'khor* which symbolizes supreme knowledge;" and *'phrul 'khor 'khor ba: 'phrul chas 'khor lo rang bzhin du 'khor ba*, "Spinning the machinery like wheels."⁵² Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, current Abbot of Tritan Norbutse Monastery in Nepal, says the magic (*'phrul*) refers to "the unusual effects that these movements produce in the experience of the practitioner."⁵³

With that in mind and because it seems to better bring forth its meaning, I will be using "magical movement" to describe this practice. As stated earlier, magical movement is a distinctive Tibetan practice of physical yoga in which breath and concentration of the mind are integrated with particular body movements, such as those of *ZZ Oral Transmission*.⁵⁴

⁵¹ *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, Cheng-tu: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang; H.A. Jashke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, New Delhi: Munshiram Monoharlal Publishers, 1998 (rpt. 1881); and Chandra Das, *Tibetan-English Dictionary* (compact edition), Delhi: Book Faith India, 1992 (rpt from 1902).

⁵² *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 1793-1794. English translations are mine. Jashke adds, "magical wheel, in ancient literature merely a phantastic attribute of gods etc.; in modern life applicable to every more complicated machine with a rotating motion e.g. a sugar mill (H.A. Jashke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 360)

Also, Chandra Das focuses in its meaning as "magic circle" and provides seven different kinds of them related to protect and/or capture enemies (Chandra Das, *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 855).

⁵³ Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, oral conversation, Houston, TX, December 2005.

⁵⁴ I should note that what in *Quintessential Instructions* is spelled *'phrul 'khor* is written as *'khrul 'khor* in *Shardza's Commentary*. Even when citing from the former, *Shardza* maintains this spelling. We not only see that in the title but in every occurrence of the word (see *Commentary* pp. 321-346). Ponlob Thinley Nyima favors *'phrul 'khor* as the best rendition, as seen above and more specifically from our discussions in Houston 2002 and 2003. However, Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, arguably the most respected contemporary scholar and lama from the Bon tradition, asserts that *'khrul 'khor* is actually a mistake and that *'phrul 'khor* is not just the best but the only correct spelling to use when referring to this kind of practices (Personal communication,

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, to my knowledge the only contemporary Tibetan lama (*bla ma*) and scholar to have written about this category of practices, also elucidates the meaning of '*phrul 'khor* both as 'magical' and as 'machine.' Using the Sanskrit equivalent, *yantra yoga*, in a book of the same title,⁵⁵ he persuasively describes the body as a machine or a tool that one can utilize to understand one's own nature more clearly. This, he states, is the aim of *yoga*.⁵⁶

In using the term "magical" to describe this practice, I am aware that it might not agree with the usual understanding in English. Partly, as H.S. Versnel writes, "our notion 'magic' is a modern-western biased construct which does not fit representations of other cultures."⁵⁷ Therefore, I feel that a short explanation is needed here.⁵⁸ As it is stated the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, "[m]agic is a word with many definitions, an English word that is linked to others in most European languages but from which there may be no precise equivalent elsewhere."⁵⁹

Charlottesville, November 2004). We do, however, find the same kind of error in other Buddhists texts, like in the "Six Yogas of Naropa" (In W.Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga*, p. 207, ft. 1).

⁵⁵ Namkhai Norbu, *Yantra Yoga*, Ed. by Oliver Leick, Arcidosso, Italy: Shang shung Edizioni, 1998.

⁵⁶ Namkhai Norbu, *The Crystal and the Way of Light*, Ed. by John Shane, New York and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986, p. 85.

⁵⁷ H.S. Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion," *Numen*, Vol. XXXVIII, Fasc. 2, (Dec. 1991), pp.177. I am grateful to Daniel Levine for pointing me to this article.

⁵⁸ I want to thank Jeff Kripal for pointing this out to me (oral conversation, Houston, TX, August, 2005).

⁵⁹ John Middleton, "Magic: Theories of Magic," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Lindsay Jones, Vol. 8. 2nd edition. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005, p. 5562. Some of the meanings of the English word "magic" are:

1. conjuring tricks and illusions that make apparently impossible things seem to happen, usually performed as entertainment;
2. a special, mysterious, or inexplicable quality, talent, or skill;

Although in the past, most scholars in religion and anthropology defined magic by contrasting it with religion,⁶⁰ “[r]ecent developments in a number of disciplines bearing South Asian cultures, among others, make the distinction between magic and religion hard to sustain.”⁶¹ Scholars today use magic in a more inclusive way. In fact, “[n]umerous practices previously labeled magical can be seen as sharing a basic rationality with either religion or medicine, psychiatry, conflict resolution, or even technology.”⁶² Within the context of religious studies, Indologist Jeffrey Kripal states that magic is generally understood as “a vague reliance on external forces that are never rationally defined but which can be manipulated by ritual activity.”⁶³ It seems clear that, “[i]n most societies, magic forms an integral part of the sphere of religious thought and behavior, that is, with the sacred, set apart from the everyday.”⁶⁴ Furthermore, the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* defines magic as “the performance of acts or rites that are intended to influence a person, object, or

3. a supposed supernatural power that makes impossible things happen, or that gives somebody control over the forces of nature; and

4. the use of supposed supernatural power to make impossible things happen.

And as an adjective, magical: relating to magic or used in the working of magic.

(Encarta® World English Dictionary © 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Developed for Microsoft by Bloomsbury Publishing Plc).

⁶⁰ See for example *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings-Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1915, Vol. 8, pp. 245-324.

⁶¹ Ariel Glucklich, “Magic: Magic in South Asia,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, p. 5587.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 5587.

⁶³ Jeffrey J. Kripal, “Shashibhushan Dasgupta’s Lotus: Realizing the Sublime in Contemporary Tantric Studies,” *Breaking Boundaries with the Goddess: New Directions in the Study of Saktism: Essays in Honor of Narendra Nath Bhattacharyya*, edited by Cynthia Ann Humes and Rachel Fell McDermott. New Delhi: Manohar, 2006, p. 16.

⁶⁴ John Middleton, “Magic: Theories of Magic,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, p. 5562.

event,” adding that “[m]agical acts or rites are usually performed with the assistance of mystical power.”⁶⁵ This mystical power is related to an inner magic or inner transformation. *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*⁶⁶ does not include “magic” as one of its terms. However, in that book, the discussion on “transformation”⁶⁷ includes inner transformation in the work of Lao Tzu, and states;

bodily shifts, however multiple or spectacular, are but incidental to the internal transformation experienced. It is internal transformation at the deepest level that becomes the most sought after religious experience. It is also a transformation often linked to magic.⁶⁸

It is thus in this sense that I am using magic in “magical movement.”⁶⁹ Therefore, this yogic practice can be understood as movements that guide the manipulation of the gross and subtle bodies or dimensions (including channels, vital breath currents, and essential spheres—subtle aspects of the mind), which can lead to internal or even mystical experiences and transformation of the practitioner. And

⁶⁵ Diane Ciekawy, “Magic,” *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, edited by Maryanne Horowitz, Vol. 4. Detroit: Charles Scribner’s sons, 2005, p. 1330.

⁶⁶ *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, edited by Mark Taylor, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

⁶⁷ Bruce Lawrence, “Transformation,” *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, pp. 334-348.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 335.

⁶⁹ Lawrence also mentions how this relates to the two kinds of alchemy, internal and external, which I will refer to in the next chapter (*Ibid*, p. 335).

that is the inner magic: the power that the performance of these movements can have on the experience of the practitioner and his/her state of mind.⁷⁰

In other words, I am using magic in a more inclusive sense of the word, which corresponding to the above discussion, includes manipulation of external forces, alchemy, mysticism and medicine or healing. In chapter 3, we will see how magical movement can bring external transformations, such as walking without touching the ground and reversing one's age, as well as more internal ones, such as mental experiences, which could be equated to external manipulations, alchemy and mysticism, respectively. The use as healing or medicine could be seen as a by-product of that transformation or as one of the "unusual effects" that Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung referred to in an earlier quote. This too can be considered magic. Thus, in consonance with Clarke's line above, magical movement can be a sufficiently advanced mind-body technology that is magical in all the ways described above.

Mind-Energy-Body

In Buddhist and Bön teachings, one's physical body, speech or energy, and mind are known as the three doors through which one practices and realizes

⁷⁰ For a discussion on the relationship between transformation and magic—including alchemy and mysticism—, see Jeffrey J. Kripal, "Shashibhushan Dasgupta's Lotus: Realizing the Sublime in Contemporary Tantric Studies," pp. 3 – 18. In this discussion, Kripal relies heavily on Volney P. Gay (*Freud on Sublimation: Reconsiderations*, Albany: SUNY, 1992). Gay also uses the term "transfiguration" as "a spiritual transformation accomplished by the intervention of divine forces" (Volney P. Gay, *Freud on Sublimation*, p. 111, in J. Kripal, p. 18). I prefer to use "transformation" or even "inner transformation."

enlightenment. Within the speech or energy realm, there is a subtle energy body that emerges both metaphorically and, for some, in actuality, as we will see later on. This subtle energy body or adamantine body (*rdo rje lus* or *sku*) is composed of channels (*rtsa*) and vital breath currents (*rlung*) that run within them, providing the landscape where the mind and the physical body connect with each other. In the Tibetan yogic tradition, there are certain practices that work specifically with the energetic or subtle body and are in fact called “channels and vital breath currents” or “channels-breaths” practices (*rtsa rlung*).⁷¹ Channels-breaths are sometimes taught as a practice in itself but are often included within magical movement, in which case they are called “magical movement [of/with] channels-breaths” (*rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor*).

Rtsa (*nāḍī*, *śīrā*, *srota* or *dhamanī* in Sanskrit) generally means “channels” or “circulation channels,” and *rlung* (*prāṇa* or *vāyu* in Sanskrit) is translated here as “vital breath currents,” or simply “breaths,” depending on the context. These terms have different meanings; therefore translations vary according to the context in which they appear, such as medical or religious practice. There are even further variations among different texts and traditions.⁷² In Tibetan

⁷¹ Borrowing from Germano’s “channel-winds practices” (Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia, p. 662), I will use “channels-breaths” practices, since I feel it translates accurately from the Tibetan and brings a better sense of what we are talking about: a specific practice that utilizes the channels and different aspects of breath. It will become clearer below.

⁷² As Frances Garrett and Vincanne Adams assert, “The definition and enumeration of the circulatory channels [*rtsa*] is clearly a matter of controversy in medical and religious texts from the origins of these literary and scholastic disciplines in Tibet to present date” (Frances Garrett and Vincanne Adams, “The Three Channels in Tibetan Medicine,” *Traditional South Asian*

medicine, the channels, specifically the circulation channels, include those that carry not only breath and vital breath currents, but also blood, and other fluids and energies that “connect all aspects of the body.”⁷³ Therefore, *rtsa*, depending on the context, is translated as “veins,” “arteries,” “nerves,” and so forth. In the channels-breaths practices, *rtsa* refers to those channels that carry *rlung*. “Vital breath currents” refers to *rlung* as *qi* in Chinese and *prāṇa* in Sanskrit, rather than *feng* and *vayu* respectively, which may take on the meaning of external “air” or “wind.”⁷⁴ In the channels-breaths practices, *rlung* does not refer to that external wind but rather to internal subtler aspects of it, such as normal breath and vital breath currents that run within the body through the circulatory channels. Therefore, it is still related to the aspect of “wind,” but the emphasis is on “breath,” more specifically on the subtler breaths that I am calling here “vital breath currents.” Since in *rtsa rlung* practices *rlung* includes both one’s normal breath as well as one’s vital breath currents, I will use “channels-breaths” to describe those practices. However, when I refer specifically to the subtler breaths, I will use “vital breath currents.”⁷⁵

Medicine, forthcoming 2005, p. 6. I am grateful to Frances Garret for sharing her manuscript). Hence, some consider that these channels as well as the subtle body have an imaginary status (see for example Aghenanda Bharati— *The Tantric Tradition*, New York: Samuel Weiser, 1975).

⁷³ Frances Garrett and Vincanne Adams, “The Three Channels in Tibetan Medicine,” p. 2.

⁷⁴ See Kim Gustchow, “A Study of ‘Wind Disorder’ or Madness in Zangskar, Northwest India,” *Recent Research on Ladakh*, Vol. 7 ed. by T. Dodin and H. Raether (Ulm: Ulmer Kulturanthropologische Schriften, Band 9, 1997. I am grateful to Mona Schrempf for directing me to this article).

⁷⁵ As Gustchow rightly asserts, “Tibetan medicine’s concept of wind is as fluid and multivalent as the reality which it signifies” (ibid, p.1). Consequently, in my own research within the context of

It can be assumed with magical movement practices, explicitly or implicitly, that the practitioner is familiar with channels-breaths practices. Channels-breaths practices are crucial in the training and harmonizing or balancing (*сныoms*) of the channels and the vital breath currents of the practitioner.⁷⁶ Put simply, in these practices, the practitioner becomes familiar with the channels first through visualization and then by using the mind to direct the vital breath currents along those channels. In this way, one allows the vital breath currents to circulate through the channels more evenly in terms of the rhythm of the inhalation and exhalation and seeks a greater balance in terms of the amount and strength of the breath through the different channels.⁷⁷ The mind rides on the vital breath currents, like a rider on a horse, and the two travel together through the pathways of the channels.⁷⁸ As the breath circulating in the channels becomes more balanced, the channels turn increasingly pliable, allowing the vital breath currents to find their own comfortably smooth rhythm. When the breath rhythm is smooth, like a wave, the mind riding on it has a smoother ride, which reduces the tendency toward agitation. With the help of movements that guide the mind and vital breath currents into different areas, the

the magical movements of channels-breaths, I still do not feel I have reached a definitive translation for *rlung* that will convey the full range of its meaning. For this dissertation, however, I will use what I just proposed.

⁷⁶ The way of training and harmonizing will be explained in the description of these practices in Chapter 3.

⁷⁷ In some occasions, as we will see later, the strength of the left nostril is emphasized, since it is the channel linked with the wisdom aspects.

practice brings the possibility of healing or harmonizing body, energy, and mind, or the body-energy-mind system. This is a goal of yogic practices and also a model of good health that is in line with the concept of health or well being in Tibetan medicine.

In the Bön tradition, the principal text used for the channels-breaths practice is the *Mother Tantra* (*Ma rgyud*),⁷⁹ especially the chapter on the “Luminous Sphere of the Elements” (*’Byung ba’i thig le*).⁸⁰ The Bönpo lama and scholar, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, basing his research principally on the *Mother Tantra* and his own experience, explains this kind of practice as follows:

All experience, waking and dreaming, has an energetic basis. This vital energy is called lung [*rlung*] in Tibetan, but is better known in the West by its Sanskrit name *prana* [*prāṇa*]. The underlying structure of any experience is a precise combination of various conditions and causes. If we are able to recognize its mental, physical and energetic dynamics, then we can reproduce those experiences or alter them. This allows us to generate experiences that support spiritual practices and avoid those that are detrimental.⁸¹

⁷⁸ The vital breath as horse and the mind as its rider is a common metaphor in tantric texts, such as the *Mother Tantra*.

⁷⁹ *Ma rgyud sangs rgyas rgyud gsum rtsa ’grel*, The Three Basic Mother Tantras with Commentaries. Kuntu Zangpo (*Kun tu bzang po*) is considered to be the author of the Root Texts, and Milu Samlek, (*Rgyal gshen Mi lus bsam legs*) of the Commentaries. Terma (*gter ma*) rediscovered by Guru Nontse (*Gu ru rnon rtse*) in the eleventh century. Reproduced from original manuscript belonging to the Samling Monastery (*bsam gling*) in Dolpo, NW Nepal. Delhi (Dolanji: Bönpo Monastic Centre, distributor), 1971. And also a later edition: *Ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma’i rgyud skor*. Dolanji, India: Tibetan Bönpo Monastic Community (TBMC). Ed. by Tshultrim Tashi, 1985.

⁸⁰ *Ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma’i rgyud skor*. Ed. by Tshultrim Tashi, 1985, pp. 591-619.

⁸¹ Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1998, p. 42. He describes *rlung* as a “vital energy” here that is also an aspect of breath. This becomes clearer in his *Healing with Form, Energy, and Light*, where Tenzin Rinpoche states:

We can sense prana directly at the grosser levels in the air we breathe. We can also sense its flow in our bodies. It is at this level, in which prana can be felt both

This is the aim of the magical movement's practitioner; he or she wishes to reproduce and alter experience through physical movements that guide the vital breath currents, which in turn guides the mind and enables the generation of specific experiences.

In contrast to Indian styles of yoga in which the practitioner aims to hold a pose or *āsana* with the body still in that particular posture and the breath flowing naturally, in magical movement the practitioner holds the breath in the way indicated in the texts, while the body moves in such a way as to guide that breath, which in turn guides the mind. The emphasis on the mind being stable seems to be paramount for all types of yoga; however, the methods, as we will see, differ. According to Indologist David White, "[t]he theory here [in *haṭha yoga*] is simple: Stop this, that stops."⁸² In other words, as we stop the body, the mind stops too. White adds that putting this into practice is not so simple.

From Patañjali and continuing with Gorakhnāth and his followers, Indian yoga texts describe that, by keeping still in a specific body posture (*āsana*), the

in its movement and in its effects, that we work in Tantra. We become sensitive to and develop the flow of prana using mind, imagination, breathing, posture, and movement. By guiding the grosser manifestations of prana, we can affect the subtle levels. As our sensitivity increases, we can directly experience prana in subtler dimensions. (Tenzin W. Rinpoche, *Healing with Form, Energy, and Light*, Ithaca, NY and Boulder, CO: Snow Lion Publications, 2002, p. 77),

I feel this supports my translation of "vital breath currents."

⁸² David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddhanta Traditions in Medieval India*, Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1996, p. 274. I had the fortune to take a course on Hindu

mind will stop and be stable too. We also see this in many Buddhist and Bön meditation practices, where the body posture prescribed is a still lotus posture (*rdo rje* or *g.yung drung skyil krung*) as a support to hold the mind stable. In contrast, with practices such as channels-breaths and magical movement, the body is in movement, yet the mind is able to remain still. In other words, it is not a question of ‘stopping,’ but a quite different principle. Furthermore, as we will see later on, the movements themselves are seen as a tool or aid to help the mind be stable. Chinese mind-body practices, such as *tai chi* and *qi gong*, share with magical movement the aspect of combining movement with particular body postures and maintaining focused attention in the midst of movement. In contrast to it, though, the breath is not held but rather maintained as naturally as possible, more like in Indian yogas.⁸³ In chapter two, I will provide a theoretical framework as a possible way to understand magical movement and its elements (channels and vital breath currents) as well as its relation to Indian yogas and the ways these were interpreted by western scholars.

According to Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, magical movement should be used when one’s meditation state is unclear, unstable, or weakened in some

Tantra with David White at the time he was writing this book and read previous versions of most of its chapters with the opportunity to discuss with him and the class.

⁸³ An in-depth analysis of the relationship between the Indian, Chinese, and Tibetan yogas would be of great value; however, it is outside of the scope of this study. I hope that in the future I can investigate this further.

way.⁸⁴ That is how early masters from the *ZZ Oral Transmission* used them, removing their own obstacles to being able to abide in their meditative state of mind.⁸⁵ These practices help the practitioner, especially from the Dzogchen perspective, to regain, stabilize, or clarify the meditative state.⁸⁶ In this way, by following instructions for the physical movements prescribed, and at the same time, holding the breath in the neutral way (*ma ning rlung*) explained in the texts that follow, the mind is allowed to rest in its own natural place (*rang sa*). This means it is also available to rest or reside in a particular meditative state, sustained by the breath. Every movement ends with an exhalation accompanied by the sounds of *ha* and *phat*, allowing the practitioner an opportunity to cut through any concepts that persist and then to remain more completely at rest. The magical movement yogic exercises from the *ZZ Oral Transmission* are done while holding the breath in a neutral way. Holding the breath in this manner during each exercise allows the breath to pervade (*khyab rlung*) throughout the body. Then the forceful exhalation at the end helps induce the meditative or the

⁸⁴ Personal communication, Charlottesville, Virginia, July 2000.

⁸⁵ Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, personal communication, Saumur, France, June 2005.

⁸⁶ Dzogchen, which was mentioned earlier, is the school of thought and practice that considered to be the highest among the Nyingma and Bön traditions (see Samten Karmay, *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*, Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1988).

natural state of mind (*gnas lugs*), which, as we will see, is the aim of Dzogchen practice more generally.⁸⁷

Origin of Magical Movement from the ZZ Oral Transmission⁸⁸

According to traditional accounts, the *ZZ Oral Transmission* became a written text in the 8th century.⁸⁹ However, I would place its chapter on magical movement, *Quintessential Instructions*, around the late eleventh or early twelfth century. I argue this, based on the fact that the names of the masters mentioned in that chapter, are from up to the eleventh century. Although it is hard to find exact dating for some of them, Yangton Chenpo (*Yang ston Chen po* alias *Yang ston Shes rab rgyal mtshan*), the penultimate magical movement master mentioned in *Quintessential Instructions*, is said to have “lived [in] the last quarter of the eleventh century.”⁹⁰

Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak and other exponents of the Bön tradition claim that these movements existed in earlier centuries within oral teachings as tools

⁸⁷ Other kinds of holding are also applied, such as the vase retention (*pum ba can*). This is not so clear in *Quintessential Instructions*. Shardza explains them more fully in the Inner Heat chapter (*Thun mong gdum mi'i nyams len ye shes me dpung*) in *Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar gyi khrid gdams skor*, ed. by K. Gyatso, Delhi: TBMC, 1974, pp. 551-597.

⁸⁸ In appendix 1, I list and annotate my Tibetan sources for magical movement in the *Listening Transmission*. This also includes commentarial works in the *Experiential Transmission* [of Zhang Zhung] of the famous 13th century Bönpo master Drugyalwa Yungdrung (*Bru rgyal ba G.yung drung*) and Shardza's *Commentary and Main Points*, where he gives practical guidance on following the practices of magical movement and inner heat (*gtum mo*) during a 100-day retreat. After I describe, in chapter three, the *ZZ Oral Transmission*'s magical movement in accordance to *Quintessential Instructions* and *Commentary*, in chapter four, I include some of my ethnographical research on how the 100-day retreat described in *Main Points* is practiced today by Bönpos in India and Nepal.

⁸⁹ See Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, pp. xvii.

for dispelling obstacles (*gegs sel*) and enhancing meditation practices (*bog don*) among masters of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, although it is difficult to verify this historically. It would also be interesting to know if and how magical movement was practiced and even systematized at that time.⁹¹

Magical Movement in Western Translations

No intertextual scholarly works on magical movement, in general, in English or other Western languages exist, and certainly none about those of the Bön tradition. However, there are some important precursors to this study that need to be acknowledged. Thus, I will include them in appendix I. In brief, the main works relate to Norbu's work on Vairocana's *Sun and Moon* and various translations of the famous Six Yogas or Teachings of Naropa (*Naro chos drug*, hereafter Six Yogas). Among the latter, magical movement is not always included, even in their Tibetan originals. However, the 18th century Gelugpa

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. xvii. Karmay adds, as supporting evidence for that date, that Yangton Chenpo had studied Buddhism from Bari Lotsawa who was born in 1040 C.E.

⁹¹ Ponlob Thinley Nyima believes that each magical movement was created when needed or through an experience that proved positive. As he was telling me this, while sitting in his room at Menri Monastery, he illustrated his point with an example of resting his head on the arm in a particular posture, indicating that a master practicing in that way and getting some particular experiences would write them down later, becoming then a magical movement (Menri monastery, India, April 2002). Interestingly, the *tsakli* or "painted cards" of the *ZZ Oral Transmission* masters (see appendix IV) portray many of them, even before Pongyal Tsenpo, in poses other than the seated *dkyil dkrungs* posture. This makes me suspect that either they were known to have practiced magical movement or that the painters used their artistic license and portrayed them in what seemed to them a more "interesting" posture. Yongdzin Rinpoche says it is clear that some of the early *ZZ Oral Transmission* masters did practice channels-breaths practice and magical movement, for example it is clearly stated in the biography of Zhang Zhung Namgyal (*Zhang zhung rNam rgyal*), but he also mentioned the possibility of those portrayals being part of the artist's creativity (Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, Saumur, France, June 2005). In any

scholar and commentator of the Six Yogas, Ngulchu Dharmabhadra (*Dgul chu dhar ma bha dra*), admits a benefit in practicing them, asserting that “[w]hen they are performed, there is less chance of problematic side effects arising in the channels or energies through forceful meditation on the tantric yogas; and even if some difficulties do arise, these are mitigated.”⁹²

Importance of Orality

In trying to understand these yogic practices we need more than just the texts. As Buddhologist David Gray argues, “scriptures cannot be adequately understood if this orality, and the social world that gave rise to it, is not taken into account.”⁹³ This was made clear to me by my work with some of the major exponents of the living tradition in which these texts are embedded. The oral instructions are vital for the learning model among Tibetans. As Anne Klein points out in *Path to the Middle*, the intersections between the world of the oral and textual philosophical traditions of Tibet “creates multiple webs and layers of connections.”⁹⁴ She adds:

Among the most important of these are the links between teacher and student, which also involve relationships between teacher and text, student and text, as well as between text and personal reflection, and which engage students and teachers with a wide

case, it is clear that magical movement was practiced in the *ZZ Oral Transmission* much earlier than Pongyal Tsenpo and the other masters mentioned in the magical movement texts.

⁹² Glenn Mullin, *Tsongkhpa's Six Yogas of Naropa*, p. 259, ft. 30.

⁹³ David B. Gray, “Orality, Textuality, and Tantric Buddhist Origins: A Comparative Analysis,” p. 2, presentation at Rice University, April 21, 2005.

⁹⁴ Anne Carolyn Klein, *Path to the Middle: the Spoken Scholarship of Kensur Yeshey Tupden*, New York: SUNY, 1994, p. xix.

variety of other texts cited in the reading, or quotes that simply come to mind in the course of reflection and conversation.⁹⁵

Having benefited greatly from that kind of involvement, where the lama brings forth “his [her] own analyses developed over a lifetime” and “...adds to the reading an aura of kindliness, humor, excitement, or severity, depending on his demeanor,”⁹⁶ I could not agree more. The oral explanations I received from the lamas mentioned in this study certainly were given in warmth, kindliness, humor, and excitement, with the rigorous philosophical concepts at the heart of our discussion.

I also follow Klein’s inquiry into what it means to *read* a Tibetan text that is interwoven with a variety of oral genres, rituals, meditative techniques and written texts, and how Westerners *read* or understand it.⁹⁷ Klein notes some important differences between the Tibetan oral tradition and “the ‘classical’ oral characteristics noted by Walter Ong.”⁹⁸ Among the genres that Klein cites,⁹⁹ Shardza’s *Commentary* is mainly a “textual commentary” (*gzhung khrid*) or an “explanatory commentary” (*’grel bshad*), whereas Drugyalwa’s is best understood as “instructions from experience” (*myong khrid*). In my work with both Geshe

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. xix.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 5.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 2. For the importance of orality in different religious traditions, as well as his distinction of ‘religious reading’ vis a vis ‘consumerist reading,’ see Paul J. Griffiths, *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 4, cf. Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1982), chapter 3.

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche on *Commentary* and with the Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima on *Mass of Fire*, I also benefited from "'word commentary' (*tshig 'grel*), which, as its name suggests, is a commentary on every word of a text."¹⁰⁰ My work with Yongdzin Rinpoche and most of my work with Ponlob was in effect a "commentary on the difficult points" (*dga 'grel*) and "instructions on the explanation" (*bshad khrid*). And some aspects of my work with all of them fit into the category of "essential instructions" (*dmar khrid*) intended to reveal "the heart of a text."¹⁰¹

IV. Practice and Practical Applications of Magical Movement

Among Bön exile lay and monastic communities, magical movement is primarily used to develop meditation practice.¹⁰² The movements also strengthen physical health and emotional stability as a secondary benefit, which is attractive to monastic and lay practitioners alike. Ponlob Thinley Nyima maintains that, in addition to using them to enhance their meditative experiences (*bogs 'don*),

⁹⁹ Anne Klein, *Path to the Middle*, pp. 2-4.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 3. I take this not only in its literal sense of "getting to the red," as Klein suggests, but also in the lamas opening their heart by pointing to the essential meditative experiences to which these practices may lead. I feel compelled to acknowledge again my gratefulness to these teachers for sharing such precious gifts with me.

¹⁰² According to my fieldwork data from Bön monasteries of Menri in India and Tritan Norbutse (*Khri brtan nor bu rtse*) in Nepal and among their surrounding lay communities. In an interview with His Holiness Lungtok Tenpa Nyima, abbot of Menri monastery, in February 2002, he mentioned especially a group of female practitioners and nuns from Shar pa in the Tibetan NE region of Amdo. Whether and how intensively magical movements are practiced among Bön monastic and lay communities in Tibet today, has to be clarified through further fieldwork.

Tibetan yogis (*rnal 'byor pa*) and accomplished meditators (*rtogs ldan*) practicing in caves use magical movements to dispel bodily illness as well as mental and energetic obstacles (*geg sel*).¹⁰³ He notes that these yogis have no access to hospitals or other health care institutions, so it is through these practices that they address their physical and mental health.¹⁰⁴ Tibetans often speak more about the physical effects of these practices. Still, upon further inquiry, most will affirm that the meditative aspect is most crucial but that magical movement's uniqueness comes in its utilization of the body.¹⁰⁵ Clearly, enhancing meditative experiences and dispelling obstacles are two main objectives of magical movements. And, at least among contemporary teachers, there is also an emphasis on being able to integrate those meditative experiences into everyday life or one's daily behavior (*spyod pa*).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, lecture on "Mind-body practices of the ancient Tibetan Bon tradition," Rice University, Houston, Texas, June 19, 2002. Although many times written as *bgegs*, in *Shardza's Commentary* this type of "obstacle" or "hindrance" is spelled *gegs* and in *Quintessential Instructions* as *gags*. Thus far I have not been able to find if there are any significant differences in meanings among them. It seems that *bgegs* is utilized more to express obstacles or hindrances provoked by demons or malignant spirits (*bdud, gdon* and so forth). Ponlob Thinley Nyima speaks of *gegs sel* as the clearing of physical and mental obstacles (that are not necessarily provoked by other spirits). Yet, at this point this remains as a mere assumption on my side that needs further investigation.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, June 19, 2002.

¹⁰⁵ The importance of this will be analyzed in Chapter 2.

¹⁰⁶ I am adding the comment "everyday behavior" both from oral teachings of various Bönpo lamas, including Ponlob Thinley Nyima, and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, and particularly from the latter's teachings of the chapter on Behavior (*Rkyen lam du slong ba rtsal sbyong spyod pa'i khrid*) from the "Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung" (*Nyams rgyud rgyal ba'i phyag khrid bzhugs so*, edited by Dra rtsa bstan 'dzin dar rgyas, Kathmandu, Nepal: Tritan Norbutse Bönpo Monastery, 2002), a practice manual that condensed the main practices of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, composed by the thirteenth century scholar and meditator Dru Gyalwa Yungdrung

Although mainstream Western medicine has not recognized the connection between physical illness and energetic or mental obstacles, there are new paradigms in the emerging field of Complementary and Integrative Medicine (CIM) that do acknowledge it and are more akin to Asian systems. In fact, beginning in the 1930's and flourishing especially from the 1970's onward, "more than a thousand studies of meditation have been reported in English-language journals, books, and graduate theses."¹⁰⁷ Based on the aforementioned premise and on the several studies on meditation with patient populations, over the last several years I have expanded my research on these ancient practices to consider their possible practical and physical applications in a Western setting. For that purpose, I have given particular attention to the potential benefits of including magical movement as part of CIM treatments for cancer patients. In 2000, with Lorenzo Cohen, Ph.D.; Carla Warneke, M.P.H.; Rachel Fouladi, Ph.D.; and M. Alma Rodriguez, M.D.; at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson

(*Bru rgyal ba G.yung drung*). A later chapter of the same text includes, in fact, the same magical movements of *Quintessential Instructions* (Ibid, pp. 253 – 264).

¹⁰⁷ Michael Murphy, *The Future of the Body* (New York, N.Y.: Penguin Putnam, 1992), p. 538. With the pioneering works of Swami Kuvalayananda (born J.G. Gune) and Shri Yogendra (born Manibhai H. Desai) in the 1930s began what anthropologist Joseph Alter calls "medicalised yoga" (Joseph S. Alter, "Modern Medical Yoga," *Asian Medicine: Tradition and Modernity*, vol.1, No.1, 2005, pp. 119-146). Continuing with the studies on Zen Buddhist monks in the 1960's by Akira Kasamatsu and Tomio Hirai, and Tibetan monks by Herbert Benson, et. al in the 1970's, many scientist brought more attention to these practices, labeled in the West under the rubric of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM). In the late 1980's and 1990's, many studies with Qigong were done with cancer patients in China (See Kevin Chen, and Raphael Yeung, "Exploratory Studies of Qigong Therapy for Cancer in China," *Integrative Cancer Therapies*, 1(4); 2002, pp. 345-370). Also around that time, studies were undertaken using Asian mind-body techniques by and for western populations, spearheaded by Jon Kabat-Zinn, et al. In Appendix I,

Cancer Center of Houston, I conducted a randomized controlled clinical trial to determine the feasibility, acceptability, and initial efficacy of magical movements with cancer patients. For this pilot study, we designed a seven-session program called “Tibetan Yoga,” which included channels-breaths practices from the *Mother Tantra* and the preliminary or foundational (*sngon 'gro*) magical movement cycle described in Shardza’s *Commentary*. Our hypothesis was that, through the practice of magical movement together with channels-breaths practices, patients would be able to alleviate the mental and physical stress caused by the severe side effects of cancer treatment, such as chemotherapy or radiation. Details of the study follow later in chapter four.

As referred to earlier, mainstream Western medicine holds a much more ironclad division between physical illness and energetic or mental obstacles, and thus it becomes difficult for most doctors to accept the connection Tibetans see between the health and meditative benefits, including those of yogic practices. Part of this difference may arise from the dichotomy between mind and body that western thought inherited and absorbed from Cartesian dualism. In contrast, in Eastern thought, a subtle or energetic body or dimension mediates between mind and body.

These studies are not necessarily done to prove one tradition right and the other wrong, but rather to prove the efficacy of meditative and yogic techniques

you can find a list of these studies. In chapter 4, I discuss how this field is evolving as we move

that exist in some of these centuries-old traditions from the east, although probably in the form that Alter calls “modern medicalisation” of yoga.¹⁰⁸ I also find it important to draw attention to a point that Murphy acknowledges, but that seems to be overlooked or ignored sometimes by scientists: that different results might be due to “differences between their meditation styles.”¹⁰⁹ In other words, we cannot expect the same results from different meditative techniques, in the same way that we would not expect the same results from different styles of psychological therapies or from different physical therapies. Nevertheless, there are some generalities that do apply to all (or most) of them. To actually make this statement in a scientific way, we would need to research each one of them under the same protocol.

These yogic practices provide, in both realms of health and spirituality, a method of harmonizing the mind and the body by using this energetic dimension, thus harmonizing what we could call the entire mind-energy-body system. This concept of harmony was present in the original meaning of the term *yoga*. Indologist David White, tracing the first appearances of *yoga* to the *Rg Veda*, in the compound *yoga-kṣema* meaning “harmonious adjustment,” shows convincingly the link between the Indian medical Āyurvedic concepts of adjustments, which actually go even beyond the harmonic conjunction of solely

into the 21st century.

¹⁰⁸ Joseph S. Alter, “Modern Medical Yoga,” p. 142.

¹⁰⁹ M. Murphy, *The Future of the Body*, p. 351.

mind and body. In other words, yoga also includes the harmony of the individual as microcosm and the world as macrocosm.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, White states that the “mediating structure” or “mesocosm” is the subtle body (*sūkṣma śarīra*).¹¹¹ This is analogous to the Tibetan ‘adamantine’ or ‘vajra’ body (*rdo rje lus* or *rdo rje sku*)—vis a vis the external or “gross body” (*lus-rags-pa* or just *lus*).¹¹² Thus, by being in touch with this mediating structure and manipulating the channels, vital breath currents, and essential spheres through the visualization, breathings, and movements of the channels-breaths practices and magical movement, the practitioner was believed to be able to affect not only the microcosm of the mind-energy-body system but even the macrocosm of the external universe. Although these similar principles did exist in both yoga and āyurveda, Alter states that yoga was not used as part of āyurveda or as a healing or medical therapy. Instead, he convincingly argues that “modern yoga as a form of practice which emphasizes physical fitness, wellness and holistic health, emerged more directly out of the early twentieth-century yoga renaissance.”¹¹³ However, he also acknowledges that this modern yoga phenomena based on

¹¹⁰ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, pp. 19-20. *Rg Veda* (7.86.8; 10.166.5).

¹¹¹ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 18.

¹¹² Germano speaks to the “non-optimal and optimal modes of physical existence” also relating them to the non-honorific term of body (*lus*) and honorific (*sku*) respectively (Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia, p. 653). This differentiation applies in the Nyinmga tradition with which Germano is working. However, among the Modernists (Kagyü, Sakya, and Gelug schools), the optimal adamantine body is *rdo rje lus* instead of *rdo rje sku* (Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss*, London, England: Wisdom Publications, 1982, pp.19-20ff), although in both cases it refers to the subtle body composed by channels, vital breaths, and essential spheres. I attempted to explore this interesting differentiation in an unpublished paper, but it is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

“pragmatic, rational [and] scientific principles,”¹¹⁴ was built on, as well as purged from, its “‘other history’ of sex, magic, and alchemy.”¹¹⁵ In fact, he claims, “the tension between pragmatic rationalism and esoteric magic makes yoga powerful.”¹¹⁶ With this in mind, an argument to which we will return in the upcoming chapters, I believe that research in CIM, and especially in yogic practices, may become one bridge that can build more understanding between these ancient Asian practices and mainstream Western medicine.

¹¹³ Joseph S. Alter, “Modern Medical Yoga,” p. 119.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 119.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 119.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 119.

Chapter 2. Understanding Bodies

Put briefly, perhaps the entire evolution of the spirit is a question of the body; it is the history of the development of a higher body that emerges into our sensibility...In the long run, it is not a question of man at all: he is to be overcome (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*).¹¹⁷

I. Theoretical Framework

This chapter aims to provide a theoretical framework as a background to the Tibetan material. I will offer some brief points that will be further developed in the explanation of magical movement texts presented in chapter three. Familiarity with the role of the body and subtle body are critical to the understanding of magical movement.

Here I suggest connections with material outside the tradition, not as a systematic comparison, but rather to bring forth some points of contrast in preparation for a clear look at the Tibetan texts. These materials will come from other eastern traditions, such as Indian systems of yoga and western interpretations of eastern thought. My intention is to interweave them to bring forth a better understanding of magical movement.

Magical movement's uniqueness among Tibetan meditative practices lies in the use of the body. The body, however, seems to be conceived as a multi-layered dimension with subtler-than-physical components, sometimes referred

to as “subtle body.” Using Namkhai Norbu and Kennard Lipman’s term “dimension” to explain these bodies is very suggestive, pointing to the fact that they encompass aspects beyond the merely physical body. Thus, when we talk of such a “body,” there are other experiential dimensions at play.¹¹⁸ These under-the-skin dimensions cannot be thought to be merely intellectually “superimposed upon” the physical body and are perhaps “better [expressed as] ‘interposed within’ the visible body,” as Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta suggest.¹¹⁹ How does the practitioner reveal, discover, get in-touch or sensitizes with these other higher or invisible dimensions?

Asceticism and the Body

Many scholars have described asceticism as a “universal phenomenon,” where the relationship to one’s body becomes a central theme. I will draw from scholars who have used asceticism as a lens through which they analyze spiritual or mystical searching by people from a variety of religious backgrounds, “East and West of Jerusalem.”¹²⁰ Tibetologist Robert Thurman points to Walter

¹¹⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, Book III, edited by Walter Kauffman, New York: Random House, 1968, p. 358 (Note 676).

¹¹⁸ Manjushrimitra, *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation*, tr. by Namkhai Norbu and Kennard Lipman, Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1983, 1986. David Germano also finds Norbu and Lipman’s rendering of *sku* as dimension to be “particularly attractive” (D. Germano, *Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia*, pp. 655).

¹¹⁹ Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature*, (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1981), p. 57.

¹²⁰ Vincent Wimbush and Richard Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, rp. 2002). In the introduction to the book, the editors present asceticism as a “universal phenomenon” (p. xix) and thus group in it forty-two essays from different religious traditions. I will refer to some of the essays in this volume, since I believe that they can provide

Kaelber's article in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, stating that "[t]he Greek *askésis* relates to 'exercise' and 'training'."¹²¹ He compares it to a Greek athlete "subjecting himself [or herself] to systematic exercise or training in order to attain a goal of physical fitness."¹²² Thurman adds, "[l]ater the idea emerges that one can train the will, mind, or soul 'systematically and rigorously...so as to attain a more virtuous life or a higher spiritual state.'"¹²³ He centers his discussion on Tibetan monastic life as a way of intense ascetic training with the awareness that the "human form should be used for spiritual evolution."¹²⁴

John Dillon, although focusing on Platonic thought, presents the two diverging positions of rejecting, vis á vis refining the body, which can be said to exist across cultures and traditions.¹²⁵ Arguably in most religious traditions, western or eastern, the ascetic movement was best known for the austerities, the renunciation or rejection of the body. We can see this in St. Theresa de Avila and St. Augustine in Christianity, as well as the Vedic, Brahmanic, and Jain traditions in India. We also see this trend in some Buddhist traditions, such as meditations

understandings of the body that may be informative here. My use of "East and West of Jerusalem" to mean encompassing all religions is a phrase that I owe credit to Andrew Fort, as he describes teaching Asian traditions as "everything East of Jerusalem" (oral communication during SW Regional AAR, Dallas, TX, March 2004).

¹²¹ Robert A. Thurman, "A Tibetan perspective on Asceticism," in *Asceticism*, p. 108. He cites Walter O. Kaelber, "Asceticism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987, 1:441-445).

¹²² Ibid, p. 108.

¹²³ Ibid, p. 108.

¹²⁴ R. Thurman, "A Tibetan perspective on Asceticism," p. 116.

¹²⁵ John Dillon's "Rejecting and refining the body," *Asceticism*, pp. 80-87.

on the decay of corpses and impermanence in Theravāda¹²⁶ or the Mahāyāna Sūtra tradition illustrated in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.¹²⁷ Rejecting the body stream of asceticism emphasizes the impure tendency of the body, so the practices lead to a dismissal of the body in the pursuit of a spiritual “pure” life, detached from the “defiled” body.

In contrast to this view is the project of refining the body. The lotus flower is a classic illustration for this in Asia, particularly in the traditions of India, Tibet, and China. Indian art historian Ananda Coomaraswamy refers to the somewhat mysterious purity of the lotus that springs from the mud, but is not soiled by it, and whose leaves, though they rest in the water, are not wetted by it.¹²⁸ This symbolizes the process by which, although we are born with a polluted and impure body, we can still emerge in a new pure body or dimension, which,

¹²⁶ See for example Buddhaghosa, Bhadantācariya, *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, translated by Bhikkhu

Ñyānamoli (Berkeley and London: Shambhala Publications, 1976).

¹²⁷ Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra* [Sanskrit and Tibetan], ed. by Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya, Calcutta, India: The Asiatic Society, 1966. This is especially clear in chapter eight. See Crosby and Skilton's translation (Śāntideva, *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*, tr. by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); *A Flash Lightning in the Dark of Night* (tr. by the Padmakara Translation Group, Boston and London: Shambhala, 1994), which is an explanation of it by Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama; and Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's commentary in *Meaningful to Behold* (London: Tharpa Publications, 1986). An example of the view toward the body in this text (using Crosby and Skilton's translation) is:

Why is such an effort made to dress it [the body] like a weapon, for one's own destruction? The world is a confusion of insane people striving to delude themselves. (Ch. 8, v. 69.)

¹²⁸ Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, both in *Yakṣas* (New Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal, 1971, first published, 1928-31), p.57, and in *The Origin of the Buddha Image* (New Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal, 1971), p. 23. This idea is also related to the “divine birth” in the waters by Śrī-Lakṣmī in India and, in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, of *Guru Rinpoche*--also called *Guru Padmasambhava* (literally, “born from a lotus”).

like the lotus flower, is itself pristine. This possibility of refining the body has a sense of process, purification and transformation that is the thrust behind a spiritual movement called tantra, the ground on which yoga flourishes. Understanding it as a purification process, it is important to remember not just the purity of the lotus, but the process it took to come from the muddy waters to that pure lotus. Jeffrey Kripal writes in another context, “[p]ut bluntly, there just is no such thing as a mudless lotus.”¹²⁹

II. A Brief History of Yoga and Tantra

According to David White, Mircea Eliade was the “greatest modern ‘midwife’ to historians of religions”¹³⁰ and most likely, I would add, the one who delivered the concepts of yoga to this academic field. Here I will use the work of both Eliade and White as exemplars of two generations of Indologists who have contributed to the study of yoga in India.¹³¹

¹²⁹Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Psychoanalysis and Hinduism: Thinking Through Each Other*, afterword to T.G. Vaidyanathan and Jeffrey J. Kripal, eds., *Vishnu on Freud’s Desk: A Reader in Psychoanalysis and Hinduism* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 449. He adds,

We need not and should not end with the mud, but we certainly need to at least begin there. . . . It is pointless to deny the muddiness of the mud, but it is equally silly to deny the beautiful blooming nature of the blossom. Both are aspects of the flower. Only by accepting both, in dialogue and debate, will we be able to see a fuller picture (if never the full picture) of that iconic image and begin to understand its many truths.

¹³⁰David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. xiii.

¹³¹ Certainly by this I do not mean that they are the only ones, but arguably two of the more influential, each in their respective generation of scholarship.

White asserts that the meditative techniques under the large rubric of yoga, as well as the Āyurveda medical system, arose even before tantrism, as part of the interactions of the Vedic matrix with Brahmanic and Buddhist philosophical and mystical traditions.¹³² White adds that “[t]he organizing principles of the sixth-century BC[E] teachings of the Buddha on suffering and its cessation were essentially medical.”¹³³ Stating that, for yogins and alchemists, “the human self is an exact replica of the macrocosm,” White writes that yogic practices treat the imbalances and diseases “between the bodily microcosm and the universal macrocosm.”¹³⁴ This is an appealing argument for this study. In magical movement, the releasing of physical, energetic, and mental disease and obstacles allows the vital breath currents to flow better throughout and nurture the organism at all three levels: body, energy, and mind. Furthermore, practicing with the intention of including and benefiting all sentient beings, the practitioner is able to impact the macrocosmic dimension. As the practitioner purifies the

¹³² David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 19.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 20, cf. Robert C. Lester, *Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973), pp. 23- 24, 53; and Caroline A.F. Rhys-Davids, “Original Buddhism and Amṛta,” *Mélanges chinois et buddhiques* [Brussels] 6 (1938-39), p. 378.

¹³⁴ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, pp. 20–21. However, in his very recent *Yoga in Modern India*, anthropologist Joseph Alter argues that the “medicalization” of yoga may be a product of “postcolonialism and global modernity” (Joseph Alter, *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy*, Princeton, NJ, and Oxford, England: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 10). Although I agree with him in the context of modern medicine, I believe that White’s arguments in showing the connections between yoga and āyurveda are compelling. The study of yoga and medicine is a fascinating emerging subfield, but here I will only address it as it impacts magical movements and medicine, as we will see in chapter 4.

¹³⁴ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 20, cf. Jean Filliozat, “Les mechanisms psychiques d’après les texts de yoga,” *Annuaire du Collège de France* (Paris: 1970-71), p. 416.

"inner *maṇḍala*," s/he affects (and is affected by) the external *maṇḍala*: the whole universe. White affirms that the Upaniṣads of the fourth and third century BCE began "charting the yogic body" and that the practice of yoga is done to achieve experiences beyond the reasoning mind.¹³⁵

White speaks of the importance the traditions placed in the experiences obtained from such practices and, at the same time, the "long period of discipleship" to obtain them.¹³⁶ Identifying himself as a "westerner in a hurry," although briefly "schooled" in haṭha yoga and alchemical practices, he clearly states that his research is solely textual.¹³⁷ White also acknowledges that "the all-important chain of transmission of oral tradition has long since been broken"¹³⁸ in many of the texts on which his study is based. I, on the other hand, am working with a tradition that claims to have an unbroken lineage and, as Per Kvaerne asserts, "is practiced to this day by Tibetan adepts."¹³⁹ Having interest in both the textual and the experiential, I feel that one can help inform the other. I hope to bring this aspect forth as this study unfolds. However, I do not claim that this is the only way of looking at this kind of texts and traditions. In fact, I agree with White when he writes:

¹³⁵ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 20.

¹³⁶ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. xi.

¹³⁷ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. xi.

¹³⁸ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. xii.

¹³⁹ Per Kvaerne, "'The Great Perfection' in the Tradition of the Bönpos," in *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, p. 367.

Ultimate reality is beyond my reach, either to experience or express. I nonetheless hope that these pages may serve to bridge a certain gap between raw experience and synthetic description, and thereby contribute to an ongoing tradition of cultural exchange that is at least as old as the Silk Road.¹⁴⁰

Nevertheless, it seems clear that these yogic practices are not seen as mere exercise or performance, like gymnastics and ballet are seen in the West. In effect, Eliade asserts that, from the post-Vedic period, yoga was defined as “the means of attaining Being, the effectual techniques for gaining liberation.”¹⁴¹ He emphasizes that body perfection in the yogic practices certainly does not refer to being perfect in athletic gymnastics or hygiene of the body, but rather to the perfection of the emerging subtle body.¹⁴²

The inception of the tantric movement began around the fourth century BCE, and reached its apogee, in India and Tibet, in the eighth. The body takes primary importance in this movement, with the specific esoteric goal of attaining liberation or ‘enlightenment’ (*byang chub, mokṣa*) by means of enabling vital breath currents to flow and unblock obstacles or interruptions to that enlightenment. It is also important to note that the Tibetan spiritual practices, whether sūtra or tantra, are part of the great vehicle (*theg pa chen po, mahāyāna*). Thus, they are practiced with the motivation and intention that the

¹⁴⁰ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. x.

¹⁴¹ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p.3.

enlightenment is not just for the practitioner, but extends to liberate all sentient beings. This is called developing an altruistic mind intent on enlightenment (*sems skyed, bodhicitta*). In this sense, enlightenment affects the whole universe.

On the origins or roots of tantra, White writes:

Indian tantrism, in its Hindu, Buddhist and Jain varieties, did not emerge out of a void. It was on the one hand influenced by cultural interactions with China, Tibet, central Asia, Persia, and Europe, interactions which had the Silk Road and medieval maritime routes and ports as their venue. Much more important, however, were the indigenous Indian roots of tantrism, which was not so much a departure from earlier forms of Hinduism as their continuation, albeit in sometimes tangential and heterodox ways.¹⁴³

Tantra, as Eliade remarks, was a pan-Asian movement influenced by the local religious tradition and culture, as well as by Persia and Europe (mostly Greece) through the trade routes. White finds Indian tantra to mark a clear shift and departure from the orthodox and Brahmanic forms of what is now called Hinduism. He defines Tantra as follows:

Tantra is the Asian body of beliefs and practices which, working from the principle that the universe we experience is nothing other than the concrete manifestation of the divine energy of the godhead that creates and maintains that universe, seeks to ritually appropriate and channel that energy, within the human microcosm, in creative and emancipatory ways.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1954 (rp. 1990), p. 230, cf., *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā*, II, 22.

¹⁴³ David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 2. White makes clear that he will use "Tantra" as the written work, "tantrism" as the religious phenomenon, and "tantric" as an adjective to the former such as "tantric ritual" (p. 354, footnote 3). I will follow his advice throughout this work.

¹⁴⁴ David Gordon White, editor, *The Practice of Tantra: A Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Introduction, p.9.

Taoist practices and early alchemy in India and China had the immortality of the body as their goal. However, the aim of enlightenment was not emphasized, and their methods seem to agree more with what White considers “external alchemy,” vis á vis the inner alchemy which incorporated the use of the subtle body. Throughout *The Alchemical Body*, White shows the links of haṭha yoga and alchemy. He shows how many of the yogis practiced both and states that the alchemy was more of an external practice and haṭha yoga more internal. Buddhism, he claims, did not incorporate alchemical practice or they disappeared early on, but maintained the yoga and the channels-breaths, which could also be said to be an internal form of alchemy.¹⁴⁵

“Perfecting the body,” “the body as a temple,” and even the “immortality” of the inner or subtle body are seen as part of the know-how of enlightenment. Yoga becomes one of the most evident examples of it within the tantric movement, in which the yogi makes the body the locus and tool for the liberation of itself. This is clearly consistent with Dillon’s “refining the body.”¹⁴⁶ The chartings of the internal landscapes of the subtle body and its dynamics are brought to the foreground, and, at the time of death, it is said that the gross body is left behind as if it were an external shell, allowing the subtle, or more luminous

¹⁴⁵ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 71, and p. 78.

¹⁴⁶ M. Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, pp. 200-201.

body to continue.¹⁴⁷ In the Dzogchen tradition, the final sign of spiritual achievement is called “rainbow body” (*‘ja lus*), allegedly achieved by many masters of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*.¹⁴⁸ Like the snake leaving its slough, the yogic practitioner “must create a ‘new body’ for himself [and] be ‘reborn,’ as in other initiations, after being ‘dead.’”¹⁴⁹ This new body, the subtle body or dimension, is the loci for the yogic training. Many tantric practices, such as the well-known “purification of *Vajrasattva*,” are classic examples of this in the Tibetan tradition.¹⁵⁰ Frances Garret also points out in her dissertation that, when one dies and leaves the gross body behind, the subtle body is “necessary as the physical support of an individual’s *buddhi* [enlightened nature] during the interval between death and rebirth.”¹⁵¹

This subtle body that is able to carry one’s enlightened nature is a “workable” dimension, which, through certain *askésis* or training, can be systematically and rigorously manipulated with the different esoteric practices

¹⁴⁷ For more information, see “The Theory of The Rainbow Body” section in Samten Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, pp. 190 – 196.

¹⁴⁸ See for example “An Eyewitness Account of a Rainbow Body,” in Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Heartdrops of Dharmakaya* (commentary by Lopon Tenzin Namdak, ed. By Richard Dixey, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1993), pp. 135-137.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 165.

¹⁵⁰ See Khetsun Sangpo, *Tantric Practices in Nyingma*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1986, pp. 141 – 153. For other tantric practices using the subtle body, see Stephen Beyer, *The Cult of Tara*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1978, Daniel Cozort, *Highest Yoga Tantra: An Introduction to the Esoteric Buddhism of Tibet* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1986), H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tsong-ka-pa, and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Tantra In Tibet*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1977, and *Deity Yoga*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1981 (rp. from *The yoga of Tibet*, London: George Allen Unwin, Ltd., 1976), among others.

¹⁵¹ Frances Garret, “Narratives of embryology : becoming human in Tibetan literature,” p. 5, cf. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Volume 2, 316.

that use the subtle body, such as channels-breaths practices and magical movement. Different practices exercise the subtle body's inner breath currents in different ways, revealing different dynamics. I will present how these are portrayed in Indian yoga and will argue that other dynamics are also at work in magical movement.

Indian Yoga

Patañjali is usually considered the father of "classic" yoga philosophy expounded in the renowned *yogasūtras*, which are placed, not undisputedly, around the second century BCE to third century CE¹⁵² Interestingly, in Patañjali's system, no *āsanas* or body postures other than the seated lotus posture (*padmāsana*) and modifications of it were included. Gorakhnāth is actually credited as the founder of *haṭha yoga*. He is the assumed author of the no longer extant *Goraksa Samitta*, which contains references to *haṭha yoga* and where *āsanas* beyond the lotus posture are included.¹⁵³ Gorakhnāth is said to have lived in the 12th to 13th centuries, although "Matsyendra, his purported guru, could not have lived later than the 10th century."¹⁵⁴ Their followers used their name, Kanphatas, to designate their particular discipline of practice; however, "the term soon came to be the collective designation for the traditional formulas and

¹⁵² M. Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 4 – 9. Others, such as Alter, place Patañjali's system "around the second or third century of this era" (J. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, p. 4), and D. White places him in the third century CE (personal communication, April 2005).

¹⁵³ See J. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, p121, and D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p.141.

¹⁵⁴ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 85, also see M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 228.

disciplines that made [it] possible to attain perfect mastery of the body.”¹⁵⁵ Svātmaraṃa’s 15th-century *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* is the oldest extant treatise that is believed to be based on Gorakhnāth’s *Haṭha Yoga*, and both White and Eliade find it influenced by Buddhism, especially by the Middle Way school (*Dbu ma*, *Madhyāmika*).¹⁵⁶

Patañjali’s definition of yoga in the *Yogasūtras* as “preventing thought from going around in circles”¹⁵⁷ also places the focus more on the mind than on the body; it describes a state of concentration of the mind similar to calm abiding (*zhi gnas*, *śamata*), which could be considered the first step towards resting in the natural state.¹⁵⁸ In fact, Norbu makes a distinction between Patañjali’s system of yoga and what he (i.e., Norbu) calls the use of the *kuṇḍalinī* in yoga, which we can comfortably say, after reading Eliade and White, comes from Gorakhnāth’s tradition.¹⁵⁹ Norbu clearly associates magical movement more with the latter. In other words, Norbu sees Patañjali’s yoga as a dual system ‘rejecting the body’ similar to the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna sūtra systems approach, where the body is considered impure, and the yogin is urged to focus on the mind toward “the

¹⁵⁵ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 229. Also see George Weston Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānpata Yogis* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973).

¹⁵⁶ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 229.

¹⁵⁷ Patañjali, *Yogasūtras*, second verse, in David White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 273.

¹⁵⁸ See Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), where she traces the history of what she calls “Postural Yoga” in distinction to the categories “Modern Psychosomatic Yoga,” “Modern Meditational Yoga,” and “Modern Denominational Yoga.”

¹⁵⁹ Norbu equates *kuṇḍalinī* to *bindu* (Tib. *thig le*), see N. Norbu, *The Crystal and the Way of Light*, pp. 89 and 91.

complete cessation [of] mental activity in a state of union with the absolute.”¹⁶⁰ On the other hand, magical movement is more like the *haṭha yoga* of Gorakhnāth; it is a tantric path that involves the body with a more active engagement, utilizing the potency of the triad of body, energy (in this case as breath) and mind.

Mind-Energy-Body in Tibet

Tibetologists Anne Klein, David Germano and Robert Thurman provide some background on how the triad of body, breath, and mind is expressed in the context of Tibetan spiritual practices. In *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, Klein states that, although different Buddhist traditions define the mind in different ways, “the human mind is explicitly located in a body and affected by it.”¹⁶¹ She writes that this conception of the “body” need not be limited to the gross form of flesh, blood and bones like we think in the west. There are also subtle forms of bodies, and the subtle consciousness rides out of the body on the vital breath currents, as was mentioned above. Emphasizing the importance of embodiment in meditative practices, Klein asserts that “consciousness is always associated with a kind of physicality [i.e., body]” and adds that “[t]he more esoteric traditions also teach a variety of physical postures to enhance particular meditation practices.”¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ N. Norbu, *The Crystal and the Way of Light*, p. 85.

¹⁶¹ Anne C. Klein, *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1995, p. 70.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, p. 71.

As mentioned in the first chapter, body, energy and mind are the doors to enlightenment, which in this light can be understood as modes of training one's spirituality. Thurman rightly points out that these practitioners' training in the three doors consists of a "withdrawal of energy from habit patterns, and reinvestment of that energy in new patterns of ritual design."¹⁶³ Thurman exemplifies this with the practice of prostrations, which is one of the most popular forms of body practices among Tibetans in general. Although prostrations seem to center on a training of the body, they also include speech through a mantra recitation or invocation and mind by focusing on a visualization of an enlightened being(s). In other words, prostration can be said to be the body part of this integral practice that includes speech and mind, usually called "going for refuge" (*skyabs 'gro*) and used in all Tibetan Buddhist and Bön traditions. The purported benefits are the purification of body, energy and mind along with receiving blessings from the enlightened beings.

Among the usually rendered 84,000 meditative practices within the Tibetan traditions,¹⁶⁴ some have more of a predominance over the body, some more over speech or energy, and some more over mind. Writing about the

¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 116.

¹⁶⁴ 84,000 seems to be a commonly agreed upon number by Tibetan teachers. From the idea that sentient beings have 84,000 defilements (*gro ba thams cad kyi nyon mongs pa brgyad khri bzhi stong*), there are 84,000 teachings (*brgyad khri bzhi stong gi chos* or *chos kyi phung po brgyad khri bzhi stong*) that overcome those defilements. These are sometimes called the 84,000 doors or gates of *dharma* (here taking the meaning of teachings, *chos kyi sgo mo brgyad khri bzhi stong*) and illustrated too as

foundational practices (*sngon 'gro*) that are common to almost all Tibetan spiritual traditions—and especially important in the Dzogchen school of thought—, Klein says that these practices “are ways to bring body, speech and mind into increasing harmony with the ‘great expanse’ talked about in the Dzogchen teachings.”¹⁶⁵ All three components are always there, as in the example of the going for refuge practice. Here we are more concerned with those of the body. Besides the prostration practice, there are the circumambulations, pilgrimages and, of course, the yogic practices.

I think it is important to highlight a few of Thurman’s earlier points. One is the understanding that “human form should be used for spiritual evolution,” which is also clear in basic Buddhist and Bön teachings that emphasize the fortune of having a human existence and so the importance to use it wisely (i.e., for spiritual practice). A second point is that it is important to change our habitual patterns into the “reinvestment of that energy in new patterns of ritual design,” such as prostration, circumambulation, prayers, sacred dance, yoga and so forth, in order to evolve spiritually.¹⁶⁶ Clearly magical movement is one of

the 84,000 sections or spokes of the wheel of *dharma* (*chos kyi phung po brgyad khri bzhi stong gi 'khor lo*). For these references, see *Rangjung Yeshe Dictionary*, record 6530.

¹⁶⁵ Anne Klein, “Fully engaged in Body, Speech, and Mind.” *Buddhdharma: The Practitioner’s Quarterly*, Winter 2003.

¹⁶⁶ I would not totally reject the idea that physical exercise is present in yoga too, especially its modern development both in modern India and in the West. However, I would argue that, for the yogin, it is considered a secondary benefit of the practice, not the *raison d’être*. The recent works of Joe Alter and Elizabeth De Michelis, already cited, mention how modern yoga, even in India and not solely in the West, have emphasized the physicality of yoga and the idea that this is “thought to be the product of Western ‘perversion’ and misunderstanding” is too simplistic. As

those practices that include the use of physical body to develop meditation practice. As Tenzin Rinpoche states:

In particular, trul khor serves as an aid to meditation practice, a gateway to a more clear, open, and stable experience of abiding in the natural state of mind. Through integrating vigorous physical movement with mental concentration and awareness of the breath, the trul khor exercises unblock and open the flow of vital energy, or prana, within specific areas of the body.¹⁶⁷

Therefore, by manipulating the channels and vital breath currents of one's subtle body, the practitioner can open the flow of the vital breath permeating both to the gross body and the mind and is eventually able to experience and abide in the natural state of mind. That is the aim of yoga (*rnal 'byor*), states Namkhai Norbu.¹⁶⁸ In other words, magical movement helps dispel blockages or obstacles, and, as it will become clear as we analyze those of *ZZ Oral Transmission*, resting or abiding in the natural state of mind is a crucial component of the practice. Germano explains the link Norbu is referring to between yoga and natural state

Alter affirms, "things are much more complicated and interesting than this" (both quotes in Joseph Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, p. 10. See also Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga*).

¹⁶⁷ Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, in his unfinished work on Tibetan tantric practices of body, speech and mind.

¹⁶⁸ Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, *The Crystal and the Way of Light*, Ed. by John Shane, New York and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986, p. 85. In his upcoming book on magical movement, the translator Adriano Clemente says that *Sun and Moon* includes descriptions of seventy-five yoga postures, "each of which correspond to a[n] *asana* [posture] in the Hindu Hatha Yoga tradition, yet it [i.e., Vairocana's text] predates all known relevant Hindu texts" (*Yantra Yoga: The Tibetan Yoga of Movement*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, forthcoming 2005, foreword).

in the Dzogchen context: “[t]he etymology of *rNal ‘Byor* is ‘tuning into’ (*‘Byor*) naturalness (*rNal*),” or “‘linking up to’ (*‘Byor*) a pristine innate state (*rNal ma*).”¹⁶⁹

Buddha Nature

The Buddhist concept of “Buddha-nature” (*de bzhin gshegs pa’i snying po*, *tatāgathagarbha*), which maintains that all beings have a pristine innate state, is clearly the underlying principle here. In that light, every sentient being possesses Buddha-nature. These yogic or other esoteric practices are the methods (*thabs*, *upaya*) that allow the practitioner to connect to his/her Buddha-nature’s latent wisdom or insight (*shes rab*, *prajñā*). Philosophically, and similar also to Chinese Ch’an, Dzogchen’s discovery of one’s own nature of mind is based on the concept of Buddha-nature theory. However, because that nature is veiled, one needs to discover it. In order to discover or uncover that enlightened nature, the practitioner applies one of the 84,000 methods. Method and wisdom are described as the two wings of a mythical bird (*khyung*, *garuda*) that are needed to fly and thus be back in touch, or re-discover, that enlightened state of mind that is said to be present all along.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ D. Germano, *Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia*, p. 720.

¹⁷⁰ David Jackson examines animal images used that exemplify this approach in Indian, Chinese and Tibetan texts, including that of the *garuda* in David Jackson’s “Birds in the Egg and Newborn Lion Cubs: Metaphors for the Potentialities and Limitation of “All-at-once” Enlightenment”(in *Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the 5th seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Narita, Japan, 1989, rp. 1992, pp. 95-114). Thanks to Sigrid Pietsch for directing me to this article.

David Germano explains how the Dzogchen metaphor, the “Youthful Body in a Vase” (*gzhon nu bum pa'i sku*),¹⁷¹ is a development of the Buddha-nature theory. He states that the youthfulness (*gzhon nu*) of that dimension connotes its primordiality and readiness to emerge.¹⁷² In that way, the enlightened quality or the natural state of mind that is present in all sentient beings is always pristine and ready to be awakened, and its mediating structure is the subtle body or dimension. Germano states, “[d]espite being fully present it [i.e., the subtle dimension] is invisible to the outside.”¹⁷³

This invisible structure of the subtle dimension that enables the transformation is said to be immortal, in contrast to our mortal physical body. Nevertheless, one can use this dimension(s) and influence both the external body and the mind.

III. The Landscapes of the Subtle Dimension(s)

Anthropologist Geoffrey Samuel rightly states:

The subtle body has been one of the hardest concepts in Buddhist and Hindu thought for Westerners to appreciate, perhaps because

¹⁷¹ David Germano, *Mini-Encyclopedia of Dzogchen*, p. 720. Also see *Ranjung Yeshe* on line Tibetan-English Dictionary, entry 65310.

¹⁷² David Germano, *Mini-Encyclopedia of Dzogchen*, p. 720.

¹⁷³ David Germano, *Mini-Encyclopedia of Dzogchen*, p. 655. Germano recounts how the image of the body concealed *within* a vase is related to the frequent image of a butter lamp placed within a vase or doll in such a way that “its light is not apparent from the outside, yet nevertheless is luminously present within the depths of the vase’s interiority that gives the vase a inner luminosity or glow, just as this Gnostic energy [i.e., his translation for *ye shes*] is always already fully present within the Universe’s ultimate quintessence, despite not being externally apparent” (Ibid, p. 720).

it implies a lack of separation between 'body' and 'mind,' which Western science and medicine has had difficulty in accepting.¹⁷⁴

He adds that the introduction and acceptance of medicine from Asia, biofeedback and measurable experiments of inner heat "demonstrate the mind-body linkage in a form accessible to Western science, [and thus] the subtle body is beginning to make more sense."¹⁷⁵ One of Samuel's students, Elisabeth Stutchbery, did an interesting study with the aim of creating an "epistemic status" for these practices that she terms "technologies of consciousness."¹⁷⁶ Stutchbury's aim of finding an epistemological discourse for these practices is, in part, my aim in this section as well.

Edith Wyschogrod, although from a different context, writes that episteme involves looking for "both a conceptual backdrop and an enabling mechanism" to describe a set of practices.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, applying it to magical movement requires a basic understanding of the subtle body since it is an important part in the conceptual backdrop and in the enabling mechanism of magical movement.

¹⁷⁴ Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*, Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993, p.237.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 237. As for the inner heat experiment, Samuel refers to Benson and Hopkins, 1982, mentioned in the introduction.

¹⁷⁶ Elisabeth A. Stutchbury, "Tibetan Meditation, Yoga and Healing practices: Mind-Body Interconnections," *The Embodiment of Mind: Eastern and Western Perspectives*, ed. M.M. Del Monte, & Y. Haruki, Delft, Holland: Eburon Publishers, 1998, pp. 103ff. Her study focused on the Six Yogas of Naropa, from her field research on how they were practiced in Apo Rinpoche Gonpa (*A pho rin po che dgon pa*) in Manali, India, during 1986 and 1992.

¹⁷⁷ Edith Wyschogrod, "The Howl of Oedipus, the Cry of Heloise: From Asceticism to Postmodern Ethics," *Asceticism*, p. 16.

The subtle body can be seen as a vessel through which transformation may occur. It is the internal dimension that allows the practitioner to travel on the path to enlightenment. The idea of subtle body or other deeper dimensions within our gross or external body is a concept also known outside the tantric realm. In some shamanic cultures, this subtle dimension is described as "a thin unsubstantial human image, in its nature a sort of vapor, film or shadow....mostly impalpable and invisible, yet also manifesting physical power."¹⁷⁸ Among the Igluik Eskimos, there is the belief that "[o]ur flesh and blood, our body, is nothing but an envelope about our vital power."¹⁷⁹ The idea of the body as an envelope can be interpreted as our external body being a mere shell, protecting, but also concealing, the dimensions of our subtle body (or bodies). Stutchbury contends that, although it is difficult to find correspondences of the subtle body elements (channels and vital breath currents) with biomedicine, "different systems of advanced inner yoga meditation [i.e., her translation of *rtsa rlung*] manufacture and employ different structures, suggesting that the potentiality for creating these pathways exists."¹⁸⁰ Stutchbury rightly proposes that these elements arise or are perceived by the yogin through

¹⁷⁸ Edward Tyler, "Primitive Culture," 1871, quoted in Holger Kalweit, *Dreamtime and Inner Space* (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 1988), p.21.

¹⁷⁹ Ikinilik, an Utkuhikjaling Eskimo, Knud Rasmussen, "Intellectual Culture of the Igluik Eskimos," Vol. VII, No. 1, p. 6, Copenhagen 1930, quoted in Holger Kalweit, *Dreamtime and Inner*, p.21.

¹⁸⁰ Elizabeth A. Stutchbury, "Tibetan Meditation, Yoga and Healing Practices: Mind-Body Interconnections," p.115.

specific methods of practice, including those discussed here, which she terms “technologies of consciousness.”¹⁸¹ Thinking of these methods as technologies of consciousness bears some resemblance with Clarke’s earlier quote, and it might be yet another way to reconcile the magical movement as a machine, or the mind-body technology as a magical and/or mystical movement, where the mind-body technology can bring magical and mystical results to the practitioner.

Intrigued also by the mechanisms of these technologies of consciousness, for centuries Tibetans also investigated this kind of correspondence between the tantric vista and medical knowledge. Frances Garrett looks into the presentations of the subtle body structure in the Tibetan medical system—especially as portrayed in the famous twelfth century Tibetan medical treatise *Four Tantras* (*Rgyud bzhi*)—and in various religious tantras, reporting that “Tibetan medical scholars, for several centuries to present date, have been concerned with reconciling the two systems [medical and religious] to some extent.”¹⁸² Garret mentions how some important religious masters, such as Drapa Gyaltsen (*Grags pa rgyal mtshan*) from the Sakya school, wrote on the importance of religious

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p.115.

¹⁸² Frances Garret, “Narratives of embryology: becoming human in Tibetan literature,” p. 56. Janet Gyatso writes in detail about this debate in “The Authority of Empiricms and the Empiricism of Authority: Medicine and Buddhism in Tibet on the Eve of Modernity,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24 (1), 2004, pp. 2 ff. I would like to thank Janet Gyatso for sharing her article.

practitioners knowing the body and the subtle physiology as “the basis for meditation practice.”¹⁸³

With a provocative illustration, Drapa Gyaltzen claims that “[a]ttempting contemplative practices without clear understanding of the body...is like trying to milk an animal by tugging at its horns.”¹⁸⁴ Still, “in the dialog between Tibetan medical and religious traditions over the centuries, the very existence of these three channels is questioned.”¹⁸⁵ In other words, it is clear that one does not see these channels when a body is cut open. Nevertheless, there are numerous meditative practices that use and describe with incredible detail these channels and their energetic centers. How is one suppose to understand them? Perhaps the *mundus imaginalis* that the French philosopher Henry Corbin describes in the context of Iranian philosophy might be useful.¹⁸⁶ His concept of the *imaginal* is a mediating universe between the pure intellectual world and the empirical world perceived by the senses.¹⁸⁷ Making a comparison with the 16th century Swiss physician and natural philosopher Paracelsus’ notion of *imaginatio vera* (“imagination in the true sense”) vis á vis “phantasy,” Corbin also differentiates

¹⁸³ Frances Garret, “Narratives of embryology: becoming human in Tibetan literature,” Draft, p. 56.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 56.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 57. See also Janet Gyatso’s article mentioned above and Garret and Vincanne Adams, “The Three Channels in Tibetan Medicine,” *Traditional South Asian Medicine*, forthcoming 2005, p. 6. I am grateful to Frances Garret for sharing this article.

¹⁸⁶ Henry Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi’ite Iran*, (translated by Nancy Pearson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977). I am grateful to Jeffrey Kripal for pointing me to Corbin’s work.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, pp. vii-xii.

the imaginal from fantasy, which is usually perceived as equivalent to the unreal.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, Corbin affirms that this imaginative power “is the formative power of the subtle body or imaginal body.”¹⁸⁹

There are different kinds of subtle body presentations not only among Tibetans, but also among Indian and Chinese presentations.¹⁹⁰ Samuel proposes that different descriptions are valid in their own context, providing their own maps towards enlightenment. This could be similar to the validity of the various schools of Western psychology, which present different models that serve different groups of people. In other words, each tradition’s methods or “technology of consciousness” might draw different maps and still not pose a problem. Actually, Samuel asserts that Tibetans “are aware that there are significant discrepancies between the descriptions in different traditions....the co-existence of apparently irreconcilable descriptions in and of itself is not seen as a problem. Each description is valid in its own context.”¹⁹¹ Thus, these

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p. ix. Philippus Aurelous Paracelsus (1493-1541, born Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim) was a physician, chemist, alchemist, and considered one of the fathers of modern medicine. For more information on Paracelsus, see, among others, *Paracelsus: Essential Readings* (Selected and Translated by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1999).

¹⁸⁹ Henry Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, p. x.

¹⁹⁰ We have mentioned already some of the Indian. Among Chinese, White asserts that there are Taoist sources as early as the fourth century, such as the *Taishang suling dayou miaojing* (D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 250). Eliade also mentions early Chinese sources, although they are more related to alchemy (M. Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 284 – 292).

¹⁹¹ Geoffrey Samuel, “The Body in Buddhist and Hindu Tantra,” *Religion* Vol. 19, July 1989, p. 201. Samuel cites as references for his statement Daniel Cozort, *Highest Yoga Tantra*, pp. 115ff) and Keith Downman, *Sky Dancer: The Secret Life and Songs of Lady Yeshe Tsogyel* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1984, p. 247).

technologies of consciousness, such as meditative techniques, channels-breaths practice, or magical movement, are the means or methods that allow the practitioner to connect with one's own Buddha nature within the landscape of his/her subtle body dimension.

Although all traditions do not necessarily agree on all the details of the subtle dimension(s), there is a consistent description of the principal three channels of the subtle body in the Indian and Tibetan tantric literature. These descriptions sometimes mention five, six or seven main energetic centers or wheels (*khōr lo, cakra*) organized along the central channel.¹⁹²

Elements of the Subtle Dimension(s)

i. Channels (*rtsa, nādi*)

The general agreement in Hindu and Buddhist subtle body descriptions is that there are three channels of utmost importance: a 'central channel' (*bdu ma, suṣumnā*), or 'all-encompassing' channel (*kun 'dar ma, a va dhū ti*)¹⁹³ sometimes

¹⁹² White maintains that in Indian texts it is said to derive from the six-*cakra* Indian subtle body writings, earlier expressed in Matsyendranāth's *Kaulajñānanirṇaya*, the Western Transmission *Kubjikāmata* and Bhavabhūti's *Mālātī Mādhava* (D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 134). In Buddhist texts, the earlier seems to be the ca. eighth-century *Guyasamāja Tantra* (see Alex Wayman, *Yoga of the Guyasamājatantra: The Arcane Lore of Forty Verses*, New York: Samuel Weiser, 1977, pp. 163-73), although it speaks of four energetic centers (D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 422, footnote 8). In Bon, the earlier text seems to be the *Mother Tantra*, rediscovered in the eleventh century by Guru Nontse (*Gu ru rnon rtse*) (see D. Martin, *Mandala Cosmogony: Human Body Good Thought and the Revelation of the Secret Mother Tantras of Bon*, Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994, p. 28 ff., and Samten Karmay, *A Catalogue of Bonpo Publications*, Tokyo, Japan: The Toyo Bunko, 1977 p. 20), where in some cases five energetic centers are mentioned and in other parts six (see Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Healing with Form, Energy, and Light*, Ithaca, NY and Boulder, CO: Snow Lion Publications, 2002, pp. 93 – 110).

¹⁹³ David Germano says that "there appears to be some question as to the original linguistic source of *kun 'dar ma* (or at least for the syllable '*Dar*'), and in Great Perfection writings a

known as the “Royal Road,”¹⁹⁴ flanked on the right by the white-colored “solitary” channel (*rkyang ma, pingalā*), and flanked on the left by the red-colored “flavor” (*ro ma, idā*). All begin from the same point, which is a four-finger width below the navel.¹⁹⁵ Most Hindu and Buddhist tantric contemplative systems aim to bring the energies of both secondary channels into the central one.

Günter, translating the famous 14th-century Nyingma scholar and meditator Longchenpa (*Klong chen pa* or *Klong chen rab 'byams*), describes the channels as being “responsible for the differentiation into right and left, male and female, body and mind, not so much as irreconcilable opposites but as complementary, interacting facets of an all-pervading flow of life.”¹⁹⁶ He adds:

outwardly [the 3-channel structure] sets up the triad of body, speech, and (ego)mind; inwardly the triad of existentiality, communication, and spirituality; and mystically the triad of the founding strata of meaning which become embodied as concrete bearers of meaning, of world horizons, and of meaning in an ultimate sense; this triad stands there straight like pillars.¹⁹⁷

distinction between how these two terms are used, although whether a distinct reference is entailed is debatable” (D. Germano, “Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia, p. 651). It seems that the *a va dhū ti* might refer to the spinal chord, and the Tibetan term might express the vitality aspect of the central channel. As we saw from the medical and religious discussions on the channels portrayed by Garret, this is a complicated and unresolved issue at this time, and so we will, until further clarification, use them as translations of each other.

¹⁹⁴ Arthur Avalon, *The Serpent Power*, p. 111.

¹⁹⁵ HH Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, remarked that it is actually four times the width of the middle finger not four-finger width from the pinky to the index (Menri, oral communication, 2002)

¹⁹⁶ Longchenpa, *Kindly Bent To Ease Us, Part 2*, Tr. by Herbert Günter (Berkeley, California: Dharma Publishing, 1975), p. 19.

¹⁹⁷ Longchenpa, *Theg-pa'i mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod*, I, p. 535, in Longchenpa, *Kindly Bent To Ease Us, Part 2*, p. 19.

These channels are not as static as they might seem at first impression. They can be conceived as made of light and as flexible, so that when vital breath travels through them they inflate like a balloon.¹⁹⁸ Güenther's description portrays the ample significance and the vibrant potential of this subtle dimension as a structure that supports various levels of understanding that lead to the realization or enlightenment.

Shardza's *Mass of Fire* classifies the white right channel as that of method (*thabs*), the red left channel as that of wisdom or insight (*shes rab*), and the central as the channel of enlightenment (*byang chub*).¹⁹⁹ The same text emphasizes that the union of method and insight brings forth enlightenment or that, through the methods and insight, one can discover or allow the enlightened nature to manifest. This understanding helps internalize the subtle differences in quality that the vital breath currents have as they circulate through the different channels. Shardza also asserts the need to bring them into the central channel.²⁰⁰

In terms of structure, although sometimes the secondary channels are described as parallel to the central channel, and at other times the secondary channels intertwine around the central one, most of the Tibetan systems follow

¹⁹⁸ H.H. Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima mentioned how Tibetans would traditionally use the metaphor of intestines (*rgyu ma*) as channels, but the balloon metaphor may seem more appropriate for a western audience (Menri monastery, oral communication, 2002).

¹⁹⁹ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, p. 4.3. I have used the Sanskrit names *idā* and *piṅgalā* that are given in Hindu texts, but in Buddhist texts they use *lalāna* and *rasanā* for the secondary channels, as a literal translation for *rgyan ma* and *ro ma*, respectively.

²⁰⁰ More on this in chapters three and four.

the former (see appendix II, figure 1).²⁰¹ Beyond the basic or principal structure of the three channels, sometimes called the root or trunk, there are various minor channels, usually divided as branches (*yan lag*), secondary branches (*nying lag*), and leaves (*lo ma*). This net of channels is said to be composed of 72,000; 84,000; or 720,000 channels. As Shardza claims, there are so many that we cannot count them or mention them.²⁰²

The channels are the architectural support of the subtle body and act as pathways through which fluids and energies travel. Some, like the veins and arteries, are the pathways for blood to circulate around our body. Subtler channels are the roads through which vital breath currents travel, nurturing the subtler dimensions of the body.

ii. Energetic Centers (*khor lo, cakra*)

Along this supporting structure of the channels lie the energetic centers or wheels. Their numbers and locations vary according to the tradition describing them or even according to the specific practice in which they are engaged, but in

²⁰¹ However, and maybe based on some of the Hindu traditions, “[a]t the sites of the four chakras, the two channels, *rasana* and *lalana*, wrap around the central channel, forming knots” (Tsongkhapa, “A Book of Three Inspirations,” tr. By Glenn Mullin in *Tsongkhapa’s Six Yogas of Naropa*, p. 143). Geshe Michael Roach also described them in this way, following Tsongkhapa (Public talk, Houston, TX, 2004).

²⁰² Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, p. 6.4.

general the most important ones are located along the central channel. In *Mass of Fire*, Shardza describes them as follows:²⁰³

- Crown, great bliss energetic center (*bde chen 'khor lo*),
- Throat, energetic center of enjoyment/experience (*longs spyod 'khor lo*),
- Heart, true nature energetic center (*bon nyid 'khor lo*),
- Navel, manifestation energetic center (*sprul pa'i 'khor lo*), and
- Secret, bliss sustainer energetic center (*bde skyong 'khor lo*).

Shardza describes each energetic center as having a number of petals, a color, and so forth, and acknowledges that other texts describe them differently.²⁰⁴ He adds:

one should visualize each center with its spokes as tree/center (*tsibs shing*) entering to the handle/center (*yu ba*) of an umbrella (*gdugs*). In that way they [the channel-petals] enter the central channel and abide in one/same hollowness (*sbubs*).²⁰⁵

Also, as their individual titles illustrate, each energetic center supports a distinct experience. Different practices will engage one or more of them and thus give

²⁰³ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, p. 27 (Tr. by M.A. Chaoul, unpublished). This description is not unique to this text. I use this text as an example, since it is the one with more intimate relation to the texts and materials I am analyzing in this dissertation.

²⁰⁴ Shardza writes that there is not much agreement in other texts in regards to the amount (*mang nyung*) of channel petals (*rtsa'dab*) and so forth. However, two important texts, the *Ye khri mtha' sel* and the *Mkha'gro gsang mrdzod*, agree on the above description of the number and names of the energetic centers. He adds that “this is the thought/intent of the *Yang rtse Klong chen*, and similarly, [I, Shardza] have expressed (*bkod*) it’s validity (*thad pa'i sgrub*) in the *dBying rig mdzod*,” where one can see it in more detail (Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, pp. 27 – 28, from unpublished manuscript).

rise to such experiences. A chart created by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Ligmincha Institute illustrates the functions of each of the vital breath currents as they work in a particular energetic center through the channels-breaths practices of the *Mother Tantra* (see appendix II, figure 2).

iii. Vital Breath Currents (*rlung*, *prāṇa*)

In the channels-breaths practice from the *Mother Tantra*, five kinds of vital breath currents are mentioned, each related to one of the five vital breath currents of Tibetan medicine (also equivalent to those in Āyurveda).²⁰⁶ As the vital breath current is brought to each of these energetic centers and held there, it subtly moves, expressing the energy of that energetic center into a shape (*dbyibs*) and with a specific color. Many of these characteristics are not unique to *Mother Tantra* or to Bön, but they are the closest links to the *ZZ Oral Transmission's* magical movements. However, having a channel-breath movement for each of the five vital breath currents seems quite unique to the *Mother Tantra*.²⁰⁷ Shardza,

²⁰⁵ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, p. 27.

²⁰⁶ We see the same names used for the different vital breath currents in different medical texts as well as in various tantric texts. However, as Dr. Yeshe Dhonden remarks, the Tibetan medical texts locate the life-sustaining vital breath at the crown of the head and the pervading vital breath at the heart, and in the tantric texts this is reversed (Dr. Yeshe Dhonden, *Healing from the Source*, tr. by B. Alan Wallace, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2000). Dr. Dhonden adds: "Moreover, when Tibetans refer to disorders of the life-sustaining wind, we always refer to the heart, which is where such disorders are felt, with symptoms such as heaviness, palpitation, throbbing, and so forth. Thus, even though the medical *tantras* [i.e., *Rgyud bzhi*] say it is located on the top of the head, in actual practice Tibetan doctors identify it as being located at the heart. So there is somewhat of an incongruity between theory and practice" (Ibid, pp. 24-25).

²⁰⁷ I need to research this further.

basing his description on the *Mother Tantra*, describes the five vital breath currents in *Mass of Fire*.²⁰⁸

- Upward moving (*gyen du rgyu*) vital breath at throat center, the shape is of an umbrella; color is yellow;
- Life upholding or life force (*srog 'dzin pa*) vital breath at the heart center, shape of a precious jewel, white color;
- Fire and equanimity (*mnyam pa*) vital breaths at the navel center, shape as a wheel, red color;
- Downward (*thur du*) clearing (*sel ba*) vital breath at the secret center, shape of a bellows (*sbud pa*), blue color;
- Pervasive (*khyab*) vital breath at all the channel petals, shape as sunrays, green color.

In these channels-breaths practices, there is an external movement of the body for each vital breath, an internal way of the breath moving, and a subtle way of the light expressed in a specific color and producing a specific shape.²⁰⁹ Shardza instructs the practitioner that in order to enter well into the path of this method of channels-breaths practices, one must diligently (*'bad*) apply oneself to its practice until one is perfectly fit or able (*les su rung*) in the concentration of the mind and does not fall into deluded thoughts (*'khrul 'byams*).²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, p. 28. Also *Mother Tantra*, pp. 603ff.

²⁰⁹ Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche discusses these three aspects in *Healing with Form, Energy and Light*, Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 76 – 130.

²¹⁰ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Mass of Fire*, p. 28.

Inner Landscapes: Charting the *Maṇḍala*

I offer my whole body containing the three channels with its five energetic centers, the five vital breaths and the light coming forth from them, together with the sixteen mind-essences—or essential spheres.²¹¹

Namkhai Norbu states that the subtle body is called the “inner *maṇḍala*” and asserts that “[i]t is the work done with the inner *maṇḍala* that makes the tantric practices of the Path of Transformation a more rapid path realization than the methods of *sūtras*.”²¹² As mentioned earlier, he uses the Sanskrit *yantra yoga* to describe magical movements. I would thus like to explore the meanings of *yantra*, as I believe it can help in understanding its use within the yogic context. In its earlier uses, *yantra* takes the meaning of “object serving to hold,” “instrument,” or “engine,”²¹³ as well as a “magical diagram,” which is a simple form of *maṇḍala*.²¹⁴ Also, according to David Gray, “[t]he use of *yantra* as a yogic posture was common by the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries, although we cannot conclude that its use was not common prior to this.”²¹⁵ Basing his research on the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* and its commentaries, Gray states, “[t]he term ‘yantra,’

²¹¹ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, “Channels-breaths supplication prayer” (*Rtsa rlung gsol ‘debs*), in *Mass of Fire*, p. 102, lines 1–2 *maṇḍala* offering (*maṇḍal bul ba*) section (from my unpublished translation).

²¹² N. Norbu, *The Crystal and the Way of Light*, pp. 89–90.

²¹³ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 219.

²¹⁴ Buddhologist David Gray, who has examined in detail the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* and its commentaries, mentioned that at least in Jayabhadra’s mid-ninth-century commentary of it, the term *yantra* was used “but only in the sense of a magical diagram” (electronic communication, Houston, TX, June 2005).

²¹⁵ David Gray, electronic communication, Houston, TX, June 2005.

which is usually translated into Tibetan as *'phrul 'khor*, occurs several times in the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* and commentaries, with three different meanings, in order of frequency: 1) a magical diagram 2) a yogic posture 3) a machine or mechanism."²¹⁶ I believe that each of these three meanings, although different, can be understood as being partly present in each of the other two. As a magical diagram, *yantra* or *maṇḍala* is understood as a cosmic manifestation or palace of the deities. Thus the body can be seen as the machine hosting the inner *maṇḍala* of the subtle body that can be toiled through yogic postures. Italian Buddhologist Giuseppe Tucci states in his *Theory and Practice of the Mandala*: "It [the *maṇḍala*] is, above all, a map of the cosmos. It is the whole universe in its essential plan, in its process of emanation and of reabsorption."²¹⁷

Maṇḍalas are sometimes drawn, painted, or even constructed with sand. They serve as a support for the practitioner in his/her meditation practice, as a way to concentrate better and also defend the practitioner "against mental distractions and temptations."²¹⁸ Eliade also writes, "[t]he *maṇḍala* 'defends' the disciple against any destructive force and at the same time helps him to concentrate, to find his 'center.'"²¹⁹ It is interesting to note that the Tibetan word

²¹⁶ David Gray, electronic communication, Houston, TX, June 2005. Also see his *The Discourse of Sri Heruka: A Study and Annotated Translation of the Cakrasamvara Tantra*. American Institute of Buddhist Studies/Columbia University Press, forthcoming 2006.

²¹⁷ Giuseppe Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Maṇḍala*, tr. from Italian by Alan Houghton Brodrick (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2001), p. 23.

²¹⁸ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 225.

²¹⁹ Ibid, p. 222.

dkyil, besides the meaning of “*maṇḍala*-center,” also denotes “core,” “essence,” “inner,” and so forth, and *dkyil 'khor*, the Tibetan rendering for *maṇḍala*, denotes “fullness” and “entirety,” among other meanings.²²⁰ Also, in Tibetan oral language, “how are you?” is literally “how well is your physical form or body” (*sku gzugs bde po*), and the honorific manner of addressing a lama, for example, is “how clear is your *maṇḍala* dimension?” (*sku dkyil gsal dwangs*). This understanding of the body as a *maṇḍala* that can be cleansed, I argue, is what the practitioner intends in every magical movement, cleansing from the center to the periphery.

In many Hindu, Bön, and Buddhist practices, one is said to “enter the *maṇḍala*” as one is initiated to the practice of that particular deity. In Eliade’s words, “by entering the *maṇḍala*, the yogin approaches his own ‘center,’” and in that he “re-enacts and masters the cosmic process,” through which the meditation practice “can find the *maṇḍala* in his own body.”²²¹ He argues that the *maṇḍala* is an *imago mundi*, and “its center [*dkyil*] corresponds to the infinitesimal point perpendicularly traversed by the axis mundi; as he approaches the center, the disciple approaches the ‘center of the world.’”²²² Furthermore, as an *imago mundi*, the cleansing expands to all sentient beings, which are part of the

²²⁰ Ranjung Yeshe electronic Tibetan-English dictionary, record 65310.

²²¹ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 225.

²²² Ibid, p. 225. It is important to note that categories such as *imago mundi* and *axis mundi* are Eliade’s way of describing or interpreting these Buddhist concepts and not necessarily concepts

periphery. Each magical movement, then, could also be seen as a pure offer of oneself, all beings, and the entire universe. As stated in the *maṇḍala* offering section from Shardza's channels-breaths practice supplication prayer, cited at the beginning of this section,, one could say that, from that center, the channels, the vital breath currents and their luminosity, together with the mind-essences, arise as one performs magical movements of channels and vital breath currents. It is to that center that the "return of the absolute from existence to essence" occurs.²²³

Vajra Hermeneutics

In his article, "Vajra Hermeneutics," Robert Thurman creates an appealing hermeneutical model to understand tantric practices, including the stages of generation (*bškyed rim*) and completion (*rdzogs rim*).²²⁴ Thurman writes that the former is "the stage of the imaginative visualization of the universe," [where] "[t]he diamond womb of the *maṇḍala* palace now becomes a gymnasium wherein one practices the arts of dying and creative resurrecting."²²⁵ His description evokes the dynamism of the creation and reabsorption process that occurs in every magical movement. The body-*maṇḍala*, as described above, hosts the manifestations created by working with channels and vital breath currents in

described by Buddhists in the same way. Nevertheless, I find them to be very useful tools to understand the Buddhist conception of *maṇḍala*, beyond its literal sense.

²²³ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 263.

²²⁴ Robert Thurman, "Vajra Hermeneutics," *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, ed. D. Lopez, pp. 119-148.

²²⁵ R. Thurman, "Vajra Hermeneutics," pp. 131-132. A thorough explanation of the generation and completion stages are outside the scope of this study, and so I direct the reader to: H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tsong-ka-pa, and Jeffrey Hopkins *Deity Yoga: in Action and Performance Tantra*

each of the magical movements, engaging the practitioner in a transformation process. Each magical movement becomes the means for an utter remaking, including the subtlest spiritual level, the psychic, the emotional, and the grosser physical levels. It can lead to a total makeover that Eliade would describe as “a totally new existence,” from profane to sacred.²²⁶ Furthermore, this transformation, which is able to extend from the subtlest to the physical, is said to have the potentiality of changing not just oneself but others too, as will become clear in chapter three.

Mahāyāna Ethics

The dynamism that occurs in the body-*maṇḍala* is imbued with a Mahāyāna ethical dimension. When one practices for the benefit of all sentient beings one is at that moment in the center (*dkyil*) of the *maṇḍala*, and from there practicing for the benefit of all beings, the periphery (*‘khor*). Through the inner dynamism of these practices, the yogin’s perspective is freed into what, in Tibetan tantric parlance, is referred to as “pure vision” (*dag snang*):

To see the entire world around one as having the nature of the mandala is a form of ‘pure vision’ or *dagnang* opposed to the impure vision of ordinary life. The mandala vision is truer and more correct than the practitioner’s normal perception of reality. Everything in the external universe can be seen as an aspect of the

(Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1981), David Germano, “Dzogchen Mini-Encyclopedia,” Daniel Cozort, *Highest Yoga Tantra* and Sarah Harding, *Creation and Completion*, among others.

²²⁶ See M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 167ff. The sacred and profane are categories developed by Eliade (based on R. Otto, E. Durkheim and others) in his *The Sacred and Profane: The Nature of Religion*, San Diego, New York, and London: Harvest/HBJ, 1987 (rp. 1957 and 1959).

entities within the mandala and aspects of the external and internal reality.²²⁷

Samuel affirms that the completion stage of these practices is:

the directing of the energies into the central 'channel' of the body, which in Hindu Tantra was generally conceptualized as the ascent up the spinal column of Kuṇḍalinī, the coiled serpent at the base of the spine, [which in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition] is equated with the awakening and the ascent of bodhicitta.²²⁸

That awakening of the "mind of enlightenment" (*sems bskyed, bodhicitta*) to the altruistic impetus of the Mahāyāna tradition is with what Samuel calls "bodhi" orientation, or the emphasis on the goal of liberation or enlightenment with the intention to liberate all sentient beings. Samuel adds, "The bodhi orientation thus provides Buddhist Tantra with an inbuilt ethical parameter, which is on the whole absent from Hindu Tantra."²²⁹ As we will see below and further in the next chapter, the intention of practicing for the benefit of all sentient beings is very apparent in magical movement. This is especially depicted at the end of each movement, when the practitioner purifies not only his/her own obstacles, but also includes those obstacles of all sentient beings. By liberating all

²²⁷ G. Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, p. 236.

²²⁸ Ibid, p. 242. In tantra, *bodhicitta* can also be related to *thig le*, which can be translated as "mind-essences" or, in sexual practices, as "seminal-essences." Not denying that this might also be the case here, as some of the yogic and sexual practices can be related, I will focus here on the more "classic" meaning and more "sterilized" tantric understandings.

²²⁹ G. Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, p. 243.

obscurations in this way, the yogin has the perception that the whole universe is a Buddha dimension, and all beings in it are Buddhas, including oneself.

Maṇḍalas as Buddha Dimensions

Since *maṇḍalas* are also considered to be the palace of the deities or heightened states of mind, the performance of these yogic practices can elicit different enlightened or Buddha dimensions (*sku*). They thus provide a paradigm for the relation between ordinary sentient beings and Buddhas, or conventional to ultimate reality. Therefore, by engaging in these yogic practices, the yogi can produce that shift. For example, in *Mass of Fire*, Shardza writes that in channels-breaths practices one brings the air with one-pointed concentration (*sems gtad*) to each center. By allowing the air to move along and around (*gyi gyi kor kor*) each of the centers, one helps the manifestation of these *maṇḍalas* or Buddha dimensions to occur. He describes it as follows:²³⁰

- Crown center and throat center, together with the upward moving vital breath, are True Buddha Dimension (*bon sku*),
- Heart center²³¹ together with the life-force vital breath, are Complete Buddha Dimension (*rdzogs sku*),
- Navel center together with the fire and equanimity vital breaths, are Manifested Buddha Dimension (*sprul sku*),
- Channel-petals of the branches together with the pervasive [vital breath], are Essential Buddha Dimension (*ngo bo nyid sku*), and

²³⁰ Shardza, *Mass of Fire*, p. 29. This could also go together with the channels-breaths chart mentioned earlier (see appendix II, figure2).

²³¹ Note here that *snying* is used instead of *thugs*, Shardza, *Mass of Fire*, pp. 28 - 29.

- Secret center together with the downward moving and clearing [vital breath], are the Great Bliss Buddha Dimension (*bde chen po'i sku*).

In the same text, Shardza makes a parallel between the channels and the main three enlightened dimensions: the central channel as true dimension, the right channel as complete dimension, and the left channel as manifested dimension.²³²

The complete and the manifested dimensions can be thought to arise from or express the qualities of the true dimension. The true dimension is said to have no attributes; it is being, like the natural state of mind. From that state, all attributes can arise, like those of the completion and manifested dimensions.

From the practitioner's perspective, these yogic practices provide the methods to transform from the state of an ordinary sentient being into that of a Buddha. The practices use the secondary channels to eventually allow the yogi to abide in the central channel. Abiding in each energetic center along the central channel provides an experience of a different Buddha-realm, as we see from Shardza's description above. However, in order to abide in the central channel, the practitioner works with the secondary channels, which become the conduits for the cleansing of obstacles and bringing the right nutrients into the central channel, where they will eventually dissolve. In other words, it manifests into two (or more) channels and is then reabsorbed into one. This is a very simplified account of the dynamics of the generation and completion stages. In any tantric

practice, after the generation stage, there is a concluding stage where the practitioner dissolves himself or herself back into the center and finally into emptiness (*stong pa nyid*, *sunyata*). That center is the center of the *maṇḍala*, the state of mind when one is the center from which all can arise and into which all will eventually dissolve.²³³

IV. The Yogi's Dynamism

The subtle body is the yogi's field. In this field, the vital breath currents move through the channels and energetic centers, creating a certain dynamic. Here I will propose that in different yogic systems there are different dynamics in play. Therefore, I will first present the dynamic represented by the *kuṇḍalini*, about which White and others have already written, and then introduce another model that I will call the *maṇḍala*-dynamic.

White writes, "[t]he yogic body becomes the stage for the return of the absolute from existence to essence through the descent and ascent of the *kuṇḍalini*."²³⁴ Throughout *The Alchemical Body*, White finds points of convergence and overlap between what he calls the "pneumatic" and the "hydraulic" ways of

²³² Shardza, *Mass of Fire*, p. 29. Again, this is not unique to this text; other tantric texts from Buddhist and Bon traditions have similar correspondences.

²³³ David White dedicates much of his chapter eight ("Homologous Structures in the Alchemical Body") and part of chapter nine ("The Dynamics of Transformation of Siddha Alchemy") to what he calls the "withdrawal and return on the part of a cosmic yogin," and he explains how the work done by the yogin, as microcosm, affects the whole universe, the macrocosm. (D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 263). Tucci also devotes his chapter, "The *Maṇḍala* in the Human Body," to this issue (G. Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Maṇḍala*, pp. 108-133).

these *kuṇḍalinī* dynamics. In other words, the pneumatic runs by means of air and breath, while the hydraulic operates through, or like, fluids. White states that the yogin uses more the former and the alchemist more the latter, but “[t]he quest of the alchemist and that of the yogin are one and the same.”²³⁵ As we have seen, White qualifies that by saying that alchemy is an external method and that *haṭha* yoga and even channels-breaths practices—which he calls “channels and winds”—are internal methods, pneumatically working the breaths together with the mind through the channels, which “can lead to direct enlightenment.”²³⁶ Our bodies thus become a site of potentiality where the energetic landscapes of channels and energetic centers are not static but latently dynamic and craving to be awakened. White affirms:

In *haṭha yoga*, the principal motor behind the transformations...is a pneumatic one. It is wind...taking the form of controlled breathing, plays a crucial transformative role in the *haṭhayogic* system.²³⁷

The vital breath currents’ principal function, one could argue, is to promote this awakening. As Prabhkar Machwe asserts, the “[h]uman body has such morphogenetic fields of unrapped [*sic.*unwrapped] energy, which can be released and aroused by the appropriate contact.”²³⁸ In other words, as the vital

²³⁴ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 263.

²³⁵ Ibid, p. 263.

²³⁶ Ibid, p. 71.

²³⁷ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 45.

²³⁸ Prabhkar Machwe in the foreword of B. Bhattacharya's *The World of Tantra*, (New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1988), p. x.

breath currents come in contact with the subtle body and its energetic centers, the energy stored in each center can become released. The qualities related to that center are unwrapped and brought forth for the practitioner to use. Indologist Jean Varenne forewarns that, within the subtle body, the breath is directed to different areas, even though “Hindus know as well as we do that ‘material’ air penetrates no further than the lungs. Yet this internal circulation is of very highest importance since it determines the success or otherwise of the meditation.”²³⁹

Analyzing the Indian systems, Eliade, White, and other scholars²⁴⁰ emphasize the upward moving of the vital breath currents piercing through the various energetic centers, emerging through the fontanel of one’s head or crown center. This is what, inspired by David White, I refer to as the “*kuṇḍalini*-process.”²⁴¹ *Kuṇḍalini* is imagined as a serpent lying dormant in one’s secret energetic center. It is awakened by the vital breath current as it reaches and pierces that energetic center, and then hikes to the summit by piercing all the intermediate centers on its way. The victory of that ascent is expressed in a transformation that breaks the ties to mundane or samsaric existence and

²³⁹ Jean Varenne, *Yoga and the Hindu Tradition*, (translated by Derek Coltman, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 158.

²⁴⁰ See for example M. Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 245 – 249, David White, *The Alchemical Body*, pp. 290 – 294, and A. Avalon, *The Serpent Power*, p. 110, among others.

²⁴¹ “*Kuṇḍalini* beyond yogas: a spring to immortality/enlightenment,” an unpublished paper I wrote for David White’s “Hindu Tantra” course at The University of Virginia, Spring 1996.

transmutes “into an energy of pure consciousness.”²⁴² He who makes this his “permanent abode and can lead his energy there at will, attains to liberation while still living.”²⁴³ This is what I call the *kuṇḍalini* dynamics.

White asserts that, through the breath control or *prāṇāyāma*, the base of the central channel is opened, which is identical to what we will also see in the magical movement’s text. Thus, White writes:

it is ultimately breath, breathing in and breathing out, that unites the microcosm to the macrocosm. It is for this reason in particular that breath control plays such a paramount role in the entire yogic enterprise.²⁴⁴

He describes the *kuṇḍalini* model of breath control or *prāṇāyāma* as follows: “It is by pumping up and thereby emptying the two peripheral subtle channels, the *idā* and the *piṅgalā*, that the theretofore empty *suṣumṇā* suddenly becomes filled with the subtle breath or life force (*prāṇa*) to become the yogin’s internal upward-tending channel to liberation.”²⁴⁵ White’s analysis of *haṭha* yoga’s *kuṇḍalini* dynamics is an important foundation to understanding the dynamics of magical movements.

²⁴² A. Avalon, *The Serpent Power*, p. 29.

²⁴³ A. Avalon, *The Serpent Power*, p. 31. Called *jivanmukti*, it is a crucial concept in Indian tantric thought. For more on *jivanmukt*, see David White, *The Alchemical Body*, pp. 142 – 174, as well as the exceptional work of Andrew Fort, *Jivanmukti transformation: Embodied liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedanta*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998.

²⁴⁴ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, p. 46. White is also marking the similarities and distinguishing them from the alchemical transformation yogic system, based on fluids rather than air.

²⁴⁵ D. White, *The Alchemical Body*, 226.

Mandala-Dynamics

The body as a *maṇḍala* is more than a structure in magical movement. It hosts and also affects the dynamics of the vital breath currents within the subtle body. In the same way that the *kuṇḍalinī* metaphor describes the pneumatic (and in some cases hydraulic) dynamics of *haṭha* yoga, that model will have a place in, but not encompass the totality of the dynamism of magical movement. I will call the dynamism operating in magical movement *maṇḍala*-dynamics. In other words, magical movement shares the *kuṇḍalinī* dynamic to a certain extent, especially in channels-breaths practices as the practitioner works with the energetic centers all along the central channel, as seen earlier. However, the upward thrust and piercing of the energetic centers by the vital breath currents is not emphasized. In my view, magical movement operates under a slightly different paradigm or model that I will be calling here *maṇḍala*-dynamics. I would also argue that *maṇḍala*-dynamics supports the philosophical view that the magical movement texts studied here propound.

Moving the Gears

In channels-breaths practices and in magical movement, the principal motor behind the transformation is pneumatic, as it is in *haṭha* yoga. By this, I mean that, through the power of the breath that carries the mind, changes can occur at the physical, energetic and cognitive levels. In channels-breaths practices and magical movement, after the initial inhalation, breath is held as one executes

one of the movements. As the breath is still, the mind riding on it is also still. It is still in a particular way, however, where, during the performance of each movement, there is no inhalation and exhalation. In spite of this, the vital breath currents continue their internal flow. In each movement of the channels-breaths practices, the corresponding vital breath current takes a particular shape according to the particular energetic center where it is working.²⁴⁶ In magical movement, it is the pervasive vital breath current (*khyab rlung*) that slowly and smoothly keeps distributing throughout the whole body. As the body moves following one of the magical movements, it guides that pervasive vital breath current into different areas that need to be unblocked. This means that each magical movement is designed to carry the vital breath current into different areas so that they can be unblocked and clear. The mind is at rest, and the yogin can integrate the body movement to keep releasing obstacles and allow the mind to continue abiding in its natural state. This is also the meaning behind integrating one's actions, mentioned in chapter one.

In channels-breaths practices from the *Mother Tantra*, as the breath and mind get to a particular energetic center, they display the specific form that we have seen as subtle movement of light, described by Shardza in *Mass of Fire*.²⁴⁷ In my own imagination, each time the vital breath current arrives to the energetic

²⁴⁶ As shown above, different shapes are produced as each of the five vital breath currents arrives at its related energetic center.

²⁴⁷ See Shardza's earlier description of the vital breath currents.

center it “kisses” the sleeping *kuṇḍalini* beauty and awakens it. As the vital breath current makes contact with an energetic center, the latent energy there awakens. Some need more than just a kiss to awaken, and the movements help in that regard too. Said differently, each magical movement guides the vital breath currents to different energetic centers and areas of the body. The continuous movement stirs and shakes the vital breath currents in those areas, so the movement and the pressure of that vital breath current working in the specific area can clear the blockages away. The *Mother Tantra* images of the umbrella, jewel, wheel, sun rays and bellows in each of the energetic centers, as we have seen earlier, are the displayed *maṇḍalas* at each center, with their respective yellow, white, red, green and blue colors.

In all magical movements, the breath is pervasive. Thus, it follows the same dynamics as the pervasive channels-breaths movement from the *Mother Tantra*: as the breath together with the mind arrive at the union of the channels, the vital breath current spreads like green rays of light to the rest of the body. Each of the magical movements then guides that vital breath current to a particular area and helps open blockages and clear obstacles. I equate this image of the rays of the sun at the energetic center of the union of the channels in magical movements to the display of the *maṇḍala*-dynamics movement outwards, spreading from the center to the periphery, from the energetic center of the union of the channels to the whole body.

The body movement itself could also be conceived as a particular *maṇḍala* display, where the impetus of the vital breath current pulsates the torso, head and limbs, allowing the body to become a distinct form, or the *maṇḍala* of that particular magical movement. If we allow ourselves to picture the *maṇḍala* displays in the way described above, these Tibetan yogic practices can be said to express this *maṇḍala*-dynamism by following the dynamics of the pervasive vital breath current from its center at the union of the channels to its radiating to the rest of the body. For each movement, there is an external manifestation of the physical movement as a body-*maṇḍala* and a distinct internal *maṇḍala* following the pattern of the vital breath current. The pneumatic dynamic here follows a centrifugal-centripetal movement from the center to the periphery and is reabsorbed back to the center. And yet, the ascendant-descendant dynamic of the *kuṇḍalini* model is not totally absent either. The center of this dynamism may shift along the central channel. It is thus not just one *maṇḍala* in motion at each time, but it opens the possibility of multiple interacting *maṇḍalas*.²⁴⁸

These *maṇḍalas*, literally from Tibetan center (*dkyil*) and periphery (*'khor*), sometimes function one at a time and sometimes simultaneously. In channels-breaths practices, one works one *maṇḍala* at a time.²⁴⁹ Having trained each *maṇḍala* individually through channels-breaths practices, in magical movement

²⁴⁸ I am grateful to Anne Klein for her comments during our discussion of this material, Houston TX, January 2005.

one works with many *maṇḍalas* simultaneously, by means of the pervasive vital breath current reaching to multiple energetic centers. Understanding these dynamics, Silburn's translation of *cakra* as "whirling centers" is very appealing, and so these *maṇḍalas* are whirling simultaneously, waking up different parts of the yogin's body.²⁵⁰ Said simply, many inner *maṇḍalas* of the different energetic centers can be awakened and, at the same time, help shape the *maṇḍala* of the body as a whole. As the pervasive vital breath current spreads within the body guided by each of the magical movements, there is unison in the whirling of the different centers involved. This should become clearer as the explanation of magical movement unfolds in the next chapter.

Radiating Maṇḍalas

So, as the vital breath currents enter each one of the energetic centers, they stimulate each of them to whirl, creating *maṇḍalas* expressed in the body as form, with breath as energy and mind as light. Tenzin Rinpoche's book title, *Healing with Form, Energy and Light*, conveys this clearly; however, I should note that Tenzin Rinpoche does not describe them as *maṇḍalas*. Inspired by Thurman's descriptions of the subtle body generation and completion stages as "artistic techniques,"²⁵¹ one could also think of each process of these *maṇḍala* representations as being a different kaleidoscope. Think, for example, of

²⁴⁹ Except for the upward moving vital breath current movement, where the throat and the crown energetic centers are engaged.

²⁵⁰ See Lillian Silburn, *Kuṇḍalini: the energy of the depths* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY, 1988), p. 25.

watching a kaleidoscope and all the variegated forms displayed, always emerging from a center point. Every time we rotate our kaleidoscopic body, the kaleidoscopic manifestation or display changes, and then it dissolves or is transformed into another one. So, the manifestations change as the yogin performs the different magical movements, but the return is always to the center. Nevertheless, after each magical movement or *maṇḍala* display, the coming back to the center may feel different, possibly each time feeling more comfortable in that natural state of mind, which is sometimes also called “home.”²⁵²

The *mahāyāna* impetus mentioned above takes particular importance at this stage of the practice. Understanding not just the body and subtle dimensions as *maṇḍalas*, but also the universe as the macrocosmic *maṇḍala*, the rays of the pervasive vital breath current spread from the center to the periphery, with the altruistic intention of the mind of enlightenment not only to every organ, cell, pore, breath, mind and so forth, but also to all sentient beings. With each magical movement, the display of the *maṇḍala* can be slightly different, shaped by the body and by how the body guides the vital breath currents and mind. However, we can say that the model is the same for all the 39 movements that will be explained in the next chapter. That is, a pneumatic display begins at the union of

²⁵¹ R. Thurman, “Vajra Hermeneutics,” p. 132.

²⁵² Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche uses the metaphor of “home” for the state of being or returning to one’s natural state of mind. In many Dzogchen teachings, the home is the mother (*ma*) and one’s awareness is the son (*bu*), coming back to the mother’s lap (See for example, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Wonders of the Natural Mind*, Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press, 1993 pp. 121-122).

the channels and spreads in all directions like sunrays throughout all the main and secondary channels that carry vital breath currents. Taking it a step further, we could say that the intention of performing this for all sentient being becomes ingrained in every cell and minute particles of the body, energy and mind so that the transformation, after years (or lives) of practice, can be radical. Presumably, that is the ontological shift from a sentient being to a Buddha.

The dissolution of the completion stage is also crucial to this dynamism. In magical movement of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, there seems to be a shift of center at that concluding point. Although one could say that the sunrays return through the same channels and even specifically back to the two secondary channels, then to the central channels and finally to the union of the channels, there is also a sense that the return is to the heart energetic center instead. As one performs the various magical movements with the power of the vital breath currents and the focusing of the mind, gross and subtle obstacles are released. Hence, the sensation of the physical body becomes less solid, and the subtle dimension comes to the forefront. The center of the subtle dimension is the heart center. So, as one begins a magical movement, one focuses in the center of the physical body (i.e., the union of the channels, four fingers below the navel), which is the center of the generation stage of the *maṇḍala*. However, as one concludes the movement and exhales, one releases obstacles and feels more connected to the subtle

dimension. Therefore, the dissolution that results in the completion stage is into the center of the subtle dimension: the heart.

In discussing this with Ponlob Thinley Nyima, he mentioned that the heart is usually considered the center in the meditative state. He said, “the dissolving is in the heart,” and added that the “mind is in the body but the special connection is the heart.”²⁵³ Based on our discussion on the *Mother Tantra*, especially in the chapter of the “Sphere of True Nature” (*Bon nyid thig le*),²⁵⁴ we came to the conclusion that there is a shift in the center of the body-*maṇḍala*. Forasmuch as the pervasive vital breath current begins spreading from the energetic center at the union of the channels, after its full manifestation, it dissolves at the heart.²⁵⁵

Also, in reference to the expansion to all sentient beings, or the macrocosmic *maṇḍala*, the following chapter of the *Mother Tantra*, “Never Waning Sphere” (*Mi nub thig le*),²⁵⁶ describes nine kinds of vital breath currents that begin at the heart, with the subtlest “vital breath of true nature” (*bon nyid gyi rlung*), and end with the full manifestation and dissolution of the whole universe

²⁵³ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, April 2005.

²⁵⁴ *Mother Tantra*, pp. 317 – 355. 332. I want to especially thank Ponlob here for discussing with me in this manner that is not along the lines of how the Tibetans do, and yet he expressed that he was happy to do so, finding it fruitful. He added that, in the dialectic school, questioning is thoroughly encouraged, although usually would take a different style.

²⁵⁵ Ponlob pointed out specifically where this “Sphere of True Nature” chapter refers to the grosser manifestation arising from the navel and the subtler from the heart, *Mother Tantra*, p. 332.

²⁵⁶ *Mother Tantra*, pp. 357 – 376.

of this time, with the “era-destroying vital breath” (*kal pa'i jigs rlung*).²⁵⁷ In other words, through the power of the pervasiveness of the vital breath currents, there is a connection from the subtlest, one’s natural state of mind, to the grossest, the whole universe. I believe this would be in concordance with White’s contention that the transformation process of the yogin microcosm affects (and probably is being affected by) the universal forces of the macrocosm.

In brief, I see the *maṇḍala*-dynamism that underlies these magical movements as beginning at the energetic center of the union of the channels, with the pervasive vital breath current and neutral holding, manifesting from there in different shapes guided by the different magical movements and dissolving after the exhalation with *ha* and *phat* at the heart center. There, the yogin rests naturally in that state of mind and in that way is in contact with all sentient beings. As mentioned earlier, when the *maṇḍala*-dynamic is at work, the *kuṇḍalinī* ascent is not totally absent. The pervasive vital breath currents spread into all directions like sunrays, from the center to the periphery, but upwards is quite prevalent. In their spreading, these vital breath currents provoke other energetic centers to whirl, and different experiences may manifest different *maṇḍalas*, different kaleidoscopic displays.

At the completion stage of the dissolution, there can be a total transformation from profane to sacred, as Eliade would say. And as long as one

²⁵⁷ *Mother Tantra*, p. 366. See appendix II, figure 3 for the list of these nine kinds of vital breath

is able to remain in that expanding state (*rgyas*), which has been purified (*sangs*) of external, internal and secret obscurations, one (and all sentient beings) can be in the Buddha (*sangs rgyas*) *maṇḍala*. When that experience fades, one is back to *saṃsāra*, but one would think that every time with more cleansing like the bottle cleansed with water and with more familiarity to that meditative state so that one can remain longer in it. That transformation can then be said to have affected every fiber, cell maybe even DNA, physically energetically and spiritually. This subtler dimension seems to emerge from within the physical body, but without the need to totally shed from it. In other words, a refining of the body that allows the subtle dimensions to be “interposed within” the physical body.²⁵⁸

I hope that this chapter of the dissertation has provided enough of a theoretical framework that can ease our understanding of magical movement and its dynamism. Therefore, I will now move specifically to the magical movement of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*.

currents.

²⁵⁸ Borrowing the term from Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature*, p. 57, as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Chapter 3.

Texts and Lamas: Interweaving Textual and Oral Wisdom

In *Commentary*, Shardza provides a very clear and systematic presentation of the ZZ *Oral Transmission*'s magical movements. In fact, this is the primary magical movement text studied by the main Bönpo monastic centers and lay communities.²⁵⁹ Therefore, although *Quintessential Instructions* predates Shardza's *Commentary*, I focus my discussion here on *Commentary* and draw from *Quintessential Instructions* (and sometimes from *Experiential Transmission*) as appropriate,²⁶⁰ complemented by oral instructions that I received from contemporary Bönpo lamas.²⁶¹ I will also add some of my own interpretation drawn from my own experiential and phenomenological reflections in order to make it more intelligible to the reader.

According to Shardza's *Commentary*, there are thirty-nine magical movements organized into four categories or cycles:²⁶² foundational (*sngon 'gro*), root (*rtsa ba*), branch (*yan lag*), and special or auxiliary branches (*bye brag*). The

²⁵⁹ The two Bön monastic institutions in exile that provide geshe (*dge shes*) degrees, Menri and Tritan Norbutse, rely upon *Commentary* as the main manual for practicing magical movements, although they also study *Quintessential Instructions*, *Mass of Fire*, and the sections on magical movements included in *Instructions on the A (A khrid)* tradition. Other minor monastic institutions in exile, as well as Bönpo lay communities, mainly use Shardza's *Commentary* and *Mass of Fire*. As mentioned earlier, in Shar pa, Amdo (T.A.R), there is a female group of monastic and lay practitioners following Shardza's texts too.

²⁶⁰ I will thus mention when Shardza's *Commentary* diverts significantly from the earlier version (on which it is based) and will provide a full translation of both texts in appendix III.

²⁶¹ I received oral instructions on all the movements from the various Bönpo lamas mentioned before.

²⁶² The text itself does not give a name to this four-fold categorization.

foundational cycle consists of only one magical movement set or group of movements, but each of the subsequent cycles is subdivided into two sets. This makes a total of seven sets within those four cycles, illustrated as follows:²⁶³

1. Foundational (323.3)

2. Root (326.2)

2.a Root magical movement set [among root cycle] (326.2)

2.b Magical movement set that Clears away obstacles (330.1)

3. Branch (333.2)

3.a Root [or Principal Branch magical movement set] (333.2)

3.b [Branch magical movement set that] Clear away obstacles
(335.5)

4. Special (338.3)

4.a Special magical movement set that clears away individual obstacles from the head, the body and the limbs (338.3)

4.b Special [magical movement set] that clears Common obstacles away (340.3)

The foundational cycle begins by training the vital breath currents to flow through the channels and by warming up the body through a series of energetic massages of the head, legs, arms, torso and lower body. The root cycle consists of a main, or root, magical movement set that helps enhance and maintain a relaxed and clear meditative state of mind, followed by a magical movement set that clears away physical, emotional or mental obscurations. Similarly, the branch cycle is divided into two sets: one that enhances meditation and the other that clears obscurations away. The special branch cycle is divided a little differently.

²⁶³ The numbers in parenthesis, indicate the page in *Commentary*.

Its first set consists of a group of magical movements that, as in the foundational cycle, clear away obscurations from different parts of the body. Its second set harmonizes body, energy and mind by clearing away common obscurations of the whole mind-energy-body system.²⁶⁴ After describing each set, the benefits of the movements are explained, sometimes as a whole set and at other times movement by movement.

As I mentioned in chapter 1, most of the masters that designed or compiled these magical movements lived around the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Six²⁶⁵ masters of the *ZZ Oral Transmission* are known to have designed or compiled the seven magical movement sets. They are mentioned both in the *Quintessential Instructions* and in *Commentary* as follows:

1. Pongyal Tsenpo (*Dpon rgyal Btsan po* alias *Dpon rgyal Chen po*) compiled the foundational cycle and the root set of the root cycle;
2. Togme Shigpo (*Rtog med shig po*) compiled the set of magical movements that clear obscurations from the root cycle;
3. Lhundrub Muthur (*Lhun grub mu thur*) compiled both sets of the branch cycle;
4. Orgom Kundul (*'Or sgom kun 'dul*) compiled the first set of the special cycle;

²⁶⁴ A schema of this division can be see below in the text's outline section.

²⁶⁵ We can think of five or six, depending on whether we count Yangton Chenpo (*Yang ston Chen po*) among those who designed part of a set or just transmitted it to his son, Bumje Od (*'Bum rje 'od*). As we will see later, both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Commentary* mention Yangton Chenpo as a transmitter of the first part of the seventh set, but it is Bumje Od who remains the chief composer of that set.

5. Yangton Chenpo (*Yang ston Chen po* alias *Yang ston Shes rab rgyal mtshan*) compiled the first three movements of the last set, transmitting them to his son;

6. Bumje Od (*'Bum rje 'od*) compiled the rest of that last set.

These masters appear to have had a direct teacher-student relationship with each other, except for Lhundrub Muthur and Orgom Kundul.²⁶⁶ Although it is difficult to date the lifetimes of these teachers, Yangton Chenpo is said to have lived at the end of the eleventh century.²⁶⁷ With that in mind, Pongyal Tsenpo, the first of these masters, is likely dated around the tenth century. Bumje Od, being the last of these masters, possibly compiled all the sets into cycles and put them together as a text. Although there is no direct evidence for this claim, he is said to have integrated the teachings he received from his father Yangton Chenpo and his other master, Orgom Kundul into a “grand compendium,” which is how “the present corpus of texts belonging to the Zhang-zhung Nyan-gyud largely came into their present form.”²⁶⁸ In other words, Bumje Od, together with his father, compiled the different texts within *ZZ Oral Transmission*

²⁶⁶ It is not clear if they actually even met; however, both are part of the group of five masters of the *Listening Transmission's* Lower Tradition (*smad lugs*), whose transmission was “purely oral, called the ‘Transmission of the Experience’ (*NyG* [for *Nyams brgyud*])” (Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, Bangkok, Thailand: Orchid Press, 1998, p. xvii). In Tibetan *Nyams su myong ba'i man ngag gi brgyud pa* (Ibid, Bibliography, p. 111), *vis a vis* the Upper Tradition (*stod lugs*), which “was a written one and known as the ‘Transmission of the Word’ (*KG* [for *Bka'brgyud*]) and is what Gyerpung [*Snang bzher lod po*] is thought to have received from Tapi Hritsa [*Ta pi hri tsa*].” (Ibid, p. xvii) Both traditions come together again with Yangton Chenpo (Ibid, p. xvii).

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. xvii. Karmay adds supporting evidence for that date, stating that Yangton Chenpo had studied Buddhism from Bari Lotsawa, who was born in 1040 CE

²⁶⁸ John Myrdhin Reynolds, *The Oral Tradition from Zhang-Zhung*, (Kathmandu, Nepal: Vajra Publications, 2005), p. 178.

to make it into its present form, but it is not totally clear if he also compiled all the different magical movement sets to make *Quintessential Instructions*. Based on the chronology of the masters involved in it and Bumje Od's compiling the larger corpus, I believe he did. Ponlob Thinley Nyima also agrees with this speculation.²⁶⁹ This being the case, since Bumje Od was Yangton Chenpo's son and direct disciple, *Quintessential Instructions* could logically be placed, as I argue in the introduction, around the late eleventh or early twelfth century.

ZZ Oral Transmission Text(s), and Interpretations

Here I elucidate the movements described in these texts (for their translation, please see appendix III).

Commentary's title clearly indicates that Shardza's text is a commentary on *Quintessential Instructions*. It also tells us that it is part of *The Very Profound Sky Great Treasury*, which is one of Shardza's five compilations or "Treasures."²⁷⁰ I find the homage of the text particularly meaningful:

²⁶⁹ The texts do not specify the overall author or compiler of all cycles, and the living teachers of the tradition have no answer to this either. Ponlob Thinley Nyima narrates the story of Yangton Chenpo transmitting all the Experiential Transmission teachings to his son Bumje Od, who, after receiving them, put them down in writing and most likely included the magical movements (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston April 2005). He added that the circumstances in which this occurred and the important role of *Ama Jong lcam*, Bumje Od's mother, is an interesting story that is narrated in Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. 43, translated from "Life-stories of the Masters (*Bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*), pp. 106 – 107, which has the biographies of the masters of the *Listening Transmission* up to its author, Pa Ten-Gyal Zangpo, who compiled it in 1419 (Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. 7).

²⁷⁰ The others are *Lek shed mdzod*, *Sde snod mdzod* (includes 'dul ba'i sden snod, ngong ba'i sde snod, mdzod kyi sde snod), *Lung rig mdzod* and *Dying rig mdzod*. *Self-Dawning* is not part of the treasures but a separate volume. Shardza's complete works are in 13 volumes.

Homage to the Ever-Excellent One (*Kun tu bzang po*), who clears the outer and inner²⁷¹ interruptions (*bar chod*).²⁷²

Buddhist and Bönpo texts typically begin with an homage. Although they can be as simple as honoring one's personal master or the lineage, in doing so they reveal important information for the reader. This homage is the aspiration to the state of the "Ever-Excellent One,"²⁷³ one's own natural state of mind, which is a classic Dzogchen homage. It also reveals something about the topic by stating that one can be in that state by clearing away the external, internal and secret obstacles. These are, respectively, illnesses (*nad*), afflictions (*gdon*) and subtle mental disturbances (*sgrib*).

After the title and homage, Shardza's *Commentary* describes the division in cycles and sets, as shown in the above schema. In other words, practicing these magical movement cycles, the yogin can clear away illnesses, afflictions and mental disturbances, and thus aspire to rest in his/her natural state of mind, which is equated to the state of the Ever-Excellent One.

Preparation: Channels, Vital Breath Currents and Magical Movement

As seen in chapter 2, the understanding of the subtle body or dimension and its elements is crucial to the effectiveness of the performance of magical movement. *Quintessential Instructions* emphasizes the importance of "preparing

²⁷¹ Secret interruptions are included within the inner, asserts Ponlob Thinley Nyima (personal communication, Houston, October 2002).

²⁷² *Quintessential Instructions* p. 632.

the pathways of the channels, [by] purifying the channels and vital breath currents."²⁷⁴ *Commentary*, making it more explicit, describes:²⁷⁵

Regarding rooting out poisons associated with the vital breath currents and training the channels, [first] forcefully expel the coarse breath current through the right [channel/nostril], [and then] leisurely inhale long breath currents through the left [channel/nostril].

Here the practitioner becomes familiar with his/her subtle body, gaining the capacity to fully engage in the practices. Through the training of the vital breath currents, the practitioner guides the breath via the channels in what White would call a pneumatic way. With powerful exhalations and nurturing inhalations, the practitioner clears away the obstacles that are the poisons that impede the flow of the vital breath currents. In other words, the channels are paths for both the vital breath currents and the mind, which together flow like a horse and the rider on it. When the mind is distracted by one of the afflictions, when the vital breath current is interrupted by one of the illnesses, or when there are spirit-provoked obstacles, the vital breath currents cannot flow in the proper way—together with the mind, through the channels. This is why the rooting out of the poisons is key, and sometimes kept somewhat secret too. *Commentary* explains, “this is the method for rooting away poisons of the vital breath currents; [direct] oral

²⁷³ This will be my translation for the primordial being *Kun tu bzang po* (Tibetan) or *Samantabhadra* (Sanskrit), which is also a metaphor for one’s primordial or natural state of mind.

²⁷⁴ *Quintessential Instructions* 632.2-632.3.

²⁷⁵ *Commentary* 322.2-322.3. Here *gzhung du* means “later” or “as follows” (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Houston, August 2003).

explanation from a teacher [is needed]."²⁷⁶ This underscores the importance of oral commentary mentioned in the introduction. Although instructions are provided in the text, it is not advised to practice them just on the basis of reading a text. Instead, one should receive oral explanations from an authorized teacher, giving one the key to open the door to one's experiences. Furthermore, most Tibetans would not even look at such a text without having an appropriate introduction and instruction to it by a lama or master.²⁷⁷

In the training of the vital breath currents that follows, *Quintessential Instructions* states that the practitioner needs to be "holding the neutral (*ma ning*) [vital breath current] pervasively (*khyab par*) through one's entire body."²⁷⁸ In *Commentary*, Shardza emphasizes that this vital breath current "is the actual basic vital breath current."²⁷⁹ Stated simply, but not lightly, the neutral holding that allows the vital breath currents to pervade throughout the entire body is employed in every magical movement. As we saw in chapter 2, it is precisely this

²⁷⁶ *Commentary* 322.3. Here I am translating "oral" for *zhal*, literally "from mouth," and can be understood to be the counterpart of "listening" (*snyan*) within the orality process referred to earlier.

²⁷⁷ This entails not just the instruction, but the triad of instruction (*'khrid*), oral transmission (*lung*) and initiation (*dbang*). For example, Ponlob explains that since many yogis of the *Listening Transmission* had *Meri* as their tantric deity, the initiation to that deity is considered important to receive the blessings of those teachings. In that way, the practitioner purifies body, speech and mind, and thus diminishes the external, internal, and secret interruptions or obstacles. Ponlob adds that the foundational practices are important first in order to become "a suitable vessel" (*snod du rung ba*) and not let the fruits of the practice get "rotten" (*rul pa*). Therefore, the best sequence to receive these as a practitioner is: foundational practices, initiation, transmission, and instructions (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston April 2005).

²⁷⁸ *Quintessential Instructions* 632.3 (cited in *Commentary* 322.4). *Quintessential Instructions* does not divide the neutral breath in three.

²⁷⁹ *Commentary* 322.4. Underlining is mine, to emphasize it.

kind of vital breath current that creates the *maṇḍala*-dynamic in every magical movement. Furthermore, Shardza adds that this neutral holding needs to be trained through a tripartite process: “the smooth inner breath current [holding] (*‘jam rlung*), the intermediate inner breath current [holding] (*bar rlung*), and the coarse vital breath (*rtsub rlung*), or forceful vital breath [holding] (*drag rlung*).”²⁸⁰ This is not mentioned in *Quintessential Instructions*, and while *Commentary* mentions the three holdings, it does not explain them. So, what does a practitioner do? Ask the lama. Shardza, however, does explain the three breath holdings further in another text, *Mass of Fire*. There, citing continuously from the *Mother Tantra*, Shardza describes the smooth holding as a “basket” (*za ma rtog*), the intermediate as a “vase” (*bum pa can*) and the forceful as “mass of fire” (*me dpung ma*).²⁸¹

Ponlob Thinley Nyima says students and practitioners are directed to other texts, such as the *Mother Tantra* and *Self-Dawning*, which also contains *Mass of Fire*, besides receiving personal guidance from the teacher.²⁸² Thus, in *Commentary*, Shardza continues his explanation of the vital breath currents training saying, “all three, the smooth, coarse, and middle [holdings] are done in four sessions, inhaling and exhaling 108 times in each of the four. At the end of

²⁸⁰ Ibid, 322.4 - 323.1.

²⁸¹ *Mass of Fire*, pp. 39+.

²⁸² Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Menri monastery, India, February 2002.

these perform the magical movements.”²⁸³ The explanation of how to reach 108 and so forth is elucidated further in *Mass of Fire*, as well as in Shardza’s auto commentary of it, *Main Points*.²⁸⁴ The line drawing in appendix III depicts the posture in which the preparation of channels and vital breath currents is performed.²⁸⁵

Once the yogin completes the preparation of the channels and vital breath currents, he can then begin the magical movement *per sei*.²⁸⁶ What follows in the succeeding sections is the explanation of the movements, cycle by cycle.

I.Cycle1: Foundational Magical Movement Cycle.²⁸⁷

The foundational cycle consists of a single magical movement set. In *Commentary*, Shardza clearly states that, although the foundational movements are explained as six in *Quintessential Instructions*, according to oral explanation

²⁸³ *Commentary* 323.1-323.2.

²⁸⁴ *Main Points* pp. 281-319. In p. 282 it provides its full name: *Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar gyi rtsa rlung thig le zhal shes dogs sel cung zang ‘bri ba la thun mong gtum mo’i nyams len shes pa’i thun mong*, and thus it could also be called “Clearing Doubts.” *Mass of Fire* (pp. 39 – 41) describes, for each of the three holdings, the points of the body (*lus nad*) or the posture in which one should sit for that practice, the points of the breath (*rlung nad*) or the way one should guide and hold one’s breath and the points of the mind’s focus (*dmigs pa’i gnad*) or the way in which one focuses the mind’s attention to focus or uses a particular visualization. The purpose of these holdings is to develop the inner heat, which as mentioned before is sometimes considered a prerequisite for magical movements. This is a more tantric approach, and perhaps for this reason does not appear in *Quintessential Instructions*.

²⁸⁵ This illustrates the soft holding inner breath current (see preparatory breath posture in appendix III). This whole breath training could be compared to what in Indian yogas is called *prāṇayāma* (“training of the breath”).

²⁸⁶ As we will see in chapter 4, different curricula prescribe the above training in slightly different ways, varying on the time the practitioner has to develop them.

(*zhal shes*),²⁸⁸ they are condensed into the following five: “Purification of the Head (*mgo sbyang*), Purification of the Legs (*rkang sbyang*), Purification of the Arms (*lag sbyang*), Purification of the Upper Torso (*stod sbyang*), and Purification of the Lower Part [of the body] (*smad sbyang*).”²⁸⁹ However, as Ponlob Thinley Nyima demonstrated, when practiced from *Quintessential Instructions*, practitioners do all six parts as one single magical movement in the style of an “energetic massage” including all six parts of the body.²⁹⁰

Shardza thus takes a hermeneutical approach with the foundational cycle.

In re-interpreting the six ambiguous foundational magical movements from

²⁸⁷ *Commentary* 323.3.

²⁸⁸ It is unclear the source of these oral explanations, i.e., if they come from Shardza’s own teacher or from earlier ones. Furthermore, Ponlob Thinley Nyima points out that *zhal shes* in this context should actually be *zhal las shes*, meaning “oral wisdom or explication” from a lama. This can be confusing in *Commentary*, since the text itself refers to *Quintessential Instructions* as *zhal shes* when citing from it. Ponlob unequivocally asserts that *zhal shes* should refer to *Quintessential Instructions* and *zhal las shes* to oral explanation by a lama, and thus this is clearly a mistake in *Commentary* here, and it should be *zhal las shes* (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Houston, August 2003).

²⁸⁹ *Commentary* 323.3 – 323.4 for the listing, followed by the description ending in 326.2. Shardza’s explanation is a welcome clarification for practitioners. While in *Quintessential Instructions* the foundational cycle seems solely a preparation for the main three cycles that follow, in *Commentary* it is not a simple preparation, but is actually one of the magical movement cycles. Shardza makes a clear distinction between each movement within this initial set. In other words, the six stages mentioned in *Quintessential Instructions* seem more of a single magical movement with six parts, rather than six distinct magical movements.

²⁹⁰ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Houston, TX, August 2003, and April 2005. In the first of these two visits, he carefully followed the six stages articulated in *Quintessential Instructions* (i.e., head, body, right leg, left leg, right arm and left arm), aiming to highlight the parts of the text where one part ended and the other began. However, he also mentioned then, and confirmed in the latter visit, that the distinction was not clear in *Quintessential Instructions* and that we were fortunate to have clear commentaries such as Shardza’s, as well as oral commentaries from living teachers. In effect, contemporary Bönpo teachers, monks and practitioners, have shown them to me in several occasions as being all one continuous massage-like movement of the whole body, including head and limbs (Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, personal instructions Charlottesville, VA, June 1994 and Chongtul Rinpoche, Houston, TX, October 2002, among others).

Quintessential Instructions and crafting out the five distinct magical movements he describes in *Commentary*, he brings clear meaning to the practitioner. I will continue then, following Shardza's five foundational magical movements.

The Foundational Magical Movement Set.

Beginning with the purification of the head magical movement, this initial cycle is designed to purify obstacles of different parts of the body, with a succession of purificatory massage-like magical movements. Having previously done the preparation of the subtle body through the training of the channels and vital breath currents described above, the practitioner now works on the physical body as a tool towards purification.

The beginning posture is the cross-legged meditation posture (*skyil krung*), which, also called swastika (*g.yung drung*) or *vajra* (*rdo rje*), can sometimes mean full lotus (legs totally crossed) or half-lotus (one leg on top of the other—see drawing in appendix III).²⁹¹ Many of the movements begin in the cross-legged posture, which is said to have many benefits such as:

- supporting the generation of heat by having the legs crossed into one's body;
- allowing the vital breath currents to flow smoothly through the body by keeping the spine straight; maintaining alertness by keeping the chest open "like an eagle soaring in the sky;"
- reducing thoughts' elaboration by keeping the neck slightly bent forward; keeping the mind clear by gazing with one's eyes slightly open looking naturally forward; and

²⁹¹ *Skyil krung* can sometimes mean half-lotus, or full lotus, also called *g.yung drung* or *vajra* (Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima and Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Menri monastery, February 2002).

- by keeping the hands in the position of equipoise--resting comfortably, palms up on the lap, left upon right, about four finger widths below the navel--helps generate bliss.²⁹²

i. Purification of the Head

In this posture, with the breath held in the natural way, together with the mind, in the purification of the head magical movement, one begins by rubbing one's hands on top of one head. With the heated hands, one sweeps downwardly along the right, left and front of the head in order to help direct the pervasive vital breath currents and clear away any obstacles of the head in the pneumatic way described earlier.

In other words, as one feels contact with one's obstacles, be it physical illnesses, emotional or mental obstructions, or spirit's provocations (*gdon*), one sweeps away the obstacles by means of the posture, the heated hands and the vital breath currents guided by them. To conclude the movement, Shardza writes:

In order to send out the illnesses and harmful disturbances from afflictive obstructions and spirits, sound *ha* and, stirring from the depths of cyclic existence, while at the same time shaking the body and limbs, reflect on all sentient beings as Buddhas sounding *phat*.²⁹³

²⁹² Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. *Nyam Gyud Ngöndro: The Experiential Transmission* [of Drugyalwa Yungdrung] *Part I: Ngöndro*. Ed. by Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Stephen Dignan, Charlottesville, VA: Ligmincha Institute, 1998, p. 7. And Tenzin Rinpoche's own oral commentary, Charlottesville Virginia, and Houston, TX from 1996 to 1998.

²⁹³ *Commentary* 324.1 - 2.

It is clear that the combination of the physical posture, the mind's focus and the guidance of the vital breath currents has the power to release external, internal and secret obstacles, not just for oneself but for all sentient beings. This is part of the magic that allows the practitioner to be able to connect to one's natural state of mind. This can be called the inner magic or the mystical effect of the practice. Shardza adds, "these vocalizations should be applied to all the magical movements."²⁹⁴

In each of them, the practitioner eliminates "the illnesses and harmful disturbances from afflictive obstructions and spirits" from the area that is the focus of that particular yogic exercise. Again, the release of obstacles is not just for oneself, but the intention of purification embraces all sentient beings.

About Concluding with *Ha* and *Phat*

It seems that the combined *ha phat* vocalization is unique to Bön—also shared with magical movements of the Bönpo *Instructions on the A*. Other magical movement texts, such as the Nyingma *Union of Sun and Moon*, describe exhalations with *ha*, but not with *phat*. Other meditative practices use either *ha* or *phat*, but none in this combined way, at least to my knowledge. As Shardza clearly states, in the line cited above, this vocalization of *ha* and *phat* is applied to all the magical movements from *ZZ Oral Transmission*. As seen above, it comes together with the shaking of the four limbs that stirs also the internal obstacles,

²⁹⁴ *Commentary* 324.2.

while one thinks that is stirring all obstacles from the depth of samsara (i.e., from all sentient beings). Then, with the vocalizations, one exhales and cleans those obstacles away, remaining in a more clear state of mind. Actually one could say in a clearer mind-energy-body system on in a clearer embodied mind.

Although sometimes *Quintessential Instructions* mentions just *ha* for this concluding exhalation,²⁹⁵ in other sections, it mentions both *ha* and *phat*, and it is clear that both are applied to all magical movements.²⁹⁶ Furthermore, *Commentary* not only reaffirms then that both the *ha* and the *phat* should be applied to all the magical movements, but it also distinguishes the effects of *ha* and *phat*.

²⁹⁵ *Quintessential Instructions*, 633.1-2.

²⁹⁶ *Quintessential Instructions*, 632.3. *Quintessential Instructions* first mentions this vocalization at the beginning of its foundational cycle, stating that "in order to expel ('don) the impurities vocalize (bton) *ha* and *phat*" (632.3). However later in that cycle mentions that after shaking the four limbs one should "exhale ('bud) the vital-breath sounding *ha* and expelling ('don) the stale air" (633.1 – 633.2). Notice that only *ha* is mentioned here without a *phat* following it, although possibly it is assumed, since the statement of only a page before in *Quintessential Instructions* indicates the use of both vocalizations. It could also be a sign of inattention of the author or scribe.

Commentary reaffirms that both the *ha* and the *phat* should be applied to all the magical movements, not only in its first mention, in the above citation, but also reminds us at the end of the cycle: "afterwards send out the sounds *ha* and *phat*; applying ('gres) this to all [magical movements]" (325.4 - 5). However, as we will see, in some of the 38 magical movements only *ha* is indicated and no *phat* (especially in *Quintessential Instructions*, and *Experiential Transmission* following it) and actually sometimes none of the sounds are mentioned at all, but the phrase "apply to all" will appear in the first and/or last magical movement of every set. It seems clear in *Commentary*, supported also by oral instructions of all the teachers from whom I learnt these magical movements, that these sounds are implemented at the end of each magical movement. It is hard to know if there is a specific reason for this omission. Possibly a lack of consistency, or the assumption that both sounds are always present. Ponlob Thinley Nyima thinks that it is a combination of both reasons (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Menri monastery, February 2002, and Houston, August 2003).

Thus, the *ha* is used “In order to send out the illnesses and harmful disturbances from afflictive obstructions and spirits,” and *phat* is “stirring from the pit of cyclic existence, while at the same time shaking the body and limbs, reflecting on all sentient beings as Buddhas.”²⁹⁷

Purification of the Legs, Arms, Torso, and Lower Body.

The magical movements that follow in the foundational set are the purification of the legs, the arms, the torso, and the lower part of the body, respectively. All of them are performed seated, and one stands up only at the end of each movement. As one concludes with the shaking of the four limbs, the vocalizations and the mind focus as described above. After performing each magical movement and its concluding shaking and vocalization, the lamas advise to “stay in that experience until it loses its freshness.”²⁹⁸ Therefore, one tries to remain in that pure experience, and when one is not able to hold the experience in a relaxed and clear state of mind, it is time to perform the next magical movement. So, after the purification of the head, one remains for a moment in a centered, relaxed and clear state of mind (energy and body), and after a few moments, one then begins the next magical movement.

²⁹⁷ *Commentary* 324.1 - 2. See figures 5 and 6, in appendix III, illustrating the shaking of body and limbs.

²⁹⁸ This is advice that I heard not just in magical movement practice but in many meditative instructions, where as one expels some obstacles and is able to find a more clear state of mind and tries to abide in it as clear as possible. When the experience loses its freshness, it means that one is not being able to hold it in that clear state of mind, and it is time to perform the next magical movement.

ii. Purification of the Legs.²⁹⁹

Seated with legs extended to the front and parallel to each other, one is instructed to inhale with pervasive breath and neutral holding, allowing the vital breath currents to be guided by one hand a time through the respective leg as if it were an energetic massage. Each hand sweeps slightly above each leg or actually lightly touching the leg. The downward sweeping movement purifies all obstacles held in each leg. One is instructed to grab the toes and hold upwards shaking slightly and then let the leg go down to the ground again. One concludes with the shaking, stirring, mind focus and vocalizations as explained earlier.

Breathing

It is very important to restate the breathing process that applies to all the magical movements. The pneumatic aspect is vital. The vital breath current prevailing is pervasive and there is neutral holding. Therefore, one inhales allowing the breath to expand from the union of the channels, four-finger width below the navel, throughout the body like sunrays. These radiate guided by the body movement and creating an inner experience. This is the process that I have called *maṇḍala*-dynamic. That dynamic is the same for all movements; however, the movements themselves define not only the external shape but also the way the vital breath currents are guided, and thus the mandalic display (externally and internally) varies from movement to movement. Trying to explain this

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 324.4 – 325.1.

phenomenologically, the state of mind accessed should be the same, but the sensations that color that experience may differ. I will mention some examples of this as I describe other magical movements.

iii. Purification of the Arms³⁰⁰

Seated in the cross-legged posture, one is instructed to create special hand gesture (*pyhag rgya, mudra*) with each hand called diamond-scepter (*rdo rje, vajra*) fist. This is a powerful hand gesture also used in other practices of Bön and Buddhism. In this case, though, instead of having the thumb at the base of the ring finger, the thumb presses the ring finger. Noteworthy is that constricting the ring finger in both these ways is a common Tibetan way of preventing spirits to enter and disturb one's energetic system.³⁰¹

In this magical movement, by bending the arm, the *vajra*-fist touches the armpit, especially at an energetic point inside, believed to enhance the experience of clarity.³⁰² One extends the right arm sideways, brings it back to the armpit seven times and then does the same with the left. As the arm extends, one is to feel the vital breath currents run through that arm and sweep obstacles from it.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, 324.4 – 325.1.

³⁰¹ Ponlob Thinley Nyima explained how this is the door for spirits to enter in oneself causing disturbances. Thus, closing them impedes those disturbances and even thoughts, explains Ponlob (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, during a talk on *Tibetan Meditation: A Healing of Body, Energy, and Mind*, Rice University, Houston, TX, April 2005). This is a common belief among all traditions of Tibet.

³⁰² Namkhai Norbu mentions ten energetic points or five pairs of energetic points, these ones on the edge of the armpit are described "to experience clarity" (Namkhai Norbu, *The Song of the Vajra*, edited by Gina Perrini, Dzogchen Community, 1992. This text is an edited transcript of the teachings that Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche imparted in Tashigar, Argentina, December 1990, and that I was fortunate to attend.

In other words, instead of having the arms and hands sweep away obstacles of other areas of the body, through a strong sideways movement each arm purifies itself. One concludes with the same shaking, stirring, mind focus, exhalation and vocalization as usual, remaining then in the experience as long as it is clear.

iv. Purification of the Upper Torso³⁰³

As the torso remains straight, one is to maintain the channels straight as well. This allows the flow of the vital breath currents, especially in the torso area. Extending both arms in front and drawing them inwards, one touches or slightly pounds the chest area with the back bottom of the hand (*lag mgo*) seven times. At the end after the shaking the limbs, stirring inside, the exhalation and vocalization is *ha, ha, ha, phat*. This is the only movement in the whole text that instructs to exhale with three *has* instead of one and then *phat*. Also, it is the only one within this set in which the area purified is not really massaged, but pounded, and then purified through that triple exhalation. It seems like the *ha* themselves might suggest a way of expelling what the thumping in the torso had freed. Furthermore, the three consecutive *has* might be also associated with the release of the three kinds of obstacles mentioned earlier: external, internal and secret or subtler.³⁰⁴

³⁰³ Ibid, 325.1 – 325.3.

³⁰⁴ Ponlob Thinley Nyima relates that, although this is not mentioned in the text, it seems a good speculation (personal communication, Houston, August 2003). It would also be interesting to bring the correlations between the body areas and different afflictions from the channels-breaths practices of the *Mother Tantra*, mentioned earlier. In other words, if in the chest area the affliction

v. Purification of the Lower Body³⁰⁵

For the last movement in this set, according to *Commentary*, the beginning posture is the same as in the second magical movement, where one is seated with both legs extended in front and parallel to each other. However, both arms sweep simultaneously downwards. After inhaling and holding in the usual way, one raises one's hands on top of the head and brings them down, making contact at the waist and sweeping down along both legs, again, like an energetic massage brushing obstacles away. Reaching the toes, one extends the arms and legs and stirs all four limbs slightly, feeling that some of the subtler obstacles are freed through fingers and toes, while still maintaining the breath.³⁰⁶ One repeats this movement seven times. *Commentary* reaffirms here, at the end of the foundational cycle, that both the *ha* and the *phat* should be applied to all the magical movements of this cycle of purification.³⁰⁷ In fact, and as mentioned above, this extends to the magical movements of all four cycles.

Benefits (*yon tan*)³⁰⁸

is anger, how can we release anger with this magical movement? In the root magical movement sets, we will see correlations between the afflictions and individual movements, not necessarily focusing in a specific area of the body.

³⁰⁵ *Commentary*, 325.3 – 325.5.

³⁰⁶ The release of obstacles through the extremities seems to be a common element in many energetic practices of different traditions.

³⁰⁷ Even to the one right before, which has three *ha* and one *phat*. Presumably in that one, only the three *ha* were mentioned because that is where the difference is, and since the *phat* remains the same it was not even mentioned and just assumed.

³⁰⁸ *Commentary* 325.5 – 326.2. Benefits works better in English, although usually benefits is used more for *phan yon* and qualities for *yon tan*, denoting good qualities.

As it is common with many Tibetan texts on esoteric practices, the benefits or “good qualities” (*yon tan*) are disclosed after the written instructions. The benefits of the five foundational magical movements are described as follows in *Commentary*—which actually cites *Quintessential Instructions*:³⁰⁹

It balances the channels and vital breath currents, clearing the interior of the channels. All four³¹⁰ elements are in balance, the points of the body function well.³¹¹ Awareness is lucid and the special or subtler³¹² vital breath currents open up. These foundational magical movements are ascribed to the state of mind of Pongyal Tsenpo (“Sovereign King of Scholars”).³¹³

Interestingly, the benefits of the foundational magical movements in *Quintessential Instructions* are the same in *Commentary*, even though the movements do not appear to be exactly the same. Of course, Shardza might argue that the effects are the same, since he has only expanded the extremely succinct and pithy account of the *Quintessential Instructions* to bring more clarity from the oral instructions he received. Thus, one could say that each of the movements of this set, compiled by Pongyal Tsenpo and re-designed by Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, helps the practitioner in releasing external, internal and secret

³⁰⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* 633.2-3.

³¹⁰ *Commentary* 326.1; *Quintessential Instructions* does not mention four (*bzhi*) but just “elements.”

³¹¹ Ponlob says that *nad du tshud* is a phrase meaning that all functions well or runs smoothly (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston 2003).

³¹² Although the Tibetan word here is *bye drag*, usually translated as “special” or “particular,” Ponlob explains that here it refers to the minor or subtler channels that branch out from the root and the branch channels.

³¹³ This line seems to apply to the following set in *Quintessential Instructions* 633.3. In other words, it seems it mentions Pongyal Tsenpo not for the foundational magical movement set, but for the first set of the root magical movement set. In *Commentary*, however, Shardza makes it clear

obstacles of the whole body. These obstacles could be understood as interruptions to one's connection to the Ever-Excellent One, or one's nature of mind, as explained in the homage. Or, and not necessarily incompatible with the former, these obstacles can be viewed as provoking numerous physical, energetic and mental disturbances.³¹⁴ Therefore, the act of clearing away of these obstacles brings the practitioner to a healthier sense of wellbeing at all three levels of body, energy and mind. Additionally, both texts also emphasize that having cleared the channels of its obstructions, the channels and the vital breath currents that circulate through them are under control. This, in turn, balances the four elements (air, fire, water, and earth), making the whole body like a well-oiled machine. With one's body as a cleansed receptacle and functioning well, the mind's awareness gains lucidity and even the special or smaller vital breath currents open up.³¹⁵ In simple terms, as the channels open up and the vital breath currents circulate better, one becomes purer and wisdom increases.³¹⁶

It is important for the practitioner to remember at the end of each magical movement to perform the shaking of the four limbs. This internally stirs all the afflictions, obstacles and obscurations of not just oneself but also of all beings in cyclic existence, to then be able to expel them away and liberate from them. That

that Pongyal Tsenpo designed or compiled both of these sets, mentioning him at the end of each set.

³¹⁴ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, August 2003.

³¹⁵ *Commentary* 326.1, *Quintessential Instructions* 633.3.

³¹⁶ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, April 2005.

focus of the mind, together with the strong exhalation with the sounds of *ha* and *phat*, allows the practitioner to release all those obstacles and connect to an undefiled state. This is where one tries to remain until the experience remains fresh, and only then does one continue with the next magical movement. This practice has the intended result that every being becomes a Buddha, a being dispossessed of afflictions, obstacles and obscurations, which, as mentioned before, is in accordance with the *mahāyāna* path. This, of course, is not expected to happen in one session. In fact, sometimes the tradition will say one may not necessarily even achieve it in one lifetime. However, the more one cleanses now, the better s/he will be in the next rebirth. One could think of this process as pouring clean water in a dirty bottle, our body-energy-mind system, stirring it and pouring the water back out. The more one does this, the cleaner the bottle will be. One could say that there is a cumulative effect in performing the magical movements in terms of cleansing, and also in terms of helping becoming more familiar and more settled with the Ever-Excellent state of mind.

II. Cycle 2: Root Magical Movement Cycle.³¹⁷

The root cycle is composed of two sets: the root itself, which has six magical movements (*rtsa ba drug*), and the six root magical movements that dispel obstacles (*gegs sel drug*).

2. Root Magical Movement Cycle

- a. Root Magical Movement Set: six movements.
- b. Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles: six movements.

Quintessential Instructions and *Commentary* are both in agreement here; however, in *Commentary* Shardza condenses *Quintessential Instructions'* quite elaborate and detailed explanation of the benefits of the first set and adds an extra magical movement at the end of the second set, so it also contains six. Therefore, I will provide the additions.

2a. Root Magical Movement Set.³¹⁸

The six root magical movements are: Striking the Athlete's Hammer [to overcome] Anger; the Skylight of Primordial Wisdom [that overcomes] Mental Fogginess; Rolling the Four [upper] Energetic Centers³¹⁹ [to overcome] Pride; Loosening the Corner Knot [to overcome] Desire; Waving Upward the Silk Tassel [to overcome] Jealousy; and the Stance of a Tigress' Leap [to overcome] Drowsiness and Agitation.³²⁰

As we can see from the names, each magical movement aims at overcoming or appeasing one of the five principal obstructive afflictions (*nyon mongs*) or poisons

³¹⁷ *Commentary* 326.2 – 333.2; *Quintessential Instructions*, 633.3 – 637.4.

³¹⁸ *Commentary* 326.4 – 329.3, *Quintessential instructions* 633.3- 635.1. *Commentary* maintains a continuous enumeration, and so the next magical movement is number six. However, following *Quintessential Instructions* and for simplicity's sake, I will number the magical movements set by set, but at the beginning of each new set I will also note the numbers of the magical movements according to *Commentary* in order to maintain its sense of continuity.

³¹⁹ Probably relates to crown, heart, navel, and secret centers. Ponlob agrees with this speculation,

(*dug*): delusion (*gti mug*), anger (*zhe sdang*), attachment (*'dod chags*), pride (*nga rgyal*) and jealousy (*phrag dog*). The last one overcomes the two main obstructions to a stable meditative state of mind: drowsiness (*bying*) and agitation (*rgod*). The names also reflect the way the body will move in order to achieve each goal, maintaining the vital breath currents flowing in the pneumatic *maṇḍala*-dynamic way, allowing the mind to settle in its own natural state. This set is the “root of the root,” and thus Tenzin Rinpoche maintains that it is the most important set for a practitioner to learn and practice.³²¹ Also, together with its companion set in this cycle, they provide significant correlations of each movement with one of the five elements, their related wisdom qualities, the afflictions to be overcome, and other correspondences that we will see below (also please see chart as figure 7, in appendix III).

i. Striking the Athlete’s Hammer to Overcome Anger.³²²

This is the first movement of this set and the sixth continuing the enumeration from the beginning of the text. Beginning by standing on one’s knees, with back straight and legs crossed in the back at the level of the ankles, one interlaces the hands behind one’s neck. Keeping this posture, one bends from the waist forward, touching both knees with the respective elbows, and returns

³²⁰ *Commentary* 326.2 – 326.4; *Quintessential Instructions*, 633.3 – 633.4.

³²¹ In other words, if someone does not have the time to learn and practice all the magical movements s/he should focus on these ones (Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, oral communication, Charlottesville, VA, 2000, and Houston, TX, 2004, amongst other times).

³²² *Commentary* 326.4 – 327.1.

to the initial posture. Holding one's breath as usual, one repeats this movement in a flowing motion seven times.

It could be said that one's body actually becomes the hammer, and by holding the neck with both hands, one brings the hammer back and forth as one bends to the front and comes up again seven times. One can imagine that anger itself is being stricken or that by the exhaustion of the movement, anger disappears or dissipates. Internally, as one inhales and gets into this posture, the vital breath currents work particularly in the chest area, opening up any blockages or constrictions. Furthermore, as we will see in the benefits section below, this movement relates to the element of space. Thus, in the initial position of keeping the back straight and chest area open—to which one returns each repetition—the anger seems to be dissolved by the space or within space.

ii. The Skylight of Primordial Wisdom that Overcomes Mental Foggiess.³²³

In the Skylight of Wisdom movement, one rolls back and forth in the cross-legged posture with both arms bent to form two triangular skylights or windows—each formed by the side of the body and the arm touching the respective knee. In that back and forth rolling motion, the head is directed to touch the ground or is going toward the ground. As one moves forward and

³²³ Ponlob remarks that Tibetan windows are usually 3-sided, without a glass, and generally in the ceiling as a skylight.

backward, maintaining the skylight of window posture, the heaviness of mental foggy is said to dissipate like smoke through a skylight.

iii. Rolling the Four [Limbs like] Wheels, to Overcome Pride.³²⁴

In this movement of rolling the four limbs, and at the same time the energetic centers in our body, one keeps the torso straight and open. Swinging back and forth in the cross-legged posture, grabbing one's toes with the respective hand, one stands on one's knees when going forward, keeping the body upright like a brush stroke (*shad*).³²⁵ As the body rolls like a wheel seven times, the four radiant wheels of the crown, throat, heart and navel also spin. As these open, the sense of stiffness, sometimes associated with pride and haughtiness,³²⁶ is slowly relaxed (and eventually overcome).

iv. Loosening the Corner Knot to Overcome Attachment.³²⁷

In the cross-legged posture, the elbows are extended to the side with the hands pressing under the armpits with the thumbs. The other fingers point toward the heart center, in the middle of the chest. The knot is the manifestation of desire or attachment; thus, by liberating the knot, one can liberate his/her own

³²⁴ *Commentary*, 327.4 – 328.1. There are two possible ways of understanding this title. One is that the four wheels refer to the crown, the heart, the navel, and the secret centers, and the other is that the limbs are rotating like wheels. In his last visit, Ponlob leaned more to this explanation (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, August 2003 and April 2005). See figure 8 to have more clarity on this magical movement.

³²⁵ It seems that there is a play of words here with *shad* as straightening or aligning and as the straight stroke of for example the A.

³²⁶ The colloquial for haughtiness is the onomatopoeic “tok tok” (*krok krok*), usually said together with the torso inflated and a heavy demarcated march with the feet.

³²⁷ *Commentary* 328.1 – 4.

attachments bringing the one elbow to its opposite knee. To perform this movement one needs to twist and turn, freeing the stiffness and internally freeing the attachment. This way, one twists seven times to the right and seven to the left, alternating. As one performs this movement one feels like loosening a knot.

v. Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel to Overcome Jealousy.³²⁸

In this magical movement, as one's body weight inclines on one side, supported by that leg and arm, the other side feels free, with the free arm and leg waving harmoniously upward like a silk tassel in the wind. Planting the left foot and hand on the ground, the right leg and arm are waved skywards seven times. Then, changing sides, one repeats waving with the left arm and leg. This fluttering movement is felt not just in the arm and leg but also in the body, especially the lower back, and may help release the internal tightness of jealousy.³²⁹

vi. The Stance of a Tigress' Leap to Overcome Drowsiness and Agitation.³³⁰

The sixth magical movement of this set is an active engagement of the whole body. One begins by standing and twisting forward in order to pass both hands behind one's legs and touch the ears. In this position, one is supposed to

³²⁸ *Commentary* 328.4 – 329.1.

³²⁹ Also, when looking at the correlation with the organs, one can see how the kidneys in this posture can feel more release. Actually each of the five movements relate to the five elements and each have a corresponding organ (space:heart, earth:spleen, air:lungs, fire:liver and water:kidneys).

hop seven times forward and seven backwards. On many occasions, I have seen practitioners laugh as they try to engage in this posture. However, with perseverance, as one maintains the posture and performs the movement, all obstacles of drowsiness and agitation can be released. One feels awakened by the active yet exhausting engagement of the pose. In other words, one feels reinvigorated having overcome both hindering tendencies, drowsiness and agitation, that distract from one's meditative state. Thus, one is able to return to a calm and alert meditative state. *Commentary* reminds the practitioner to "[a]pply the shaking and stirring, vocalizing the sounds *ha* and *phat*, in all [the magical movements explained above]." ³³¹

Benefits. ³³²

Commentary clusters the benefits of the first five root magical movements and states that "these five root magical movements are the exalted perspective (*dgongs*) of Pongyal Tsenpo." ³³³ Then it proceeds with the benefits of the sixth root magical movement without assigning authorship. *Quintessential Instructions* assigns all six root magical movements to Pongyal Tsenpo. ³³⁴

The condensed description in *Commentary* makes it simple to understand that the first five root magical movements help overcome the five poisons or

³³⁰ *Commentary*, 329.1 – 3.

³³¹ *Commentary*, 329.2 – 3.

³³² *Commentary*, 329.3 – 330.1.

³³³ *Commentary*, 329.3.

³³⁴ *Quintessential Instructions*, 635.1.

afflictions (see figure 7 in appendix III). Shardza also condenses the detailed benefits described in *Quintessential Instructions*, simplifying them, in *Commentary*, as follows:

The benefits of these five, condensed here from the *Quintessential Instructions*, are: the door to the channel of the five poisons closes and the door to the channel of primordial wisdom opens. The five aggregates are purified in their place and the celestial spheres of the five Buddha dimensions are completed. The five elements are mastered and the five essential lights dawn.³³⁵

Therefore, the channel related to the poisons (i.e., the right one) closes down, and the one related to the primordial wisdoms (i.e., left or heart one) opens up. This actually means that each of the magical movements overcomes a particular affliction, as mentioned in its name, and has a particular correlation (depicted in appendix III, figure 7). The text provides the correlations but not explanations for them. Thus, they might seem arbitrary. In discussions, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche has expressed interest in finding ways to test if these correlations were accurate. The scientific studies described in chapter 4 can become a stepping-stone toward that goal.

Benefits in *Quintessential Instructions*

What follows is *Quintessential Instructions*' in-depth and detailed account of the benefits for each of these five root magical movements. For the benefit of

³³⁵ *Commentary*, 329.3 – 5.

the sixth magical movement, *Commentary* does follow *Quintessential Instructions* almost word by word. Thus, I will provide its description after the first five.

Before describing the individual benefits, *Quintessential Instructions* states, “[i]ntegrate with your experience (*nyams su blangs pa*) by combining (*sprad*) the ten yogic gazes throughout day and night.”³³⁶ *Commentary*, besides not describing the detailed benefits for each magical movement, also lacks this line. It is noteworthy that Shardza chooses to omit this seemingly important instruction point present in both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission*.³³⁷ Yongdzin Rinpoche mentioned that the ten gazes are actually five day gazes and five evening gazes, related to the following five: truth dimension, complete dimension, manifested dimension, method and wisdom.³³⁸ In this way, one can integrate the benefits of magical movement in everyday life—day and night.³³⁹

i. Striking the Athlete’s Hammer

The benefits of Striking the athlete’s hammer are that the path which is the space ³⁴⁰ channel liberates, and the door to the anger channel closes. Having liberated the consciousness aggregate, the pure realm of the truth Buddha dimension dawns. The space

³³⁶ *Quintessential Instructions*, 635.1.

³³⁷ *Experiential Transmission*, 255.19 – 256.

³³⁸ Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, oral communication, Charlottesville, VA, October 2004.

³³⁹ As Ponlob Thinley Nyima explained, the way to integrate them is in relation to the direct visionary or leap over practices, and Shardza actually addresses this in “The Four Direct Leap Visionary Practices” (*Thod rgal snang bzhi*) within his *Heartdrops of the Ever-Excellent One* (*Kunzang nying thig*) (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, TX, April 2005). Also see *Heartdrops of the Ever-Excellent One*—an oral explanation of this text exists as *Heartdrops of Dharmakaya*—, p. 62.4. Ponlob adds that, in that text, Shardza also relates the gazes to the five elements (Ponlob added that he learnt this from his teacher Lama Nyima Tsertan (Nyi ma Tse brtan), in Dolpo, Nepal. Unfortunately, an elaboration of this topic is outside of the scope of this study.

³⁴⁰ Here I am using “space” for *nam mkha* even though usually I translate it as “sky.”

essence dawns and the collection of the four diseases is liberated. Having liberated the object of knowledge in its own place, the external, and internal [and secret] interferences are cleared. The space does not set and the emptiness wisdom dawns.³⁴¹

In terms of disease, the text claims that all four diseases (wind, bile, phlegm and the combination of these three) will be liberated. As the external, internal and secret interferences are cleared, consciousness can then rest naturally in its own place (i.e., being undisturbed). This is beautifully voiced in the last line, “The space does not set and emptiness wisdom dawns.”³⁴²

According to Tibetan tradition, wisdom has five qualities, sometimes called five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*). Each of these five root magical movements correlates to one of the wisdom qualities, respectively: emptiness (*stong nyid*), mirror-like (*me long*), knowing things as they are (*ji lta'i*), discrimination (*sor rtogs*) and knowing the varieties (*ji snyed*).³⁴³

ii. Skylight of Primordial Wisdom

As for the benefits of the Skylight of Primordial Wisdom [that overcome] Mental Foggiess, having liberated the form aggregate in its own place, the essence of earth dawns. The complete Buddha dimensions dawns,³⁴⁴ and the expanded celestial sphere(s)³⁴⁵ are seen. The door to the mental foggiess channel closes and the

³⁴¹ *Quintessential Instructions* 635.1 – 635.3.

³⁴² *Ibid*, 635.2 – 635.3.

³⁴³ For an explanation of them, see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, London, England: Wisdom Publications, 1983, among others. Also, look into Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's description of them in Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, in forthcoming Ligmincha Institute transcript from oral teachings in Serenity Ridge, VA, July 2004.

³⁴⁴ It is worth noticing that it is plural (i.e., many complete Buddha dimensions).

³⁴⁵ As shown earlier, I am using “celestial sphere” for *'khyil 'khor* or *mandala* in this translation chapter.

mirror-like wisdom is completed. The form realm is mastered, and mountains and rocks are not obstructive.³⁴⁶

In simpler terms, the earth element dawns, clearing one's mental foggy and allowing the practitioner to access the complete Buddha dimension(s). So it seems that, by closing the door to the mental foggy channel, confusion or mental fog is dispelled, and the mirror-like wisdom is realized. Having mastery over the form realm, mountains, rocks or any other form cannot obstruct one's clarity. In other words, as the mind is clear as a mirror, none of the appearances disturb its clarity.

iii. Rolling the Four Limbs Like a Wheel.

As for the benefits of Rolling the four limbs like a wheel to overcome pride, the formations aggregate liberates and the air essence dawns. The essential Buddha dimension is seen and the *mandala* of the three Buddha dimensions dawns. The door to the pride channel closes and one realizes the wisdom that knows things as they are. One masters the air element and the swift walking is strengthened and expanded.³⁴⁷

Here, the practitioner has access to the essential Buddha dimension (*ngo bo nyid sku*) and the celestial sphere or *mandala* of the three Buddha dimensions (i.e., truth, complete and manifested dimensions). This brings about the closing of the door to the pride channel and allows the manifestation of the wisdom of knowing things as they are. After mastering the air element, one can achieve the special power (*grub, siddhi*) of swift-walking, described as being able to walk

³⁴⁶ Quintessential Instructions 635.3-4.

slightly above the ground and cover great distances quickly.³⁴⁸ In other words, by mastering the air element, one can move like it.

iv. Loosening the Corner Knot.

As for the benefits of Loosening the Corner Knot to Overcome Desire, the feeling aggregate liberates and the fire essence dawns. The diverse manifested Buddha dimensions are completed and the manifestation celestial sphere(s) dawn(s). The door to the desire channel closes and the discrimination wisdom dawns. One masters the fire element and the fire and warmth of the yogic inner heat blazes.³⁴⁹

Attachment (*chags*) here means that one is trapped by desire or lust. The loosening of the knot or trap of desire, I believe, is an effective metaphor. The power of the fire element liberates the aggregate of feeling and allows the practitioner to have access to the various manifested Buddha dimensions and celestial spheres, which, according to *Mass of Fire*, are at the navel.³⁵⁰ Therefore, the door to the desire channel closes, allowing discriminating wisdom to dawn, and with it, the possibility of understanding the uniqueness of each manifestation within their varieties is made possible. As one masters the fire

³⁴⁷ Ibid, 635.4 – 5.

³⁴⁸ I have heard some of such stories, and Ponlob Thinley Nyima confirms, having heard many of them (personal communication, Houston, August, 2003).

³⁴⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* 635.5 – 6.

³⁵⁰ In *Mass of Fire* (p. 27), Shardza explains how, according to the *Ye khri mtha' sel* and the *Mkha' 'gro gsang mrdzod*, the different energetic centers are explained as channel petals facing upwards and of different amounts for different energetic centers. Such explanations are common in Buddhist and Hindu tantric texts. However, it is interesting that different texts describe differently the form at each energetic center.

element, the warmth that is developed through the yogic inner heat practice seems to be maintained without much effort.³⁵¹

v. Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel

As for the benefits of Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel to Overcome Jealousy; the aggregate of conceptions liberates and the essence of water dawns. The fully awakened Buddha dimension is complete, and the five celestial spheres dawn. The door to the jealousy channel closes and the wisdom that knows the varieties expands. One masters the water element and has no lethargy.³⁵²

When the element of water dawns, the aggregate of conceptions liberates, allowing the practitioner to have access to the fully awakened Buddha dimension (*mngon par byang chub sku*) and the five celestial spheres. Through closing the door to the jealousy channel, one is aware of the quality of the wisdom of knowing the varieties. After mastering the water element, one overcomes lethargy, finding this relaxed and stable water-like state of mind a support for understanding harmonious existence of different varieties. This is very important; it is like a “purer” water element quality, since water can also bring “too much” comfort, and thus lethargy—like earth. However, the benefit is that one masters that quality with balance: relaxed but not lethargic.

vi. Stance of a Tigress’ Leap

Regarding the Stance of a tigress’ leap [to overcome] lethargy and agitation, the force of the powerful vital breath currents is complete, and lethargic mental foggyiness purifies in its own place.

³⁵¹ Many monks, especially in Menri monastery, have mentioned how, after mastering inner heat, the result of being able to maintain that heat is expected (fieldwork, February 2002).

³⁵² *Quintessential Instructions* 635.6 – 636.1.

The inner currents and the mind enter the central channel from below, and [their] moving liberates in its own place.³⁵³

The entering of the inner breath currents and the mind into the central channel (as is also mentioned in the benefits of the foundational magical movement cycle) is a very important characteristic of higher tantric practices. Allowing obstacles to purify and liberate in their own place is an exemplar Dzogchen trait. As the obstacles are liberated, so are conceptual thoughts. Ponlob adds that the agent of the moving mind liberating accumulated thoughts into the central channel is also connected to direct leap visionary practices mentioned above, which are based on breakthrough practice. These are the two Dzogchen practices *par excellence*. The latter emphasizes primordial purity (*ka dag*) and the former presence in the spontaneous manifestation (*lhun grub*). Therefore, as magical movement works with both the subtle body physiology and the mind resting in its own natural place, it is said to share aspects of higher tantra and of Dzogchen. In chapter 2, I suggested that we could also see each magical movement as creating an external and an internal *maṇḍala*. The benefits here mention that through each magical movement a different *maṇḍala* or celestial realm related to one of the Buddha dimensions can be accessed. Pursuing this further we could see these as the secret, divine, or very subtle *maṇḍalas*.

³⁵³ *Quintessential Instructions* 636.1 – 2.

2b. Root Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles.

As we have seen, in *Quintessential Instructions* there are five root magical movements that clear away obstacles. However, Shardza includes a sixth one in *Commentary*. The origin of this sixth movement is not clear. Since Drugyalwa does not include it in *Experiential Transmission*,³⁵⁴ it is certainly after the 13th century. Shardza himself or one of his teachers probably added this movement, possibly as a way to set a parallel structure to the six root (of the root) magical movements.

The first five root magical movements that clear away obstacles are: Duck Drinking Water; Wild Yak (*drong mo*) Butting Sideways; Female Donkey in the [reclining] to Sleep Stance; Holding the Breath [like] a Sparrow-Hawk; and Rolling Up the Limits of the Four Continents, to which Shardza adds, Extending the Limits of the Four Continents.³⁵⁵ Interestingly, the five movements in *Quintessential Instructions* are standing, but the added sixth is sitting, while in the root of the root magical movement it is the opposite, all are sitting and the sixth is standing.³⁵⁶

The movement's name aids the practitioner in understanding the instruction better. The first four movements of this set have names of animals engaged in a particular action, which helps the practitioner to visualize the

³⁵⁴ *Experiential Transmission*, pp. 257-258.

³⁵⁵ *Quintessential Instruction*, 636.2 – 637.4; *Commentary*, 330.1 – 333.2.

specific movement. Indian and Chinese yogas have also used names of animals in many of their postures for the same reason.³⁵⁷

i. Duck Drinking Water.³⁵⁸

The first of this set (and twelfth following *Commentary*'s counting) is the Duck Drinking Water magical movement. Interestingly, *Experiential Transmission* calls each a "posture-method" (*bca' thabs*). This is probably a point that Drugyalwa wants to emphasize, since it does not come from *Quintessential Instructions*. I believe this accentuates the role of the body posture as a unique method in magical movement, guiding the breath and mind in harmony.

In this particular posture-method, the practitioner is told to relate to the sense of being like a duck or goose. Therefore, standing and straightening one's body and with both hands at the waist--thumbs pointing forward, one opens the feet with heels close to each other and toes pointing outward diagonally, imitating a duck's stance. As one inhales and holds the breath naturally and allows it to spread pervasively, one first opens the chest area and then bends at the waist, stooping forward in a motion of reaching the head to the ground as if to drink water from it. Then, standing up, one slightly bends the head backwards

³⁵⁶ The fifth in that set, the "Fluttering Skyward of the Silk Tassel," is not exactly sitting, but it is not standing either (see above).

³⁵⁷ This similarity could be understood as a way these traditions have influenced each other. However, since the names are different and autochthonous, the observation of surroundings and trying to imitate them could also be considered as a universal human trait. This could also be an interesting topic for further research.

³⁵⁸ *Commentary*, 330.3 – 5.

at the nape, keeping shoulders and chest open and relaxed.³⁵⁹ One bends backwards and stoops forwards seven times. One concludes with the characteristic shaking and stirring of the limbs, while visualizing the stirring of all cyclic existence and exhaling the stale breath sounding *ha* and *phat*.³⁶⁰ Again, one maintains the intention that all sentient beings are cleared from their obstacles. The chest being open relates to the space element, as we also saw in the first magical movement of the previous set. In the benefits section, we will see how the correlations continue and expand into those overcoming physical illness.

ii. Wild Yak Butting Sideways.³⁶¹

In trying to imitate the sideways butting of a wild yak, the right leg is a step in front of the left,³⁶² and, having inhaled and held naturally the vital breath, one places the weight of one's torso to that leg. Then, following with the shoulder and head, which creates the butting, one closes this part of the movement with a little jump across the other leg that follows almost by inertia. In this way, one turns sequentially, alternating seven times to each side and feeling the power of the butting without letting it disturb one's balance.

³⁵⁹ *Commentary* provides more detail than *Quintessential Instructions* here.

³⁶⁰ *Commentary* (330.4) has *ha* and *phat*. However, both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* only mention *ha*. See earlier comments on this.

³⁶¹ *Commentary*, 330.5 – 331.2.

³⁶² I have seen taught the other way around during oral instructions. However, they also say that, since it is done to both sides, which one goes first is not that critical.

Although this movement looks very different than its parallel one of the previous set, this one is standing and jumping, and Skylight of Wisdom is sitting and rolling, it has a similar function in terms of swirling internally to then release mental foggiess and bring clarity to the mind of the practitioner. This clarity is heightened by the usual concluding movement of shaking and stirring the limbs, together with the exhalation of the stale breath sounding *ha* and *phat* and the prescribed visualization.

iii. Female Donkey [reclining] to Sleep.³⁶³

The female donkey is also performed while standing, but moving into a reclining stance as if going to sleep. One begins by standing upright with feet shoulder-width apart. With the hands at the waist, one turns and twists with the torso downwards and with the right elbow trying to touch the left knee, imagining being like a donkey who is going to lay on the ground to sleep. Still in the standing posture and without actually laying on the ground, one then turns and twists to the other side, trying to reach the right knee with the left elbow. As one turns and brings the torso up slightly, it is like awakening from this sleeping posture into the rising one (*nyal langs*). This is similar to the standing up on one's knees in Rolling the Four Limbs like a Wheel, also opening the chest and awakening the mind. The Female Donkey Going to Sleep follows a pattern of alternating between trying to go to sleep (*nyal*) and rising up (*langs*) seven times.

It then concludes with the usual shaking and stirring of the limbs, together with the exhalation and visualization.

iv. Holding the Breath Like a Sparrow-Hawk.³⁶⁴

“Holding the breath” (*rlung ‘dzin*), in this context, can also have the meaning “upholding or soaring in the wind.” Ponlob explains that the sparrow-hawk is a small kind of hawk that can hold its breath body while the wings move a little bit.³⁶⁵ As one stands with both feet together and both hands at the waist, one inhales and holds naturally, maintaining a straight torso and allowing the breath to spread pervasively. One is instructed to lift the heels slightly, resting mostly on the balls of one’s feet. From that stance, one motions the head towards the right, following with the torso moving sideways and downwards, including a subtle shaking like the soaring of the sparrow-hawk. One performs the same movement to the left and then to the center, looking skywards and supported by a slight upward hop. After repeating the pattern right, left and center seven times, one does the concluding shaking, exhalation and visualization. The holding of the breath for all seven repetitions can be difficult in this movement. This in itself can bring more inner heat or motivate the related fire element. As in Loosening the Corner Knot, the trap of desire is liberated, especially at the end of the movement. In other words, after a long upholding of the breath and guiding

³⁶³ *Commentary*, 331.2 – 4. Also see photo as figure 9 in appendix III.

³⁶⁴ *Commentary*, 331.4 – 332.1.

³⁶⁵ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, TX, May 2005.

it with the sparrow-hawk-like movement throughout the whole torso, the exhalation releases obstacles and pressure of the holding, allowing one to connect to the clarity of the fire and the resting in the freed mind.

v. Rolling Up the Limits of the Four Continents.³⁶⁶

Standing upright with feet shoulder-width apart, the arms resting by the sides and palms opened forward, one inhales and holds naturally. With a slight jump, one brings the right leg to touch with its sole above the left knee. Simultaneously, one crosses the arms over the chest, right over left, and places one's hands under the opposite armpits. The four continents are the four limbs, which are rolling in this movement. One alternates the legs and arms, jumping in this manner seven times to each side. The leg that crosses corresponds to the arm that is above when crossing. After alternating legs and arms seven times to each side, one concludes with the usual shaking, exhalation and visualization.

Experiential Transmission states, “[a]pply (lit. “take in hand,” *lag len*) following practical guidance (lit. “red instructions,” *dmar khrid*) from oral wisdom.”³⁶⁷ As mentioned earlier, it is not unusual for part of the instruction to be passed orally by the lamas. Following that model, besides some adjustments of the posture to clarify the meager description in *Commentary* (it is even briefer in *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission*), Ponlob Thinley Nyima not only explained it in more detail, but also demonstrated this

movement, especially the jumping as the arms and legs roll.³⁶⁸ That explanation led me also to see the parallelism to Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel. Although in that movement one is not jumping, the movement of the hands and legs in both movements can help the practitioner be in touch with the water element to which these movements relate.

vi. Extending the Limits of the Four Continents.³⁶⁹

This is the magical movement that Shardza adds, making it the sixth movement of this set and seventeenth of the text. Sitting in a cross-legged posture that is described here as “adamantine cross-legged posture” (*rdo rje sgyil grung*)—also popularly known as “full lotus” posture—, one makes a fist with both hands with the thumbs pressing on the base of the ring fingers, also sometimes called the adamantine (*rdo rje, vajra*) fist.³⁷⁰ Placing the fists on the ground with palms down and loading one’s weight on the fists, one raises the body off the ground, rotates counterclockwise and descends.³⁷¹ In this way, one

³⁶⁶ *Commentary*, 332.1 –2.

³⁶⁷ *Experiential Transmission*, p. 258.3.

³⁶⁸ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication (Houston, October 2002).

³⁶⁹ *Commentary*, 332.2 - 4. See photo as figure 10 in appendix III.

³⁷⁰ This is, for example, mentioned in *Commentary* 324.5, when describing the hand purification magical movement, among the foundational magical movements that Shardza expanded. As exemplified in these two cases, I have seen this fist described with position of the thumb sometimes inside and other times outside the ring finger. In this case Shardza just describes the hand posture without naming it adamantine or otherwise.

³⁷¹ Ponlob also mentioned and demonstrated that in some cases the movement is done without rotation, just lifting the body up and descending. In this way *bskor* is understood as “movement” rather than rotation (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, TX, 2004). On the other hand, in all other occasions reviewing these movements, this one was explained and demonstrated as rotating and explicitly counterclockwise.

extends the limits of the four continents that, again, are the four limbs. While the latter movement dispelled the obstacles by rotating the limbs, here the limbs are bound, and the rotation of the whole body in that posture generates a sense of expansion that helps clear away obstacles. This rotation is done seven times, after which one performs the usual concluding shaking, exhalation and visualization.

Benefits.

Togme Shigpo (“Non-conceptual Destroyer,” *Rtog med zhig po*) is considered the author or compiler of this set.³⁷² *Commentary* says:

The benefits of these, according to the *Quintessential Instructions*, are:³⁷³ The Duck [drinking water movement] liberates from the four collections of diseases and opens the doorway of the channel of sky; the Wild Yak [butting movement] liberates from the diseases of phlegm and opens the doorway of the channel of earth; the Female Donkey [lying down as in sleep movement] liberates from diseases of bile³⁷⁴ and opens the doorway of the channel of air/wind; the Hawk [upholding the wind movement] liberates from diseases of heat and opens the doorway of the channel of fire and the [two] Four Continents [magical movements] free [the practitioner] from diseases of cold and open the doorway of the channel of water.³⁷⁵

These benefits have interesting parallels with those of the previous set, as I briefly mentioned in the above descriptions. Both sets follow the same order of the elements: space, earth, air, fire, and water, and the last movement of both is like a combination of the five elements. The root of the root set places more

³⁷² *Quintessential Instructions* 637.3 – 4, *Commentary*, 333.2.

³⁷³ *Quintessential Instructions* 637.1 – 637.4.

³⁷⁴ *Quintessential Instructions* says it liberates from phlegm and bile (637.2)

³⁷⁵ *Commentary*, 332.4 – 333.2.

emphasis on the afflictive obstructions (*nyon mongs*) related to the mental obscurations (*sgrib*), while the set of magical movements that clear away obstacles place more emphasis on the diseases (*nad*). As for the collection of the four diseases mentioned in the benefits of the Duck Drinking Water, Ponlob explains that this refers to the imbalances of wind (*rlung*), of bile (*mkhris pa*), of phlegm (*bad kan*) and of the combination of the three, thus making four.³⁷⁶ These are identical to, and probably derive from Tibetan medicine. In figure 11 (in appendix III), the movements of both sets are shown side by side, to bring more clarity to the correlations I refer to here.

As for the common or general benefits of this set, the practice of these movements is said to “cause one to possess the power of speed-walking, ignite the warmth [of one’s body] and reverse the aging process.”³⁷⁷

In brief, the root magical movement set, designed by Pongyal Tsenpo, is believed to work more by opening the door of the five elements and closing the door of the five poisons in order to allow primordial wisdom and its manifestation as the five celestial spheres or *maṇḍalas* of Buddha (or enlightened) dimensions and the five lights to manifest. The root magical movement set that clears away obstacles, designed by Togme Shigpo, helps overcome illnesses so that the practitioner can actually have the experiences of celestial spheres and

³⁷⁶ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, October 2002.

³⁷⁷ *Quintessential Instructions* (637.4) reads *tshe lo log 'gyur thub par*, “power over the reversing of one’s years of one’s life.”

lights that arise from being in touch with one's primordial wisdom. These movements can also bring extraordinary powers through the manipulation of the vital breath currents, the focus of the mind and the body movements guiding them, such as speed-walking, reverse age and so forth. Simply stated, these root magical movements can bring mystical, medical and magical results.

III. Cycle 3: Branch Magical Movement Cycle.³⁷⁸

Similar to the root cycle, the branch or ancillary magical movement cycle is composed of two sets: the root or main branches and the ancillary branches or those that clear away obstacles.³⁷⁹ Each set has five magical movements.

3. Branch Magical Movement Cycle

- a. Root [or Principal Branch magical movement set]: five movements.
- b. [Branch magical movement set that] Clear Away Obstacles: five movements.

3a. Main Branches Set.³⁸⁰

The five main branch magical movements are: the Natural Descent (*rang 'beb*) of the Four Elements, the Peacock Drinking Water, Collecting the Four

³⁷⁸ *Commentary*, 333.2, Quintessential Instructions 637.4.

³⁷⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* begins by calling them root and branches (637.4) and later (638.5) calls them *gag sel*, which is probably why *Commentary* uses the latter classification.

³⁸⁰ *Commentary*, 333.2 – 335.5, Quintessential Instructions 637.4 – 638.5.

Stalks (*sdong po*), Rolling (*bsgril*) the Four Upper and Lower [limbs] and Striking (*rdeg*) the Four Knots (*rgya mdud*).

i. Natural Descent of the Four Elements.³⁸¹

In the first magical movement of this set (and eighteen altogether), one assumes the cross-legged position and places the palms down slightly, pressing upon both thighs. As the forearms and torso are straightened, the channels are straightened too. Bringing the head and upper body down and forward with a slight shake towards the ground, one visualizes the motion as a smooth descent of the elements, like snowflakes falling to the ground. Coming back up with the upper body straightened, one is instructed to harmoniously move the head and torso down as before for a total of seven times. As this smooth descent and ascent is done, as in all movements, by holding the breath pervasively, the inner obstacles dissolve smoothly too. With a sense of lightness at the end of the seven repetitions, one concludes with the standard shaking of the limbs along with the exhalation and visualization.

ii. Peacock Drinking Water.³⁸²

Seated with legs extended in front and parallel to each other, one joins or crosses³⁸³ one's forearms behind one's back, with the thumbs pressing the ring

³⁸¹ 334.1

³⁸² *Commentary*, 333.5 – 334.2.

³⁸³ *Snol* can mean either "cross" or "join." I have seen it multiple times in Menri and Tritan Norbutse performed by joining the hands. Ponlob, on the other hand, says that it should be

fingers of each hand. Bending the body forward, one imagines going to drink water in the ground in front of oneself, with the forehead reaching or going toward the space in between the knees. As one raises the head back up and to the right over the shoulder, one imagines swallowing the water. Then, swinging the head over the left shoulder, one again imagines swallowing water. Finally, bringing the head to the center, one looks upward, imagines swallowing water for a third time and then repeats the whole pattern seven times. This movement, elongating one's body forward and upright—including right and left sides—, stretches the channels so that the vital breath currents flow unruffled. Thinking of the name not just as a way to describe the movement but taking its peacock allegory a step further, one can feel that one swallows the poisons and converts them into nurturing nectar. After feeling nurtured by the vital breath currents in that way, one concludes as usual.

iii. Collecting the Four Stalks.³⁸⁴

The four stalks, similar to the continents in previous movements, refer here to the four limbs. In a seated posture with legs bent at the knees and lying sideways on the ground, one places the soles of the feet to touch each other. Grabbing the big toes with both hands, as *Quintessential Instructions* points out,³⁸⁵ one rolls backward and forward. Going backwards, one places the backbone on

crossing one's arms in the back (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, October 2002).

³⁸⁴ *Commentary*, 334.2 – 4.

the ground and stretches the arms and legs skywards, releasing the toes and allowing the limbs to separate, radiating outward. Rolling forwards, one collects the four limbs like stalks, returning to the starting posture. The emphasis is clearly in the gathering as one comes forward. After the openness and radiating backwards, it can feel like retrieving nurturing qualities that are collected and gathered as one goes forward. Repeating this movement seven times, with a sense of fulfillment, one concludes with the usual shaking of the limbs, exhalation and visualization.

iv. Rolling the Four Upper and Lower [limbs].³⁸⁶

Maintaining the seated posture, but now in a cross-legged position, this magical movement works with the limbs contracted, rather than radiating and being brought together as in the previous magical movement. Grabbing the toes of each foot with one's fingers,³⁸⁷ one rolls backward, touching the feet to the ground. Then, rolling forward, one brings the forehead to the ground (or at least towards touching the ground). This back and forth movement can feel like the charging of a dynamo. Charging in that way seven times, one concludes as usual, with a strong sense of liberation in the exhalation, shaking and visualization.

³⁸⁵ *Quintessential Instructions* 638.2.

³⁸⁶ *Commentary*, 334.4 – 5.

³⁸⁷ I have also seen it where the arms are crossed, grabbing the toes of the opposite foot.

v. Striking the Four Knots.³⁸⁸

The last magical movement of this set is done in the adamantine posture mentioned in Extending the Limits, of the previous set. Bringing the right and left hands in between the cove (*khug*) of the knees, one holds each calf from underneath with its corresponding hand. Inhaling and making sure that the natural holding is settled, one lifts and rotates the whole body seven times counterclockwise. Its similarity to the sixth magical movement that Shardza added in the last set, but with different hand placement, makes me believe that Shardza was inspired by this magical movement to design Extending the Limits of the Four Continents. As for the rotation, in the same way I pointed out in that movement, Ponlob Thinley Nyima asserts that is sometimes performed by just lifting the body up and letting it fall down, controlled.³⁸⁹ On the other hand, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima comments on the direction of the rotation. He asserts that not only for this movement, but in general, when a Bönpo text does not indicate the direction, the rotation should always be "Bönpo way," i.e., counterclockwise (*vis a vis* the Buddhist performing them clockwise).³⁹⁰

As for the four knots, I believe it refers to the limbs again, and, actually, the "four-fold knot" might be a better way of conceiving it. The striking helps to

³⁸⁸ *Commentary*, 334.5 – 335.2.

³⁸⁹ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, August 2003. He also performed it in that way and said that both ways were correct. This use of *bskor* would follow the same line of thought of '*khor* meaning "rotating" or "wheel," but also "movement," as we have discussed in the introduction.

release the knot(s), which can also mean an obstacle or a constriction. In other words, the knot does not allow the vital breath currents to flow properly, and thus with the striking it frees the knots, allowing the vital breath currents to clean and nurture internally. *Commentary* reaffirms at the end of this set, “[s]haking vigorously the four forms (*gsugs*, i.e., limbs) and reciting the sounds *ha phat*, are required in all [magical movements].”³⁹¹

Benefits.

As before, *Commentary* cites *Quintessential Instructions* for the benefits of these magical movements:

[One] liberates from diseases of the four elements [allowing] the vital breath currents together with the mind to enter the essential points. Appearances magically liberate and adherence to mistaken appearances is reversed. The strength of the body extends and one gains natural mastery over the four elements. External and internal obstacles are cleared allowing the channels and the vital breath currents to function well. The strengths of body oil, its heat and excellent luminosity, extend.³⁹²

Similar to the root magical movements, especially the root magical movements that clear away obstacles, the elements correlate to illnesses in this set. Both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Commentary* only mention general benefits of this set and not separate benefits for each magical movement. However, we find here the addition of the obstacles related to the mind. The phrase *gnad du tshud*, which appears twice here and will appear a few times again in these texts, although

³⁹⁰ His Holiness Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, Menri monastery, February 2002.

³⁹¹ *Commentary*, 335.2.

literally meaning “entering the essential point” or “capture with precision,”³⁹³ Ponlob observes that it is a well-known expression to mean that things are “functioning well.” He explains it as being analogous to the gears of a machine being greased.³⁹⁴ The mention of the increase of the body oil, heat and luminosity, can be regarded as signs that the machine is working well and that the practitioner has conquered the elements—in particular here, fire.

The author of these magical movements, Lhundrub Muthur (*Lhun grub Mu thur*),³⁹⁵ “Spontaneously Perfected (One), holder of the *Mu* lineage), is not mentioned until the end of the next set, since he has designed both sets of the branch magical movement cycle.

3b. Branch Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles.³⁹⁶

This set is composed of five magical movements: the Great Garuda Flapping (*rdeb*) its Wings, Peacock Stirring Water, Collecting the Four [limbs] Clearing Away the Limitations, the One-Sided Gallop of the Antelope (*e na*) and One-Sided Pulse of the *Sha ri* Deer.³⁹⁷

³⁹² *Commentary*, 335.2 – 5, *Quintessential Instructions* 638.3 – 6.

³⁹³ Ranjung Yeshe dictionary, record 65310.

³⁹⁴ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, August 2003.

³⁹⁵ I am reading *‘thur* instead *thur* in *Commentary*, 338.2 and in *Quintessential Instructions* 639.4. *Mu* is one of the five Bönpo family lineages.

³⁹⁶ *Commentary* 335.5– 338.3, *Quintessential Instructions* 638.5 – 639.4.

³⁹⁷ It is not too clear the exact word or its origins, but it seems to describe a kind of deer. *Quintessential Instructions* has two different spellings for it, *sha na’i* (638.5) and *sha ra na*, and probably following the latter *Commentary* has *sha ra* or *sha ra’i*.

i. Great Garuda Flapping its Wings.³⁹⁸

The first of this set (and twenty-third of the general count) begins in a standing posture and ready to “fly.”³⁹⁹ Standing upright like a brush stroke (*shad*), one extends the right arm skyward. With a small jump, one simultaneously bends that arm to touch the right shoulder-blade with the right hand and touches the buttocks with the back of the right heel. *Quintessential Instructions* explains it simply, saying that one should extend and contract the corresponding arm and leg simultaneously.⁴⁰⁰ Alternating this movement with the right and left side seven times, one amply opens the chest area with each extension of the arm or “wing” and feels lighter with the jumping (i.e., flying). The conclusion is as usual, shaking the limbs, exhaling sounding *ha* and *phat* and visualizing the clearing away of obstacles from all beings, including oneself.

ii. Peacock Stirring the Water.⁴⁰¹

Continuing in the standing posture, one brings one’s extended arms down from being in front of one’s chest to the ground around the feet. Shaking both hands simultaneously to the front, right and left sides, one imagines to stirring water and then returns to the upright posture. This movement can also feel long

³⁹⁸ *Commentary* 336.1 – 3.

³⁹⁹ In fact, all but one magical movement among this set, are movements that begin in a standing position.

⁴⁰⁰ *Quintessential Instructions* (638.5 – 6) uses a simpler description, but none of the texts mention the jumping. However, in all oral instructions I have received, it is shown that way, and Ponlob has laid emphasis on it too (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, August 2002).

⁴⁰¹ *Commentary* 336.3 – 5.

in terms of holding one's breath, although the stretching and elongation of arms helps in creating more internal space for the air to move. The stirring or shaking of the water also creates a rippling effect in stirring oneself internally. After repeating this pattern seven times, one ends with the usual shaking, exhalation and visualization, clearing away all that was stirred.

iii. Collecting the Four [limbs] Clearing Away Limitations.⁴⁰²

This difficult magical movement is the only one within this set that does not begin in a standing posture. Squatting down without bending the back, one collects the four limbs by having the soles of the feet touching and the hands holding them. Hopping seven times forward and seven backward while maintaining that binding posture, one clears away the limitations (*mtha'*). These limitations can certainly be physical, such as flexibility and strength, but also energetic and mental. In that regard, it can relate to overcoming the collection of the four diseases as part of the physical limitations and to clearing away one's conceptual mind as part of the mental limitations. One concludes as usual.

iv. One-Sided Gallop of the Antelope.⁴⁰³

This long one-footed gallop of the antelope magical movement has twenty-eight steps before exhaling at the end. Standing on the right foot while holding the top of left the foot (i.e., the ankle and upper part of the foot) with the left hand, one places the sole of that foot in the right leg inguinal cavity. In this

posture, one hops forward on the right leg while simultaneously swatting with the right hand downwards and close to the hip (even to the right buttock). Taking seven small hops forward, one then turns around and takes seven small hops in the other direction. Still holding the breath, one changes the positions of the legs (i.e., standing on the left leg and holding the right foot with the right hand placing it on the left leg's inguinal cavity) and hops on the left leg seven times forward, and turning around, seven times backwards. This jumping seems to create some internal stir, which, together with the release provoked with the swatting of the hand, helps to clear away obstacles. After twenty-eight steps, one is ready to exhale thoroughly, releasing external, internal and secret obstacles. One concludes with the usual shaking, exhalation and visualization.

v. The One-Sided Pulse of the *Sha ri Deer*.⁴⁰⁴

Similar in some ways to the preceding movement, the one-sided pulse of the deer also includes three bows at each step. Standing upright, the sole of the right foot presses perpendicularly against the side of the left leg, forming a triangular window shape (similar to the one formed by the arms in the Skylight of Wisdom in the root of the root set).⁴⁰⁵ In that posture, one brings the arms from the side to the back and extends them behind one's back with the hands

⁴⁰² Ibid, 336.5 – 337.1.

⁴⁰³ *Commentary* 337.1 – 3.

⁴⁰⁴ *Commentary* 337.4 – 338.1.

⁴⁰⁵ Although not necessarily explained in this way, it was demonstrated to me in oral instruction in Nepal, India and the US.

crossing in the same position as the Peacock Drinking Water, in the main branch set. In each hop, one bends the torso, shoulders and head forward three times, and, at the same time, the hands in the back make a downward clearing movement.⁴⁰⁶ After hopping forward seven times, with three bows each time, one turns around and does seven hops with three bows each to the other side. Shardza emphasizes that the whole movement is done “with one inhalation.”⁴⁰⁷ This extensive movement concludes with a well-deserved exhalation, shaking and visualization.

Benefits.

Commentary states:

As for the benefits of these, from the former (i.e., *Quintessential Instructions*): the obstacles from the four elements are liberated and the door to the channel of the elements is opened. The elements are balanced and [thus] the collection of the four diseases is harmless.⁴⁰⁸

Quintessential Instructions actually says “liberating obstacles from the five elements” instead of four, but continues by mentioning “the door of the channel of the four elements is opened.”⁴⁰⁹ Shardza clearly condenses the meaning of *Quintessential Instructions*, but cites it as if it was a direct quotation (as we have

⁴⁰⁶ *Thur sel* is usually used in the context of the downward and clearing vital breath current seen both in Tibetan medicine as well as in channels-breaths practices. In oral instructions, both in Tritan Norbutse and in Menri, I have always seen the hands in the back like in the Peacock Drinking Water without mention of the downward movement. However, I feel that utilizing the hands in this way can bring even more clearing of obstacles.

⁴⁰⁷ *Commentary* 338.1. This remark is absent in *Quintessential Instructions*.

⁴⁰⁸ *Commentary*, 338.1 – 3.

seen before).⁴¹⁰ In terms of the elements, mentioning four or five depends on if the element of space or sky is included or left aside, since sometimes it is considered as the container of the four elements and not an element in itself.⁴¹¹ In any event, as the obstacles from the elements are liberated and the door of the element's channel is opened, the elements come into balance, and thus one cannot be harmed by disease. This is in accordance with the Tibetan medical theory, which states that illness is the result of an imbalance of one's elements. In magical movement, the restoration to balance is done by the pneumatic force of the vital breath currents guided by the physical movements and the focus of the mind.

Lhundrub Muthur is mentioned here as the author of both sets of the branch magical movement cycle. (No author was mentioned in the benefits for the previous set.)⁴¹² The branch cycle is analogous to the root cycle in that each begins with a root set followed by a set of magical movements that clear away obstacles. However, it is not clear if Lhundrub Muthur designed the branch cycle in this way, or, more likely, it is the product of the compiler of the whole text,

⁴⁰⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* 639.3 - 4.

⁴¹⁰ To give Shardza the benefit of the doubt, it could also be that the edition he was working with had it in that way. Furthermore, he might have been working from oral tradition and without a written version.

⁴¹¹ It would be interesting to know if each individual magical movement of this set is believed to open the doors of the individual channels of the four elements and to clear all four kinds of disease, paralleling the root cycle. Another question to ask the lamas of the lineage.

⁴¹² *Commentary*, 338.2 - 3.

which I assume to be Bumje O, as he is the one who compiled the sets and created the cycles as the overarching categories.

IV. Cycle Four: Special Magical Movement Cycle.⁴¹³

4. Special Magical Movement Cycle

a. Special Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Individual Obstacles from the Head, Body, and Limbs: five movements

b. Special [magical movement set] that Clears Away Common Obstacles: five movements (seven, including the subdivisions).

The first set is composed of five movements that clear away the obstacles of the head, torso, arms, lower body (specifically the stomach) and legs, respectively.

The second set, instead, focuses on clearing away obstacles from the whole body.

4a. Special Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Individual Obstacles.⁴¹⁴

This set resembles the foundational set in its clearing away or purifying of obstacles from the different parts of the body. I think of this set as the “special foundational set,” since both have five movements relating to different parts of the body. The foundational set has movements purifying the head, legs, arms, upper torso and lower torso, while this special set has movements that clear away the obstacles of the head, the upper torso, the arms, the lower torso and the

⁴¹³ *Commentary* 338.3 – 346.2, *Quintessential Instructions* 639.4 – 643.1.

legs (together with whole body). One general difference between them is that, in the foundational set, the clearing is done through a massage (and internal sweeping of the vital breath currents); while in the special set, the clearing of obstacles is mostly internal and guided by the movement of that particular area of the body.

i. Clearing Away [obstacles] from the Head: Rotating (*ril*) and Nodding (*lcog*) the Head.⁴¹⁵

The first magical movement of this set (and twenty-eighth altogether) starts with the gradual clearing of the body, beginning with the head. Sitting in the cross-legged posture, one places both hands on top of the thighs, which helps straighten the back along with the inner channels. Holding the breath in the usual pervasive manner, one rotates the head seven times counterclockwise and seven times clockwise, which one is advised to do so slowly. The movement guides the vital breath currents in order to help clear away obstacles of the head as one imagines the vital breath currents internally spiraling up and “waking up” all the sense organs in the head. Still holding the breath, one continues with a front-back movement of the head, which is also repeated seven times and produces a similar awakening sensation. This is a stronger internal clearing than the Purification of the Head in the foundational set. The conclusion is the usual

⁴¹⁴ *Commentary* 338.4 – 340.3, *Quintessential Instructions* 639.4 – 640.4. Instead of “individual,” *Quintessential Instructions* calls this set “the gradual clearing of obstacles” (*gags sel rim pa*).

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid*, 338.4 – 5.

visualization together with the shaking of the limbs and the exhalation with *ha* and *phat*.

ii. Swinging (*ling*) the Binding Chains (*sgrog chings*) of the Torso.⁴¹⁶

With one's knees planted on the ground and the legs crossed in the back at the level of the ankles, one places most of one's weight forward. One's arms embrace and cross around the straightened torso, holding the opposite shoulders. One twists this "chained" torso, rotating it seven times to the right and seven to the left. The constrained torso feels liberated internally; the movement helps the opening and clearing of the obstacles in the torso.

This magical movement is very different than its predecessor in the foundational set, where the purification was done by pounding one's chest and then exhaling with three *has* and a *phat* as a way of releasing or brushing away external, internal and secret obstacles. In other words, through the swinging of one's "chained" upper torso, this movement of the special set clears away and liberates the obstacles of the torso. The conclusion here is as usual, sounding one *ha* and one *phat*.

⁴¹⁶ Commentary 339.1 – 2.

iii. Grasping [like] the Raven's Claws, [clearing away the obstacles of] the Arms.⁴¹⁷

Sitting in the bodhisattva posture, one holds one's arms on each side with hands clinched like claws (with the thumb pressing the other fingers) and fingers facing outwards. Extending first the right arm, the palm and fingers extend out to that side and return to the same position. Then one replicates the movement with the left arm. Alternating between the right and left arms, one repeats the movement seven times to each side. This movement is extremely similar to the Purification of the Arms in the foundational set; in each extension and retrieving of each arm, one imagines the clearing away of obstacles from that arm. The only differences are the position of the hands and that the extending and contracting are alternated in this movement instead of done sequentially (seven to the right and then seven to the left) in the one in the foundational set. Again, like in the root magical movement set that clears away obstacles, an animal is mentioned as an example to imitate the position, in this case, of the hand. Animal metaphors seem very useful for the practitioner to imagine how to follow the pose. The conclusion of the movement is with the usual visualization, shaking and exhalation.

⁴¹⁷ *Commentary* 339.2 – 3. *Commentary* does not specify in the title here that this movement clears away the obstacles of the arm, just mentions arm, but it is clear from the above context, plus it is mentioned in this way in *Quintessential Instructions* (639.6).

iv. Adamantine Self-Rotation of the Stomach (*pho ba*).⁴¹⁸

Although the text instructs to sit in the bodhisattva posture, for those who can, the lotus position is preferable to keep the torso and channels straight. Crossing the right and left arms at the elbows, one holds the ribcage with both hands, embracing the stomach. Then, one rotates the waist and stomach⁴¹⁹ seven times counterclockwise and seven times clockwise. This adamantine rotation can be said to release subtle obstacles from the navel energetic center, which is the hub of the area. In this way, it shares some similarities with the Fire Vital Breath Current movement among the channels-breaths practices of the *Mother Tantra*.⁴²⁰ One concludes the same as all other magical movements.

v. Camel's Fighting Stance [that clears away the obstacles of the] Legs [and whole body].⁴²¹

The last magical movement of this set is mostly for the legs, but it actually engages the whole body. Squatting down with legs bent almost flat on the ground, one brings the forearms between the legs.⁴²² Grabbing the big toes or all toes of both feet with both hands, one rolls backwards, planting the legs and

⁴¹⁸ *Commentary* 339.3 – 5.

⁴¹⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* (639.6 – 640.1) has it as both waist (*rked pa*) and stomach.

⁴²⁰ It is difficult to compare this movement to any of the foundational set. The closest one would be Purifying From the Waist Down (i.e., waist and legs), which actually shares more similarities with the next magical movement of this set than with the one in question.

⁴²¹ *Commentary* 339.5 – 340.2. *Quintessential Instructions* does not mention the legs in the title of this movement, probably meaning that it is to purify the whole body, which I believe it does too, since the whole body is clearly engaged in its performance.

⁴²² *Quintessential Instructions* (640.1 - 2) has some details in the description of this magical movement that are absent in *Commentary*. Here it adds that the legs are contracted (*bskum*).

head to the ground.⁴²³ Extend skywards the legs and arms like a brush stroke, stirring and shaking up in the air, like if fighting. “Having done that,” *Quintessential Instructions* states, “complete the turning” (*bskor rdzogs*),⁴²⁴ which feels like Collecting the Four Stalks in the main branch set. In other words, the opening and contracting of the body and limbs in these movements guides the vital breath currents to spread and contract clearing away obstacles of the whole body. The external movement reflects well the inner *maṇḍala*-dynamism. Like in most magical movements, here too one repeats it seven times. One is instructed to conclude as usual, and *Commentary* reiterates, that shaking the four limbs and the vocalization of *ha* and *phat* and so forth should be applied to all magical movements.

This movement also resembles Purifying the Lower Body in the foundational set. It can also be said to be a combination of that movement together with the Purification of the Legs in that same foundational set. However, Camel’s Fighting Stance has the added rotation back and forth, which makes it a more thorough cleansing movement of the whole body.

Benefits.⁴²⁵

As for the benefits of these, [in accordance with] the intent of Orgom Kundul (*‘Or sgom kun ‘dul*, “Meditator of *Or* [clan/family]),

⁴²³ *Quintessential Instructions* (640.2) mentions the nape planted on the ground, while in *Commentary* (340.1) it is legs and head being planted.

⁴²⁴ *Quintessential Instructions*, 640.2. Although not explicit in *Commentary*, it is assumed that one returns to the beginning posture, like in all movements.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid*, 340.2 – 3.

tamer of all [obstructions]”, all the cooperative conditions of temperature (heat and cold), wind, bile, and demons become clear as well as the diseases of each of the branches [i.e. limbs/parts of the body] become clear.

For the first time we find a direct mention of the demonic forces being cleared away among the benefits; they were not mentioned among the benefits of the root or branch cycles. In other words, the movements of this special set clear away physical illnesses as well as those provoked by the hindering spirits.

In *Quintessential Instructions*, this section of benefits is more extensive.

Besides the above, it also reads:

In this way, all kinds and sorts of illnesses are cleared by the upper and lower special [magical movements].⁴²⁶ In terms of the concluding actions, the key points of the vital breath currents: in each session of breathing purify with each magical movement in accordance with the oral wisdom [received from your teacher]. Accordingly, in all [magical movements] respectively, shake clearing the vital breath vocalizing *ha* and *phat*. This reminding note of the special [magical movement set] that clears away obstacles [comes] from applied (lit. ‘take in hand’, *lag len*) red instructions from oral wisdom.⁴²⁷

As mentioned in chapter 2, red instructions are considered very special heart advice. Even so, Shardza omits this instruction in the same way he omitted the instruction regarding the ten gazes in the benefit section of the root of the root

⁴²⁶ Interestingly, *Experiential Transmission* (261.14) omits the word *bye brag* in this line that could be then referring to the upper and lower parts of the body. In any case, I do think that the meaning is similar to the upper and lower special magical movements or those which engage the upper and lower parts of the body.

⁴²⁷ *Quintessential Instructions* 640.3 – 4.

magical movement set.⁴²⁸ This leaves me with the qualm of why did Shardza not include this kind of advice? Did he not consider them important? Perhaps by leaving them as oral wisdom, the text allows each lama to decide in which circumstances it is appropriate to include those special instructions. Once again, this highlights the relevance of the oral instructions, even when written texts of those teachings exist. Reiterating Gray's earlier statement: "These scriptures cannot be adequately understood if this orality and the social world that gave rise to it is not taken into account."⁴²⁹

4b. Special Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Common Obstacles.⁴³⁰

The second set of the special magical movement cycle is the last set of this text. It contains five magical movements; however, since one of them is subdivided in three parts, it actually becomes seven magical movements. In contrast to its preceding set, all these movements clear away obstacles from the whole body (or more accurately, the whole mind-energy-body system).

The magical movements that clear away the common obstacles are: Stirring the Depths of the Ocean, Freeing (*bkrol*) the Nine Knots (*rgya mdud*); Binding and Freeing the Channels; Chinese Woman Weaving Silk (*dar thag*) First, Second, and Third [parts]; and the Bouncing Jewel (*nor bu 'phar len*).⁴³¹

⁴²⁸ *Experiential Transmission* (261.12 – 18) also includes it, as for the most part it is same as *Quintessential Instructions*.

⁴²⁹ See chapter 1. David B. Gray, "Orality, Textuality, and Tantric Buddhist Origins: A Comparative Analysis," p. 2.

⁴³⁰ *Commentary* 340.3 – 346.2, *Quintessential Instructions* 640.5 – 643.1.

⁴³¹ *Commentary* 340.3 – 4.

i. Stirring the Depths of the Ocean.⁴³²

For the first of this set (and thirty-third altogether), one sits in the bodhisattva posture and holds both legs under the calves with both hands.⁴³³ Raising the whole body with strength gathered internally, one rotates seven times counter-clockwise and seven times clockwise.

This movement bears the name of the visualization that the yogin or practitioner is maintaining in every magical movement. In other words, the stirring the depths of the ocean, refers to the ocean of cyclic existence. Thus, this movement emphasizes the stirring and then clearing of one's own obstacles together with those of all sentient beings. One should conclude as usual, with the sense of relief and joy of clearing away obstacles of oneself and of others.

ii. Freeing the Nine Knots.⁴³⁴

The nine knots that are freed or liberated refer to the nine parts of the movement. Sitting with the soles of the feet on the ground and legs half-extended (knees bent), one taps with both palms alternating, seven times in each of the six places mentioned: the crown of the head, the forehead, the nape, the top of the right and left shoulders, the right and left hip bone, and above the right and left

⁴³² *Commentary* 340.5 – 341.2.

⁴³³ *Quintessential Instructions* (640.5) is clearer on this point stating, “with the right and left hand hold both legs” (*rkang ngar gnyis lag pa g.yas g.yon bzung la*). Recently, Ponlob demonstrated this movement holding the legs from inside (Houston, TX, April 2005). Until then, other lamas had demonstrated it holding the calves with the hands outside.

knees. One follows by tapping the ground with feet (emphasis is on the heels), and then, planting the palms of both hands on the ground like a handstand, one elevates three times the lower part of the body to the sky. I was also instructed to kick like a horse at this point and then bring the legs down with the soles of the feet to the ground.⁴³⁵ Finally, still holding the breath, one stands up and jumps upwards, trying to get into the lotus posture and coming to the ground in that pose, repeating it three times. That is called the great descent “from earth to stars.”⁴³⁶ Thus, the six taps with the hands, the tapping with the feet, the standing on the hands, and the great descents make nine parts of this magical movement, freeing all the areas involved. One concludes by standing with the usual visualization, shaking and exhalation. This is quite a strenuous movement, probably the hardest of all 39, both in terms of holding the air for such a long time and the challenge of the physical posture.

iii. Training/Binding (*‘dul*) and Freeing (*bkrol*) the Channels.⁴³⁷

This magical movement is the only in the text that has its own distinct visualization, besides the general one of clearing the obstacles of oneself and all

⁴³⁴ *Commentary*, 341.2 – 5.

⁴³⁵ Although the texts do not mention the kicking skywards, this comes from demonstration during instructions in Tritan Norbutse (1993) and US (Khenpo Nyima Wangyal, New Mexico, 1996). Maybe it is a way to keep the balance as one’s legs are up in the air.

⁴³⁶ *Commentary* (341.4 – 5) has an annotation (*mchan*): “in the air (*bar snang* “from earth to stars”) assume the bodhisattva cross-legged posture and sit (*‘dug pa*) three [times].” (See translation in appendix III.)

⁴³⁷ *Commentary*, 342.1 – 343.1.

sentient beings. Standing with legs together and holding the hands at the waist, one clearly visualizes the three channels and the six energetic centers or wheels:

- At the principal wheel of the crown an *A*,
- At the throat an *Om*,
- At the heart a *Hung*,
- At the wheel of the soles of the feet a *Yam*,
- At the secret wheel a *Ram*, and
- At the navel a *Kham*.

Through the visualization and holding of the breath, one heats up the channels and the whole body-energy-mind system with the fire of the inner heat. The three main syllables *A*, *Om*, and *Hung*, at crown, throat and heart centers, melt into light, transforming into three essential spheres of white, red and azure colors, respectively. Interestingly, both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* instruct at this point to “meditate according to the oral instructions” from one’s teacher.⁴³⁸ In that vein, Shardza’s *Commentary* describes that the three essential spheres dissolve in the *Yam* at each of the soles of the feet. That activates both *Yam*, spreading the vital breath currents up through the legs and into the secret wheel, blazing there the fire from the *Ram*. Raising to the *Kham* at the navel wheel, the fire melts *Kham* into nectar, which then falls down like raindrops.⁴³⁹ The fire is thusly enhanced by the nectar, and through the power of one’s

visualization, it raises as vital breath currents, fire and golden light that clear away all the karmic latencies, predispositions and obstacles of the three times (past, present, and future) and become a pure burnt offering.⁴⁴⁰ Therefore, our body becomes an offering that burns away obstacles of oneself and others.

To enhance the offering and clearing away of obstacles further, keeping the pervasive vital breath current and neutral holding, one jumps in one's place, striking the buttocks with both heels at each of the seven jumps. The text describes it like a gallop. Still holding the breath and the posture, one turns around and gallops for seven more jumps. With each jump, the fire increases, fueled by the vital breath current. They transform into a powerful light that clears away obstacles as it spreads, clearing and burning external, internal and secret obstacles. Thus, the spreading follows the *kuṇḍalini* model upward, externally helped by the heels kicks and also the *maṇḍala*-dynamics model, as the light and vital breath currents pervade like sun rays throughout the whole body.

These three magical movements were spoken by Yangton Chenpo (*Yang ston chen po*, "Great Teacher of Yang") to his son Bum Je 'Od ('*Bum rje 'Od* "Luminous Lord of the Scriptures").⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁸ *Quintessential Instructions*, 641.3 and *Experiential Transmission*, 262.16.

⁴³⁹ In fact, *babs* here is like the falling of rain (*char babs*).

⁴⁴⁰ Past, present and future can refer to different lifetimes or times within one's present lifetime. Burnt offering is a class of external offering used to purify obstacles of oneself and others.

⁴⁴¹ *Commentary*, 343.1 – 2. *Yang* is an abbreviation for *Ya ngal*, a very important Dzogchen lineage of masters that now continues in Dolpo (see S. Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. 29).

Benefits (of the first three magical movements of this set).⁴⁴²

[One is] liberated from all kinds of disease, as well as from all cooperative conditions [due to imbalance of] the elements, and all external and internal obstacles. All flaws of the channels, vital-breath, and essential spheres are cleared away; [and] the five vital breaths penetrate the 5 points. [One] achieves the self/natural power of speed-walking, of the ignition of the warmth of bliss and of [control] over the four elements. The erratic collection of thoughts purify into the natural abode and the non-conceptual experiences of bliss and clarity dawns.

Although *Commentary* does not attribute these benefits explicitly to *Quintessential Instructions*, as in previous sets, they clearly come from it.⁴⁴³ All kinds of disease probably mean the collection of four diseases (wind, bile, phlegm, and the combination of all three) as we have seen earlier. If we think of all kinds of disease from the Tibetan medical perspective, there would be three additional combinations: wind-bile, bile-phlegm, and wind-phlegm, making a total of seven. These could be the causes (*rgyu*), which, together with the cooperative conditions (*rkyen*) due to the elements not being in balance, can bring disharmony or unbalance to one's mind-energy-body system. Therefore, these three magical movements can liberate the practitioner from such humor imbalance, as well as from external, internal (and secret) obstacles.

In other words, through the performance of these magical movements, any flaw in the energetic body constituted by channels, vital breath currents and essential spheres is cleared away or dispelled by the inner *maṇḍala*-dynamic

⁴⁴² *Commentary*, 343.2 – 4.

power, bringing an overall balance.⁴⁴⁴ *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* have a list of such obstacles, including channels dissipating (*yar ba* or *yer ba*) and the vital breath having drowsiness or laxity (*bying ba* or *bying pa*), quarreling (*'khrug pa*), crippled (*zha ba*) and so forth.⁴⁴⁵ The vital breath currents then penetrate and open the five energetic centers.⁴⁴⁶ As they open, they allow the flow of the vital breath currents, positively affecting the mind. Consequently, the powers mentioned are the signs of the result. The most important of them, from the Bön and Buddhist perspective, is the dissolution of thoughts, which provides the ability to abide in one's natural mind in experiences of bliss and clarity.

The five vital breaths that flow through the wheels are the same ones as in Tibetan medicine, mentioned in the introduction, and correspond to the five elements. The *Mother Tantra*, a text from which Shardza quotes extensively in this aspect, particularly in *Self-Dawning*, clearly renders the correspondences between the five vital breath currents, the five channels-breaths movements and the five elements, which we can also see in English in Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's

⁴⁴³ *Quintessential Instructions*, 641.1 – 3.

⁴⁴⁴ Actually *Quintessential Instructions* (641.4) uses *sol*, "to dispel or arrest."

⁴⁴⁵ *Quintessential Instructions*, 641.4 – 5, *Experiential Transmission*, 262.19 – 263.2. The whole list is not identical, but many are shared, and when there are two different spellings, the first spelling corresponds to *Quintessential Instructions* and the second to *Experiential Transmission*. Shardza omits them in *Commentary*,

⁴⁴⁶ When they are mentioned as five, they refer to those in abdomen, torso and head. The ones in the feet are excluded from the enumeration.

Healing with Form, Energy, and Light (also see chart in appendix II).⁴⁴⁷ Following that source:⁴⁴⁸ the upward moving vital breath is related to the earth element and flows through the throat and crown wheels; the life-force vital breath is related to the space element and flows through the heart wheel; the fire vital breath is related to the fire element and flows through the navel wheel; the pervasive vital breath is usually related to the whole central channel (although sometimes also related to the wheel of the union of the channels), and the downward clearing vital breath is related to the water element and flows through the secret wheel. These correlations re-assemble that these magical movements, are not only part of a spiritual endeavor, but are also methods of healing, especially linked with the Tibetan medical system.

iv. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk.

The next three magical movements of this set are called Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, Parts 1, 2, & 3, respectively. And although each is a distinct magical movement, they are related. In fact, *Quintessential Instructions* (and *Experiential Transmission* following it) considers them as three stages of one

⁴⁴⁷ Mother Tantra, *Byung ba'i thig le*, pp. 591-619, and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Healing with Form, Energy, and Light*, especially pp. 76 – 110. Also, *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* mention a relation of the five vital breath currents to the five elements, but without stating its correspondences. The relation of those two modes of practice and discourse, i.e., Tibetan medicine and Tibetan tantric practices, specifically channels-breaths and magical movement, is a topic that I would like to continue exploring in the future. I believe that these interrelations can be the foundation for that exploration, especially since the five elements are also crucial in the understanding of Tibetan medicine.

⁴⁴⁸ I make this caveat since other systems may have different correlations, as seen, for example, in Dr. Yeshe Dhonden's comment included in the introduction of this dissertation.

movement (*rim pa gsum*).⁴⁴⁹ It is worth noting that this is the first movement with a name involving a person. Up to now we had names to imitate animal behaviors, especially in the root magical movement set that clears obstacles away, and nature. The weaving silk, refers to the movement of the loom. It is Chinese because Tibetans obtained their silk from China. And I assume that women did the weaving of silk more than men did. Thus, the name.

iv,a. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, Part 1.⁴⁵⁰

One becomes both the loom and the weaver in this posture. The knee that is up, together with the hand holding that leg by its ankle, creates the loom. The other hand moves the respective leg in seven circular weavings forward and seven backward. One starts with the right side being the loom, while the left does the weaving motion. *Commentary* states, “it should be understood that the right and the left should be switched.” Therefore, one performs the same movements, now rotating the right leg. *Quintessential Instructions* concludes this magical movement with a specific instruction to extend by straightening the legs and the arms and to exhale clearing all stale air.⁴⁵¹ However, this refers to the usual conclusion.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* 641.6, *Experiential Transmission*, 262.10.

⁴⁵⁰ *Commentary*, 343.4 – 344.1.

⁴⁵¹ *Quintessential Instructions* 642.1.

⁴⁵² I wondered why it was mentioned specifically in this magical movement. Both Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak and Ponlob Thinley Nyima said that it just refers to the usual conclusion, and none gave a specific reason why *Quintessential Instructions* had inserted it at that point in the text

iv.b. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, Part 2.⁴⁵³

Lying down now on the right side, like the Buddha entering in *paranirvana*, one closes the right nostril with the forefinger of the right hand, and brings the thumb to carefully bind the carotid artery.⁴⁵⁴ With the left hand, one grabs the left foot and performs seven circular weaving motions outward and seven inward. Interestingly, in the first part (i.e., last movement), the turning was first inwards and then outwards. Perhaps this bring some balance, or, most probably, just a lack of consistency in the authors or scribes. *Quintessential Instructions* (642.2) only mentions inwards rotation (and probably assumes the outward), and *Experiential Transmission* (263. 17–18) has both, with inwards first and then outwards. In any case, one repeats the rotation also lying down on the left side, then, standing up, performs the usual concluding shaking, visualization and exhalation. This second part of the Chinese Woman Weaving Silk is said to be an important secondary practice for enhancing the direct leap vision practice.⁴⁵⁵

(Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, Charlottesville, VA, October, 2005, Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, TX, April 2005).

⁴⁵³ *Commentary*, 344.1 – 3.

⁴⁵⁴ The binding of the carotid needs to be done with caution, since too much pressure might cause fainting and even death. It promotes the direct leap visions, but it could be dangerous if done for a long time (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, TX, April 2005).

⁴⁵⁵ Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, oral teachings, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2000.

iv.c. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, Part 3.⁴⁵⁶

Sitting in a crouching posture with the back of the buttocks on the ground, one balances with the arms slightly lifted and holding the legs by the big toes. (I have also seen it being grabbed by the ankles.) Alternating the legs, one brings each foot inward with the heels touching the inside of the hipbone, almost touching the secret energetic center. One repeats it seven times with each heel. *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* describe this process as “the legs stretch, bend, and cross.”⁴⁵⁷ The crossing is possibly like the alternating (*re mo*) in *Commentary*, since if the legs actually crossed it would be very difficult to do the striking with the heels toward the inner part of the hip bone. This last part is the simplest of the three.⁴⁵⁸ The conclusion is with the usual shaking, exhalation and visualization.⁴⁵⁹ *Experiential Transmission* also states, “accompany the utterance vocalizations and stale air to all [magical movements].”⁴⁶⁰ Again, this is a way for Drugyalwa to remind that this instruction is the last magical movement of his text, since, as we will see below, he slightly altered the order of them.

⁴⁵⁶ *Commentary*, 344.3 – 5.

⁴⁵⁷ *Brkyang bskum bsnol mar bya Quintessential Instructions* (642,3) and *Experiential Transmission* (264.2). In the latter it is (mis) spelled *rkyang skum bsnol ma bya*. *Experiential Transmission* also says *skor log theb*, which can mean “turning the legs.”

⁴⁵⁸ To maintain the same character as its predecessors, the light pounding in of the legs might be done with a slight rotation– I will ask Ponlob Thinley Nyima, as once he seemed to be indicating it in that way.

⁴⁵⁹ This phrase, *bsig sprug rlung ro sgra skad kun dang mthun*, is absent in *Quintessential Instructions*, but it is partly there in *Experiential Transmission*, which leads me to believe that Shardza took it from the latter.

Benefits (of the three parts of the Chinese Woman Weaving Silk).⁴⁶¹

The first [part of the Chinese Woman Weaving Silk magical movement] opens the door of the left channel, and insight increases; the female [left] vital-breath penetrates the vital points and discursive thoughts are pacified.⁴⁶²

The second [part] closes the door of the right channel and cuts off the continuity of the path of afflictions. [One] obtains natural power over the harsh vital breath and purifies torpor and dullness.

The third [part] opens the door of the central channel and masters the neutral vital breath. [One] obtains natural power over appearances and mind and non-conceptual primordial wisdom dawns.

The benefits of the Chinese Woman Weaving Silk are well articulated in terms of its three parts. The first movement opens the left or wisdom channel, the second closes the right or affliction channel, and the third one opens the central channel. So, the first one opens the wisdom channel, bringing in the female vital breath current and pacifying discursive thoughts. Then, in the second, by closing the affliction channel and conquering the harsh vital breath current, torpor and dullness are liberated. And finally, by mastering the neutral breath current in the central channel, one is not distracted by appearances and mental “tricks.” Thus, non-conceptual primordial wisdom dawns.

⁴⁶⁰ *Experiential Transmission*, 264.3.

⁴⁶¹ *Commentary*, 345.1 – 3.

⁴⁶² *Mo rlung* is another way of saying ‘*jam rlung*, or soft breath (Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, Charlottesville, VA, October, 2005, Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, TX, April 2005). *Quintessential Instructions* (642.3–4) has it as distilled or gathered vital-breath (*bsdu rlung*) and *Experiential Transmission* (264.4) as harsh vital-breath (*rtsub rlung*).

The opening of the left channel in the first part of this magical movement seems to work with the vital breath slightly different, according to the three texts. While *Commentary* mentions the female vital breath as penetrating the vital points, or, as we mentioned earlier, making the energetic system run smoother, *Quintessential Instructions* mentions it as a distilled (*bsdu*) vital breath current that penetrates the essential points.⁴⁶³ In *Experiential Transmission*, it is the harsh (*rtsub*) vital breath current that penetrates the essential points.⁴⁶⁴

For the second part, all three texts are in agreement regarding the benefits: closing the door of the right channel and thus cutting off the continuity of the path of afflictions. All three also agree that one obtains natural power over the rough vital breath current, purifying torpor and dullness.⁴⁶⁵ *Experiential Transmission* mentions the rough vital breath in both the first and second parts within the benefits. I think that is an oversight or a typo. Following the other texts, it would seem more sensible to have the first one be the soft vital breath

⁴⁶³ *Quintessential Instructions* (642.4).

⁴⁶⁴ *Experiential Transmission* (264.4). It also brings a controversy that has been in place for a long time, both among scholars and practitioners, concerning the relationship of the left and right channels with the wisdom and the afflicted aspects. Relating the left channel to wisdom or insight and the right to the afflictions seems the predominant position and that of this text. Some texts cite that for women the opposite is true. Unfortunately, I do not propose any solutions here but wanted to point out that this controversy still exists, and here I will follow these texts' position. I would also like to add that the mention of the female vital breath, is interesting in itself, even if not directly related to the reversing the channels for men and women.

⁴⁶⁵ *Quintessential Instructions* (642.4) and *Commentary* (345.2) use the word *sangs*, while *Experiential Transmission* has *sel* (264.6). Shardza decides here to adhere with *Quintessential Instructions*. As in other occasions, the words do not really change in meaning, but one should ask why one author, if quoting another text, decides to change the wording, even if the meaning is maintained.

current, the second one the harsh vital breath current and the third one the neutral vital breath current.

The third part, according to *Commentary*, and claiming to be a quotation (from *Quintessential Instructions* would be the assumed source although it is not mentioned), reads slightly different from its source. *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* read “the two vital breaths pierce the essential points and [one] obtains natural power over the external and internal.”⁴⁶⁶ I believe that here the external and internal refers to obstacles, although it could also be referring to the elements, and actually those two could be correlated too. In addition, none of these earlier texts mention the opening of the central channel here. However, *Quintessential Instructions* concludes this part by stating: “the general flows (*rgyug pa*) are even (*cha snyoms*).”⁴⁶⁷ *Experiential Transmission* refers to all three “gradual parts of Chinese woman weaving silk magical movement,” stating that they “teach the general flows.”⁴⁶⁸ The central channel is known for uniting, and in doing so, making the flow of the vital breath even. This is what White describes as the hydraulic model, as we saw in chapter 2.

We can also understand the benefits of the three together by thinking that all three parts of the Chinese woman weaving silk teach the practitioner the flow

⁴⁶⁶ *Quintessential Instructions* (642.4-5) and *Experiential Transmission* (264.6-8). Interestingly, here both use *bsnun* rather than its most common usage of *tshud* as seen before even in these texts, translated as “pierce” or “penetrate.”

⁴⁶⁷ 642.5

⁴⁶⁸ 254.7-8.

of the vital breath currents. In that way, one is able to balance them and especially master the neutral breath, the most important for performing the magical movement. At the same time, one can control one's mind and have power over the relation to the appearances it perceives.

v. Bouncing Jewel.⁴⁶⁹

Sitting in the bodhisattva posture, one brings the arms parallel in front of oneself and forms the “jewel” by clasping the hands by interlacing the fingers and leaving the two forefingers pointing forward, almost like a gun, and the left thumb pressing the right one. Contracting the arms, one brings that jewel toward oneself hitting all areas of the chest with the jewel, while simultaneously vocalizing *phat* with each hit. After hitting as many times as possible, which is accompanied with deep inner stirring, one shakes and exhales as usual. As expected, the text reads: “the stir and shake with *ha phat*, and so forth, extends to all of the magical movements.”⁴⁷⁰

This is the thirty-ninth magical movement and the last one in this text. *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission* have a longer title for it, or more like a subtitle, adding, “clearing the obstacles of the treasure of the

⁴⁶⁹ *Commentary*, 345.3 – 346.1.

⁴⁷⁰ Judging by the odd way it is written, it seems that it might have been dictated, and as for quotes from *Quintessential Instructions*, probably done by memory and not necessarily with the *Quintessential Instructions* text in front.

torso.”⁴⁷¹ The word *stod* ‘*tshang*, indicating the pressure on the chest or torso, can be also rendered more poetically as “inspiring the heart.” In fact, in oral instructions, it is mentioned that this movement is beneficial for the heart’s health.⁴⁷²

Quintessential Instructions and *Experiential Transmission* describe this magical movement in a very similar way, although they use slightly different words.⁴⁷³ Shardza’s wording, perhaps, adapted to a 19th century audience.⁴⁷⁴ Also, both these texts mention the benefit of this magical movement, which is oddly left out in *Commentary*. Ponlob Thinley Nyima explains that in this movement the pressure brought by the breath in the torso is removed, like a “pressure cooker” with each *phat* vocalization and thumping, concluding with the total relief of the area. In this way, this movement is said to be particularly beneficial for heart problems.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷¹ *Quintessential Instructions* (642.5) and *Experiential Transmission* (263.4-5). The latter has this magical movement before the three-tiered Chinese Woman weaving silk magical movement, without giving any explanation.

⁴⁷² I heard this almost every time I received oral instructions, beginning with the first time in Tritan Norbutse in 1993.

⁴⁷³ *Quintessential Instructions* 642.6, and *Experiential Transmission* 263.8.

⁴⁷⁴ There are slight, yet significant changes at the end of the description. One is that when pointing to the special or particular part, both these texts have the more familiar term *dmigs* rather than *gdan* in *Commentary*, and in explaining it they say to throw or entrust your focus and add that one should understand this and the breathing from applied oral instructions or hands-on oral instructions (*lag len zhal*). Interestingly though, even among these two texts there are slight differences in words, which I take to be typos, such as *zhar* in *Experiential Transmission* instead of the correct *zhal* in *Quintessential Instructions* and *thun* in *Quintessential Instructions* instead of the more probable *thub* in *Experiential Transmission* (*Quintessential Instructions* 642.6, and *Experiential Transmission* 263.8).

⁴⁷⁵ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Houston April 2005.

Benefits (of the Bouncing Jewel).⁴⁷⁶

The benefits are: maintaining the heart vital breath current in the chest treasure and liberating from the impure diseases.⁴⁷⁷

It seems that the more one is able to maintain the vital breath current in the central channel and the heart as its center, the more physical and mental diseases are liberated. This would be something truly appealing to undertake as a research study within a modern Western medical framework.

Interestingly too, a movement within the Chinese tradition called the "Thymus Tap Technique" appears to be similar in terms of physical movement, rhythmically tapping the chest area with both hands, and, more importantly, having significant health benefits, including the heart.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁶ *Quintessential Instructions* 642.6, *Experiential Transmission* 263.9.

⁴⁷⁷ *Quintessential Instructions* (642.6) and *Experiential Transmission* (263.9). The latter actually adds *bshug* as the verb for the first part, which with that spelling means "singing or whistling," but if spelled *bzhug* it could make more sense as maintaining the heart vital breath. (Another question for the lamas.)

⁴⁷⁸ Daniel Reid, *The Complete Book of Chinese Healing and Health* (Shambhala, Boston, 1994) p.204-205. He describes it in the following way:

In the Stand in the Horse stance, completely relaxed. Make a fist with the right or left hand and raise it up to the middle of your chest. Start tapping the spot midway between the nipples with a rhythm of one hard followed by two softer taps: one, two, three, one, two, three, etc. Tap hard enough to vibrate the sternum and create a deep drumming sound in the chest. Continue for three to five minutes, breathing naturally and keeping your mind focused on the vibrations in the chest. You may practice this in the morning as part of your warm-up, or just before bedtime, or both. Practicing at night before going to sleep is particular beneficial because the thymus gland becomes most active approximately ninety minutes after you fall asleep. Since the thymus shrinks in adults during the late teens or early twenties, it's a good idea to make this exercise a regular part of your practice, in order to stimulate this gland's immune functions.

Benefits: Stimulates the thymus to produce T-cells, which are primary immune factors. Draws blood and energy into the thymus thereby energizing and nourishing it. With regular daily practice, this exercise will increase the size of the thymus and improve its immune functions. The rhythmic vibrations not only

Although *Commentary* does not describe the benefits for this magical movement, it does have a recommendation that seems to apply to all magical movements. It is placed here as the concluding advice, probably by Shardza himself, since it is absent in both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission*. *Commentary* reads:⁴⁷⁹

Thus, afterward [i.e., having done these practices, one] effortlessly self-liberates in an uncontrived manner beyond intellect, and instantly one finds rest, entering into a meditative equipoise.

This clearly reinforces the purpose or view established in the homage of the text—which is shared in all three texts. In other words, through the practice of these magical movements, one can effortlessly (*rtsol med*) clear or liberate his/her illnesses, afflictions, and subtle mental disturbances, and thus, abide uncontrived (*bya med*) in the state of mind beyond intellect (*blo med*). In that way, one enters and is able to rest (*ngal gso*)⁴⁸⁰ in meditative equipoise in one's own natural state of mind, which can be in the state of, and inspired by the Ever-Excellent One. There is nothing else that I can add here, except to reiterate how vital this point is in understanding the impact that performing these magical movements can have on the experience of the practitioner.

stimulate the thymus, they also vibrate through the chest, gently massaging and energizing the lungs, heart, bronchial tubes, and throat.

I am grateful to Scott Clearwater for referring me to this source.

⁴⁷⁹ *Commentary*, 346.1 – 2.

⁴⁸⁰ I am reading *ngal gso* for *ngar gso*.

Concluding Verses: Colophon to the Text(s)

As it is well known, colophons are often the most obscure part of a text, and that seems to apply here too.⁴⁸¹ At the same time, as Tibetologist José Ignacio Cabezón asserts, “[t]he Tibetan colophon is a fascinating literary artifact, often the only source of information we possess about the composition of a particular text.”⁴⁸²

Quintessential Instructions’ brief colophon to this text adjudicates these magical movements to the authorship (*mdzad*) of Dampa Bum Je (*Dam pa ‘Bum rje*), the same master referred to earlier in this set as Bum Je ‘Od or Bumjeo, Yangton Chenpo’s son. Although its description is somewhat unclear in terms of referring to Bumje Od as author of only the last set or the whole text, my sense is that it is doing both at the same time, when it reads: “The complete stages of root special magical movements of the Great Completion of the Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung.”⁴⁸³ In other words, on one hand Bumje Od is seen as the compiler of the last set, which he learned in part from his father, but he is also the

⁴⁸¹ An example of this was a lecture given by José Ignacio Cabezón at University of Virginia on colophons as a genre of Tibetan literature (Charlottesville, VA, 1995), which helped form the basis of the article mentioned below.

⁴⁸² José Ignacio Cabezón, “Authorship and Literary Production in Classical Buddhist Tibet,” in Guy Newland, ed., *Changing Minds: Contributions to the study of Buddhism and Tibet in honor of Jeffrey Hopkins*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2001, p. 238.

⁴⁸³ *Quintessential Instructions*, 643.1. The reference to the root special magical movements is a little disconcerting, since that is not how this set was presented. On the other hand, if it is inclusive of all the magical movements, it should have the branch magical movements mentioned between the root and the special, as specified in *Experiential Transmission* (see below).

compiler of the whole text, as Reynolds' earlier reference confirms. Thus, it concludes with the usual *Sarva Mangalam*.⁴⁸⁴

Experiential Transmission also mentions that Dampa Bum Je Od expounded (*gsungs*) on these magical movements. However, in this text, he appears after the Chinese Woman Weaving Silk magical movements, since that is the last magical movement in that text (see earlier footnote).

Commentary has the most extensive colophon of these three texts. It does not mention Bumje Od at the end of this set. Possibly because of mentioning him earlier—at the end of the first three magical movements of this set, that were passed on to him by his father Yangton Chenpo—, it might seem redundant to repeat him. However, it seems fair to attribute the rest of this set to Bum je Od, and the earlier texts confirm this too.

Commentary's colophon reads:⁴⁸⁵

Due to my disciple's request, [and] in through the unmistakable oral instruction of the higher great masters, [I, Shardza] set forth as clear [as possible] the application of the practices of the uncommon path, of the ZZ *Oral Transmission's* magical movement. I admit the contradictions [that I made here] to the skygoers and protectors.

In a smaller typeface, not sure if for a specific reason—sometimes that is found in colophons—, or very possibly, for lack of space, the colophon continues:⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ *Quintessential Instructions*, 643.1.

⁴⁸⁵ *Commentary*, 346.2 – 3.

⁴⁸⁶ In fact the last line would have certainly not fitted, since all the rest of the pages have only five lines. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak corrected many lines of this last part and stated that there

Amplifying on this, a nephew of the *dra* [family], Namgyal Dragpa (*Rnam rgyal grags pa*) and a student of the *dra*, Tsultrim Gyaltzen (*Tshul khrims gyal mtshan*),⁴⁸⁷ both having met [and received] this profound oral instructions, and with the great intention of preventing the lineage to degenerate or stop, exhorted [me, Shardza] to write these oral instructions down, and thus [I] the renunciant/ascetic Shardza'i Tashi Gyaltzen (*Shar rda'i Bya bral Bkris Rgyal mtshan*), composed it at the Blissful Beautiful Yungdrung mountain hermitage (*G.Yung [drung] Lhun po'i De chen ri khrod*). May this practice become a condition whereby the yogis might integrate in their continuum whatever extraordinary experiences and realizations generating of the unity mind and vital breath currents.⁴⁸⁸ *Sarva Mangalam*.

In simple words, Ponlob Thinley Nyima recounts:

Shardza is praying for the benefit and increasing realization of all practitioners into becoming great yogis. Noting that it is very sad that this lineage might be lost, his students asked Shardza to please write down what he had taught them, the oral instruction, in order to benefit future practitioners. So, Shardza wrote it down in his hermitage. He concludes by praying for benefit and increasing realization, by being able to integrate mind and vital breath currents.⁴⁸⁹

Drugyalwa seems compelled to make the lineage clearer in *Experiential Transmission*, and so he writes:

should be better blockprints of this text available (Charlottesville, VA, October, 2004). I will look into finding a better copy.

⁴⁸⁷ This is probably is a typo, and it should be spelled *rgyal mthsan*. *Dra* here refers to the family name, and it could also specifically refer to Ratrul Tenzin Wangyal (*Ra sprul Bstan 'dzin dbang rgyal*), a famous teacher in that family, probably the uncle of Namgyal Dragpa and teacher of Tsultrim Gyaltzen (Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, personal communication, Charlottesville, VA, October 2004). Ponlob remarks that, also within that lineage, was Raton Kalzang Tenpa Gyaltzen (*Ra ston sKal bzang bstan pa rgyal mtshan*), who was one of Shardza's famous students and who wrote his biography..

⁴⁸⁸ *Commentary*, 346.3–6. I am not sure if “Blissful Beautiful” is part of the name of the hermitage or qualifiers to it.

⁴⁸⁹ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Houston, TX, June 2005.

This successive root, branch, and special are all together⁴⁹⁰the magical movements from the Great Completion of the Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung, [beginning with] Pongyal Tsenpo, the six destroyer of delusion [Masters] of the upper tradition, the five great accomplished [Masters] of the lower tradition to Yangton [Yangton Chenpo] and his lineage,⁴⁹¹ the successive lineage to me [Drugyalwa Yungdrung].⁴⁹²

Drugyalwa seals the text, as is customary among Buddhist texts as well, with “May it be virtuous” (*dge'o*).⁴⁹³ In mentioning the lineage masters of *ZZ Oral Transmission* that relate to magical movement, from Pongyal Tsenpo down to himself and including the different subgroups, such as those of Upper and Lower traditions, Drugyalwa points out an interesting, and somewhat difficult subject, that of the clear description of the lineage, in particular those masters related to magical movement.⁴⁹⁴

All three texts, the 11th century *Quintessential Instructions*, the 13th century Drugyalwa's *Experiential Transmission* and the 19th century *Commentary*, by Shardza, agree on the names of the *ZZ Oral Transmission* masters who composed the magical movement cycles. Drugyalwa's colophon, however, brings the added

⁴⁹⁰ Although the word *tum mong* usually means “common,” Ponlob Thinley Nyima says that here it means “all of them” (oral communication, Houston, TX, April, 2005)

⁴⁹¹ Literally “son and nephews.” As this is actually a blood lineage, it makes sense in that way too.

⁴⁹² *Experiential Transmission*, 264.9 – 12.

⁴⁹³ This Tibetan phrase is placed interchangeably with the Sanskrit *Sarva mangalam*, which is what we find in *Quintessential Instructions*.

⁴⁹⁴ Different sources mention the subgroups somewhat differently. Samten Karmay has performed a wonderful task in bringing clarity to it in *Little Luminous Boy*. Unfortunately, the book has a few typos or errors. I am in email conversations with him to help me straighten some doubts about this matter. I am extremely grateful to him for his time and detailed answers.

information of the grouping of these masters within the *ZZ Oral Transmission's* lineage. Since some of these lineage groups co-existed in the same historical period, the chronology is sometimes difficult to follow. That is the case, for example, with the Upper Tradition (in Dolpo, and Mt. Kailash area) and the Lower Tradition (in Kham, and Amdo), and the Northern and Southern lineages that follow after Yangton Chenpo. Therefore, in an effort to understand the chronology of these masters, and in particular those related to magical movement, I have compared Drugyalwa's description in the colophon with the exhaustive *Biographies of the Masters* (*Bla ma'i rnam 'thar*) beautifully reported in English in Samten Karmay's *Little Luminous Boy*, and with the succinct mention in a prayer (*gsol bdebs*) to the masters of the *ZZ Oral Transmission* that Bönpos recite daily (henceforth *lineage prayer*).⁴⁹⁵ The result of such comparison can be briefly stated as follows:

- Pongyal Tsenpo is the first *ZZ Oral Transmission* master that is mention in these magical movement texts. Although Drugyalwa mentions him by himself (i.e., not within a "cluster" or sub-group of masters), he is sometimes portrayed as the last among the "six fortunate masters (*las can dam pa*)."⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁵ More information on all these masters is found in chapter *ka*, the biographies (*rnam 'thar*) of the lamas (*ZZ Oral Transmission*, pp. 1 - 130) and well reported in English in Samten Karmay's *Little Luminous Boy*. The *lineage prayer* is in "Daily Bon Prayers," *Rgyun khyer bon spyod phogs bsdu dad ldan thar lam 'dzegs pa'i them skas shes bya ba bshugs so*, Varanasi, India: Yungdrung Bon Students Committee, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2002, pp. 131 - 140). Since there are some discrepancies, I hope that through communication with Dr. Karmay, we can find a unified version. In appendix III, I will include the *tsakli*, or painted cards, representing these masters (see figure 12).

⁴⁹⁶ "Daily Bon Prayers," p. 133.

- Togme Shigpo is the second *ZZ Oral Transmission* master mentioned in these texts, and he is placed sixth among the “six destroyers of delusion (*‘khrul zhig*)” masters of the Upper Tradition mentioned by Drugyalwa.⁴⁹⁷
- Lhundrub Muthur and Orgom Kundul follow as third and fourth masters within these magical movement texts, and are first and fifth, respectively, among the “five greatly accomplished (*grub chen*)” masters from the Lower Tradition.⁴⁹⁸

For that reason, I assume that the other masters from the Lower Tradition, namely Shengyal Lhatse (*Gshen rgyal lha rtse*), Lhagom Karpo (*Lha bsgom dkar po*) and Ngodrub Gyaltsen (*dnegos grub rgyal mtshan*), also practiced magical movement or at least were able to transmit it. And, in that way, it reaches to Orgom Kundul.⁴⁹⁹

- Yangton Chenpo and his son Bumje Od are the last two masters mentioned in relation to magical movement. Both are part of the famous Dzogchen Yangton lineage, which then moved to what now is the Northwest Nepali region of Dolpo. Interestingly, our beloved Ponlob Thinley Nyima is from this region and belongs to this *Yangton* or *Yang ngal* lineage too. Yangton Chenpo and Bumje Od are the first and second among the “nine masters or awareness holders (*rig ‘dzin*) of the Word Lineage (*bka rgyud*).”⁵⁰⁰

The *lineage prayer* has all these masters in the order that agrees with their appearance in all three magical movement texts. As I speculate how the transmission of the magical movements was handed down, it is interesting to note that its masters follow the Lower or Experiential Transmission, as could be

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 134.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 134.

⁴⁹⁹ Confirmed by Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication (phone), June 2005.

expected, with the only exception of Togme Shigpo, who is the last of the Word Lineage or Upper Tradition.

Karmay says:

[u]p to Ponchen Tsenpo [alias Pongyal Tsenpo], the tradition of transmitting the teaching to only one disciple (*chig brgyud*) was strictly observed according to the tradition, but this master taught two disciples.⁵⁰¹

In fact, he taught what was known as the “Transmission of the Experience” (*Nyams brgyud*) to Lhundrub Muthur, mentioned earlier, and the “Transmission of the Word” (*bKa’ brgyud*) to Sherab Loden (*Shes rab blo ldan*). The former was an oral transmission, while the latter was written, “which is what Gyerpung [Nangzher Lopo (*Snang bzher lod po*)] is thought to have received from Tapi Hritsa,”⁵⁰² around the 8th century CE. Furthermore, Ponchen Tsenpo is also said to have put into writing the magical movements from *ZZ Oral Transmission* (or at least a group of them) that were only transmitted orally until then.⁵⁰³

So, Ponchen Tsenpo is Lhundrub Muthur’s teacher from whom the magical movement teachings reach to Orgom Kundul, who is in the same group but with four teachers between them. It is somewhat unclear how Togme Shigpo received them, but both of them, Togme Shigpo and Orgom Kundul, passed the Word Transmission and the Experiential Transmission, respectively, to Yangton

⁵⁰⁰ “Daily Bon Prayers,” p. 135.

⁵⁰¹ Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. xvii.

⁵⁰² Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. xvii.

Chenpo. Thus, both lineages join in Yangton Chenpo, and interestingly, he is said to have had visions or visionary communication with Ponchen Tsenpo, the first of the masters related to magical movement.⁵⁰⁴ It is clear from the texts themselves, as stated earlier, that Yangton Chenpo passes his teachings—partly also via his wife, Nyanmo Tashi Jochan (*Gnyan mo bkra shis jo lcan*)—to his son, Bumjeo. The latter, I assume, is the compiler of *Quintessential Instructions*. Karmay adds that Yangton Chenpo and his teacher (or with the authorization of his teacher), Orgom Kundul, “wrote down the Experiential Transmission (NyG),”⁵⁰⁵ and from him it was divided in the Northern and Southern lineages, out of which the latter, that of his son Bumjeo, became better known.⁵⁰⁶ Drugyalwa, in fact, also belongs to that Southern lineage and is the one who, a couple of centuries later, includes these magical movements in his famous *Gyalwa’s Experiential Transmission* practice manual. Drugyalwa also includes a different magical movement cycle in his compilation of the *Instructions of the A in Fifteen Points (A khrid bco lnga)*.⁵⁰⁷ Reynolds says that it was not actually Yangton

⁵⁰³ John Myrdhin Reynolds, *The Oral Tradition from Zhang-Zhung*, Kathmandu, Nepal: Vajra Publications, 2005, p. 137.

⁵⁰⁴ Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. xix, and p. 29.

⁵⁰⁵ Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. xix.

⁵⁰⁶ Samten Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. xix.

⁵⁰⁷ *The A Khrid Collection*, New Delhi, India, 1967. *A khrid* or the tradition of “Instructions on the A” began in the 11th century by Gondzod Ritro Chenpo (*Dgongs mdzod Ri khrod chen po*) as an eighty period system (*A khrid mtshams brgyad cu pa*). Then it was condensed into thirty periods in the 12th century by ‘A zha blo gros rgyal mtshan, and finally reduced to fifteen periods by Drugyalwa. Of this present form there is an English translation of the parts one and two (of three parts), which do not include magical movements (see Bru-sgom rGyal-ba g.yung-drung, *The Stages of A-khrid Meditation: Dzogchen Practice of the Bön Tradition*, translated by Per Kvaerne and

Chenpo who wrote the Experiential Transmission, but that he and his teacher, Orgom Kundul, authorized Bumjeo to do so. Bumjeo, then, “created a grand compendium” of the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, from the teachings he received from his father and master, Yangton Chenpo, and their master, Orgom Kundul. Thus, according to Reynolds, this is how “the corpus of texts belonging to the Zhang Zhung Nyan Gyu largely came into their present form,”⁵⁰⁸ and included in it the magical movement cycles that are the core of this dissertation.

Thupten K. Rikey, Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996). I plan to work with the magical movement chapter in the *A khrid* meditation system (*The A Khrid Collection*, pp. 195-198), which contains fifteen magical movements and also sounds. I had the good fortune to learn these with the Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima and Ponlob Thinley Nyima during my stay in Menri Monastery, from January to March 2002. Within that system, there is also another magical movement text, *Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar la bogs 'don 'khrul 'khor sgyu ma'i rol mo bzhugs*, that can be found in Shardza's *Self-Dawning*. This set is comprised of forty magical movements that are divided into different sets by area of the body and type of breathing to be used. I will briefly mention it in the next chapter and plan to expand on it in the future.

⁵⁰⁸ This and previous quote from John M. Reynolds, *The Oral Tradition from Zhang-Zhung*, p. 138.

Chapter 4: Moving into the Twentieth Century

Magical movement reached a pinnacle in 13th-century Tibet and especially among Bönpos with Drugyalwa's works, which were mentioned in the previous chapter.⁵⁰⁹ This is probably the result of the 11th-and 12th-century Tibetan Renaissance, which, as Germano states, is the period when the body resurges as a center of attention for practice, such as in the yogini and other Indian and Tibetan tantras.⁵¹⁰ It seems that, at this time, there was a need for more body-oriented meditative practices. In fact, according to David Gray, they "represent a cutting-edge of Asian spiritual practice, which beginning circa the 8th century, was truly a pan-Asian movement."⁵¹¹ This shift is not only evident in magical movement and channels-breaths practices, but also with the body-centered yogini tantras and sexual yogic practices; this also affects Indian yoga. As we have seen in chapter 2, the āsanās in Patañjali were limited to the lotus posture and its variations, and many centuries later, around the 9th and 10th centuries, Gorakhnāth and his followers brought different āsanās and began the now more well known form: haṭha yoga.

⁵⁰⁹ In his main two instruction manuals, *Experiential Transmission* and *Instructions of the A in Fifteen Points*, he includes their corresponding cycles of magical movement. This appears to be a statement by Drugyalwa supporting the importance of magical movement in meditative training.

⁵¹⁰ David Germano, electronic communication, April 2005.

⁵¹¹ David Gray, personal communication, May 2005.

As seen in chapter 2, the 9th-and 10th-century commentaries on the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* might be the first occurrences of “yantra” as a yogic posture (besides also being a machine, and a geometrical diagram).⁵¹² These were just mentions without much description. Then, in the 11th and 12th centuries, body-centered tantric and yogic systems explosively grew all over Tibet as part of the Tibetan Renaissance. The famed Naropa is the prime example. Consequently, it makes sense that magical movement would gain importance at that time and extend into the 13th century, as we see with Drugyalwa, and even into the 14th century, with Tsongkhapa and his Commentary on the Six Yogas of Naropa (see appendix I).

Beyond that, however, I have not been able to find new texts or commentaries on magical movement until the 19th-20th century. Especially in the Bön tradition, there seem to be no other magical movement texts or commentaries after Drugyalwa’s time until it is “revived” by Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen. Thus, along with his impulse, we move into twentieth-century magical movement.

⁵¹² David Gray, electronic communication, Houston, TX, June 2005. Also see his *The Discourse of Sri Heruka: A Study and Annotated Translation of the Cakrasamvara Tantra*. American Institute of Buddhist Studies/Columbia University Press, forthcoming 2006.

I. Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen and Magical Movement

Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen (1859-1934) emerged from a middle-class Bönpo family in Kham [East Tibet] to become one of the most widely recognized Bönpo lamas of recent times.⁵¹³

His vision and work as an organizer of the Bön tradition has gained him a very special place in the tradition. In addition, in 1934 he is believed to have achieved the rainbow body, considered the sign of highest spiritual achievement within Dzogchen schools of both Bön and Nyingma traditions.⁵¹⁴ Magical movement is only one among the many practices about which he wrote. His five Treasures (*mdzod*) include teachings of Sūtra, Tantra and Dzogchen, and so, “if one studies his Treasures one learns about all three paths to enlightenment.”⁵¹⁵ Yet, to some Bönpos, he is controversial, in that he worked not only with Yungdrung Bön texts, but also with New Bön and Nyingma texts and masters. Nonetheless, the current Head of the Yungdrung Bön tradition, the Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, asserts: “Shardza did not mix; when he worked on Yundgrung Bön texts

⁵¹³ William Gorvine, “Reflections on the Life and Legacy of Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen,” talk at Ligmincha Institute Summer Retreat, Nelson County, VA, July 2003. This is also included in Gorvine’s forthcoming dissertation (University of Virginia), which focuses on Shardza’s life and works.

⁵¹⁴ As mentioned in chapter 2, see “An Eyewitness Account of a Rainbow Body,” in Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Heartdrops of Dharmakaya*, pp. 135-137. Also, Gorvine’s forthcoming dissertation, which includes his translation of Shardza’s medium-length biography, explains Shardza’s “Miraculous Passing” in more detail, from a believer’s perspective—one of Shardza’s disciples.

⁵¹⁵ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal conversation (phone), June 29, 2005.

he remained faithful to Yungdrung Bön, and when he worked on New Bön he worked within the New Bön system.”⁵¹⁶

Yongdzin Rinpoche states that many people followed Shardza because he composed a clear system that included the foundational (*sngon 'gro*) and main (*dnegos gzhi*) practices.⁵¹⁷ He remarked that, before Shardza, Bönpos followed the systems composed by the famous 13th-century master Drugyalwa Yungdrung. Drugyalwa is famous for two important Dzogchen practice manuals: the *Fifteen-step Instructions on the A* and the *Experiential Transmission*. In the latter, he draws from the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, among which he includes the magical movement teachings of *Quintessential Instructions*. Drugyalwa was the formative master from whom Shardza, almost seven centuries later, adopted ways of organizing these practices during the 19th and 20th centuries. Yongdzin Rinpoche asserts: “Shardza’s system is based in Drugyalwa’s *Experiential Transmission*.”⁵¹⁸ Yongdzin Rinpoche also recounts that in Central Tibet, debate and dialectics (*mtshan nyid*) were more popular, whereas in Eastern Tibet practitioners were

⁵¹⁶ Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, Menri Monastery, February 2002. Ponlob Thinley Nyima and Geshe Nyima Dakota, among other important contemporary representatives of the Bön tradition agree with this statement (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal conversation (phone), June 29, 2005, Geshe Nyima Dakota, personal communication, Houston, TX, May 2005).

⁵¹⁷ Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, personal communication, Charlottesville, VA, October 2004. Yongdzin Rinpoche said that Shardza “composed nicely: for the Foundational practices, Shardza composed the *The Ocean of Vast Space* (*Mkha' klong rgya mtsho*) and he used *Self-Dawning* for the Main practices.”

⁵¹⁸ Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, personal communication, Charlottesville, VA, October 2004.

drawn more to channels-breaths practices and magical movement.⁵¹⁹ Shardza lived in the Eastern Tibetan province of Kham, from where Yongdzin Rinpoche is also from, but he was born close to a year after Shardza's passing. Yongdzin Rinpoche added that he felt the dialectic became more popular in general Tibetan education because it was an "easier system."⁵²⁰

Magical Movement Curricula and Practice

With respect to magical movement, Shardza not only wrote *Commentary* but also included magical movement from both the *ZZ Oral Transmission* and *Instructions on the A* in *Main Points* (in *Self-Dawning* he includes the latter too).⁵²¹ Using those practices, which also include the inner heat teachings, Shardza designed a 100-day practice retreat curriculum in *Main Points*, which I will address below.

He also composed a prayer of channels-breaths (*Rtsa rlung gsol btab*) that is included in *Self-Dawning*⁵²² and is still performed today by magical movement practitioners, especially when following *Main Points*. The prayer has a foundational section (*sngon 'gro*) that includes an homage or prostration (*phyag*

⁵¹⁹ These were not the only important Bön systems. Yongdzin Rinpoche mentions that the *Drenpa gsang sgrub*, containing many prayers to the eighth century sage Drenpa Namkha (*Dran pa Nam mkha'*) and others, was an important ritual text in the East of Tibet, especially in Kham. And today that is still continued in exile in Tritan Norbutse (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston, TX, June 2005).

⁵²⁰ Yongdzin Rinpoche, personal communication, Charlottesville, VA, October 2004.

⁵²¹ In Buddhist literature, the Tibetan letter *A* has a small *a* under it, making it sound like "Ah." However, in the Bönpo texts it is plain *A*, a difference that can also be argued, as Tenzin Wangyal and others do, to be related to the Dzogchen state of no attributes.

'tshal lo) to the Ever-Excellent One (*kun zang*), securing a boundary or banishing obstacles (*bgegs bskrad*), refuge (*skyabs 'gro*), generation of the altruistic mind of enlightenment (*sems bskyed*) and a maṇḍala offering (*mandal 'bul*). Its main section consists of prayers to the masters of the mind, the sign and the hearing or listening lineages (*dgongs brta snyan khung gi brgyud pa'i bla ma gsol ba btab*) beginning with the Ever-Excellent One to one's own root master, and also includes deities, such as Takla Membar (*Stag la me 'bar*) and enlightened protectors (*bstan srung*), such as Yeshe Walmo (*Yes shes dbal mo*). Sometimes this prayer is sung together with a drum (*damaru*) and bell (*gshang*). After experiencing the blessings of the lineage, the practitioner is advised to rest in that meditative state of mind for a moment before engaging in the yogic practices.⁵²³

In *Main Points*,⁵²⁴ Shardza delineates a 100-day magical movement retreat schedule, which includes inner heat, magical movements from the *ZZ Oral Transmission* and from the *Instructions on the A*.⁵²⁵ In this text, which is the most commonly used Bönpo magical movement system today, Shardza describes a curriculum and retreat schedule based on the practices explained in *Mass of Fire*,

⁵²² *Self-dawning*, Chapter *ka*, pp. 101 – 104. Its full title is *Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar las sngon 'gro rjes kyi tshig bshad thugs rjes myur gzigs bshugs*.

⁵²³ I have seen the Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima and other monks of Menri monastery perform the prayer using drum and bell during my field research there, January-March 2002.

⁵²⁴ The title page reads "Here Lie the Oral Wisdom's Main Points of Channels and Vital Breath Currents" in *The Profound Great Sky Treasury* (p. 281). And on p. 282, it explains that this text is "Clarifying a Little and Diminishing the Doubts of the Main Points of the Magical Movement of Channels and Vital Breath Currents from *Self-Dawning*" (*Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar gyi rtsa rlung thig le zhal shes dogs sel cung zad 'bri ba*).

prescribing the yogin to practice four daily sessions for a total of 100 days.⁵²⁶ Although not specifically mentioned in *Main Points*, practitioners recite the channels-breaths prayer at the beginning of every session.⁵²⁷

Shardza's retreat schedule is divided into weekly periods. The first two weeks are used to perfect the smooth breathing retention (*'jam rlung*), which builds up to 108 repetitions in one session. During this time, external foundational practices (*spyi'i sngon 'gro*) are prescribed. These help the yogin familiarize with the channels, vital breath currents and essential spheres (the latter as a subtle expression of the mind). Special foundational practices (*khyed par gyi sngon 'gro*) are prescribed afterward. These include visualization of one's body as a deity, connecting to the subtle body within and applying the general foundational practices by securing a boundary, purification breaths and a preparation for inner heat.⁵²⁸ While the external foundational practices are done for the first two weeks, the special foundational practices are to be included in every session.

⁵²⁵ Shardza includes the set of fifteen and the set of forty magical movements from the *Instructions on the A* magical movement.

⁵²⁶ The explanation of the practices added as the days progress are mentioned in the "implementation" or "engaging in the practice" (*lag len*) section (*Main Points*, pp. 306ff.)

⁵²⁷ Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, and Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Menri monastery, March 2004. See also earlier footnote.

⁵²⁸ I will not provide the explanation of these practices here, but they can be found in *Mass of Fire*, the external preliminaries on pp. 21.6ff and the special foundational practices on pp. 34.5ff.

Then, the text instructs the yogin or practitioner, “on the morning of the 15th day, add the magical movement postures or body training (*lus sbyon*).”⁵²⁹ The third week includes the foundational magical movement cycle from the *ZZ Oral Transmission*, and the set of fifteen magical movements from the *Instructions on the A*. During the fourth week, the root magical movement set from the root cycle of *ZZ Oral Transmission* is added to the foundational cycle, and the set of seven upper torso purification magical movements (*stong sbyong gi 'phrul 'khor*) from the cycle of forty magical movements from the *Instructions on the A* is done instead of the set of fifteen magical movements.⁵³⁰ Shardza also uses the sound practices, visualizations and offerings indicated in *Instructions on the A* magical movement, which should be applied when a yogin notices an imbalance in terms of afflictions, humors, heat or cold illnesses.⁵³¹ The general offerings (*mchod*) of smoke (*bsang*), water (*chu gtor*), burnt food (*gsur*) and cutting attachment to self (*gcod*) that most Bönpos perform daily⁵³² can be incorporated in this curriculum from the fourth week onward.⁵³³ Shardza exhorts here that “to validate (*mgor*)

⁵²⁹ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 306.3 – 306.4.

⁵³⁰ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 307.1 – 307.5.

⁵³¹ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 307.5 – 308.2 Also, see *A-khrid*, p. 198.

⁵³² This way of practicing the four offerings is a traditional Bön custom that is common to all Bön monasteries, and lay communities (Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, telephone conversation, August 1998). See also M. Alejandro Chaoul, “Tracing the Origins of Chö (*gcod*) in the Bön Tradition: A Dialogic Approach Cutting Through Sectarian Boundaries,” M.A. Thesis, Charlottesville, VA: The University of Virginia, January 1999, pp. 54-58.

⁵³³ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 309.5 – 310.1.

the sessions and protect the mind, one should seal [the practice] with the dedication prayer (*bsngo smon*) and contemplation (*mnyam bzhaḡ*) at the end.”⁵³⁴

By the end of the fourth week, the smooth breath retention (*‘jam rlung*) training is completed, and the yogin begins with the medium breath retention (*bar rlung*). In this case there is no gradual accumulation, with the yogin continuing with 108 repetitions. In every session of the fifth week, the medium breath retention is followed by the pertinent magical movement sets.⁵³⁵ The magical movement sets added during the fifth week are the clearing obstacles from the root cycle of *ZZ Oral Transmission* and the set of six head purification magical movements (*mgo sbyang gi ‘phrul ‘khor*) from the cycle of forty magical movements from the *Instructions on the A*.⁵³⁶

In the sixth week, the yogin also includes the root magical movement set from the branch cycle of *ZZ Oral Transmission* and the set of eleven body purification magical movements (*lus sbyong gi ‘phrul ‘khor*) from the *Instructions on the A*’s cycle of forty magical movements. For the eighth and ninth weeks, the *ZZ Oral Transmission*’s branch magical movements that clear away obstacles from the root cycle and the special magical movements that clear individual obstacles away from the head, body and limbs are added, along with the set of nine lower body purification magical movements (*smad sbyong gi ‘phrul ‘khor*) from the

⁵³⁴ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 309.4.

⁵³⁵ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 310.1 – 310.2.

⁵³⁶ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 310.3 – 310.4.

Instructions on the A's cycle of forty magical movements.⁵³⁷ At the end of the ninth week, one finishes the training of the medium breath retention, bringing the vital breath currents to different energetic centers and minor channels all over the subtle body.⁵³⁸

The yogin begins the training in the wrathful breath retention (*drag rlung*), described as a mass of fire (*me dpung*), during the tenth week. This breathing practice, also done 108 times in each session, is followed by respective magical movement sets. During this week, the special magical movements that clear common obstacles away are added together with the seven leg purification magical movements (*rkang sbyong gi 'phrul 'khor*) from the cycle of forty magical movements of the *Instructions on the A*.⁵³⁹ Therefore, practicing in this way for the next "five weeks and two days, the one hundred days are completed (*tshang ba*)."⁵⁴⁰ Shardza concludes *Main Points* with advice on avoidances and supports, such as when it is useful to use warm clothes, receive a massage and so forth.⁵⁴¹

The above-described sequence reflects how magical movement is practiced today in the main Bönpo monasteries in exile, such as Tritan Norbutse,

⁵³⁷ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 311.5 – 312.1. Although this text mentions them as ten (*bcu*), it is clear from *Self-Dawning* ('*Phrul 'khor* chapter, p. 5.2) that they are nine (making them forty altogether).

⁵³⁸ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 312.2 – 313.4. As before, I will not provide the explanation of these practices here, but they can be found in the lines mentioned.

⁵³⁹ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 313.4 – 314.1.

⁵⁴⁰ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, p. 314.2 – 314.3.

⁵⁴¹ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Main Points*, pp. 314 - 319.

in Nepal and Menri, in India.⁵⁴² This is also the case even in present day T.A.R. (Tibetan Autonomous Region). In particular there is a group of nuns and female practitioners (*sngag ma, yogini*) practicing magical movement using Shardza's *Commentary* and *Main Points* in the Drak Yungdrung kha (*Brag g.yung drung kha*) nunnery in the Northeastern Amdo Sharkhog (*A mdo shark hog*) region.⁵⁴³

Shardza's significant contribution to systematizing and clarifying the teachings makes it easier to practice and allows these wonderful practices to continue. However, they have not been preserved in many places. I was surprised to hear that, in the Northwestern Dolpo area of Nepal, where the great Yangton family lineage still continues, they do not practice magical movement, although their predecessors included axial magical movement figures such as

⁵⁴² There are two schools of learning that a monk can follow in these monasteries. The majority follows the monastic curriculum that emphasizes the dialectic and debate school (*mtshan nyid*), but a small group follows only the meditation school (*sgrub grwa*). The latter is oriented towards meditative techniques and practices, and within this curriculum magical movement is usually learnt during the winter months of their last year. Shardza Rinpoche also designed this curriculum. (Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, personal communication, Menri, India 2002). See also Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, in their discussion using the Sanskrit terms of *pandita* and *kusali*, respectively.

⁵⁴³ Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima, Menri Monastery, India 2002. Geshe Nyima Dakpa, who graduated from that monastery, reinstated this during his visit to Houston, October, 2004, and added that one of Shardza's disciples, Thutob Namgyal (*Mthu stobs nam rgyak*), now very old, still teaches this system of magical movement in Shardza's area of Kham. When I first learnt of magical movement, in Tritsan Norbutse in 1993, and even during my field research trip there in 1995, *Main Points* was not mentioned. Instead, the focus was on *Quintessential Instructions* and *Commentary*. I got to learn about *Mass of Fire* and *Main Points* in the U.S. during a visit of H.H. Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima in 1999, and later was fortunate to study it with him in Menri in 2002, and with Ponlob Thinley Nyima in subsequent occasions.

Yangton Chenpo and Bumje Od.⁵⁴⁴ In fact, this is the lineage to which Ponlob Thinley Nyima belongs. He learnt magical movement in Menri with Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak and H.H. Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima.

There is also a larger three-year curricula by Shardza, which encompasses *Main Points*. According to Ponlob Thinley Nyima, there is no specific text that mentions the curriculum in this way. However, it has been practiced in the following manner since Shardza's time: the first year includes foundational practices, inner heat, channels-breaths practices and magical movement; the second year, inner heat, channels-breaths practices and magical movement, adding nurturing from the elements practice (*bcud len*); and the third year the Dzogchen practices of breakthrough (*khregs chod*) and direct vision or leap over (*thod rgal*). This curriculum also shows the importance of the foundational practices as a base and the relation between magical movement and higher Dzogchen practices.⁵⁴⁵

II. Magical Movement Reaches to the West

Nearly a century after Shardza's *Commentary*, there seems to be a growing interest for the Tibetan physical yogas in the "West." In the last year alone, *Yoga Journal* published three articles, one on the different types of Tibetan yogas that have come to the U.S., a second one on the magical movement paintings of the

⁵⁴⁴ The last one who taught them, Latsung Yungdrung Gyaltzen (*Bla chung g.yungdrung rgyal mtshan*), from the Zomsom area of Northwest Nepal, is also quite old now (personal communication Houston, October, 2004).

“naga temple” (*klu lha kang*), also called the secret temple of the Dalai Lamas in Lhasa, Tibet (behind the famous Potala palace), and one on the benefits of magical movement with cancer patients.⁵⁴⁶

Until now, most of the physical yogas that are taught in the West came from the Hindu traditions. When Westerners began receiving Tibetan teachings, they were more focused on receiving teachings from Tibet to develop one’s mind. I believe that this bias has at least two reasons. One is that western practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism (including Bon) felt that the mind practices were more important, and thus if a Lama came s/he was asked for mind-related teachings. The other reason is that many of the Tibetan Lamas supported this view and were either not trained in magical movement, or felt that it could lead to problems for the practitioners if not well supervised. Thus, it resulted in a lack of information about magical movement, combined with a feeling of secrecy or mysticism around it.⁵⁴⁷ Nevertheless, magical movement practices are now

⁵⁴⁵ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral communication, Houston April 2005.

⁵⁴⁶ “Into the Mystic,” by Elaine Lipson, *Yoga Journal*, June 2000, “Sacred Temple of the Dalai Lamas” by Phil Catalfo and “Comfort Zone: Tibetan Yoga may Help Cancer Patients Overcome Sleep Disturbances and Be More at Ease,” by Matthew Solan, *Yoga Journal*, September/October, 2003. *Snow Lion Publications* Newsletter also included two articles of my own on ‘*phrul* ‘*khor*. (see “Tibetan Yoga from the Bon Tradition” and “Spinning the Magical Wheel” in *Snow Lion newsletter*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, Summer 2002 and Winter/Spring 2001, respectively), and an article on the clinical research study’s publication in *Cancer* (“Tibetan Yoga Improves Sleep in Cancer Patients,” Summer 2004). In fact, the publication of that study in *Cancer* brought significant media attention, including local newspaper (*Houston Chronicle*) and TV news coverage (*Channels 2 and 11*) as well as *News Medical*, *American Cancer Society News Center*, *Florida College of Integrative Medicine News*, and *The Washington Post*, among others.

⁵⁴⁷ As the first *Yoga Journal* article reflects in its title “Into the Mystic.”

being taught in the West, including training courses and translations of the original Tibetan texts.

There are many kinds of magical movement practices in the different Tibetan traditions, and they are slowly being made known in the West. The *Yantra Yoga* that is taught in Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's Dzogchen Community is based on *Sun and Moon*—there is also a video available containing the first eight movements, which aim to purify one's breath (*lung sang*) and are considered to be very important preparatory movements for *yantra yoga*.⁵⁴⁸ The *Trul khor* that is taught in Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Ligmincha Institute comes from *Quintessential Instructions and Commentary*, on which this dissertation is founded. The *Tibetan Heart Yoga*, taught by Geshe Michael Roach and his students, comes from the Tsongkhapa's commentary on the *Six Yogas of Naropa*.⁵⁴⁹

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, through his Ligmincha Institute, teaches the earlier mentioned channels-breaths practices from the *Mother Tantra*—specifically from the chapter of the "Sphere of the Elements" (*Byung ba'i thig le*). This practice familiarizes the practitioner with the five kinds of vital breath currents. Additionally, magical movement is taught at Ligmincha Institute based on the *ZZ Oral Transmission*. However, because the 100-day curriculum by Shardza is

⁵⁴⁸ In that video, the movements are performed by one of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's senior students, Fabio Andrico. As mentioned in Chapter 1, his book should be published in the near future.

almost impossible to do in a Western setting, a curriculum consisting of five five-day intensive retreats was created to accommodate the teachings.⁵⁵⁰

Ligmincha Trul khor Training Course

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche is quite aware of the problem of the lack of context and continuity that westerners sometimes undergo when learning meditative practices, plus the lack of willingness to get involved in foundational practices and looking instead for “higher” practices. Thus, at the Ligmincha Institute he is designing ways to transmit his tradition to western practitioners by taking into account the conditions of body, speech and mind, and creating training courses accordingly.

In 2001, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche opened a formal magical movement training course at Ligmincha’s main site, Serenity Ridge, near Charlottesville, Virginia. This course is composed of five five-day retreats spanning over two years. The first retreat includes the channels-breaths practices from the *Mother Tantra*, the preparatory breathings to magical movement (with the basket retention) mentioned in *Commentary* and expanded by Shardza in *Mass of Fire* and the first two magical movement sets from *ZZ Oral Transmission*.⁵⁵¹ In each of

⁵⁴⁹ I have also read about a Master Zi Sheng Wang, who calls his teachings *Vajra Yoga*, and my understanding is that they are based on the Six Yogas of Naropa (see OMEGA Institute catalog 2005, p. 21).

⁵⁵⁰ In 2000, Tenzin Rinpoche asked me to design such a curriculum, which, under his supervision, I have also been teaching in the U.S., Mexico and Poland.

⁵⁵¹ Both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Commentary* are used, but, in general, I am following closer to *Commentary*.

the two subsequent retreats, two more magical movement sets are taught and practiced, along with the vase retention for the preparatory breaths. In the fourth retreat, the seventh and final set is taught, together with tightening more the retention of the preparatory breathings. This leaves the fifth and last retreat to the thorough practice of all the movements, breathings and focus of the mind.

The purpose of this course is primarily to offer an opportunity to those who are seriously interested in beginning or deepening their understanding of magical movement to have a training program of learning and practice. Some of the participants are long time meditators with a need for a more embodied practice, others come from other yoga traditions and yet others are new to any contemplative practice. The time between retreats allows the participants to practice and study what was learnt, and then apply it in the next level. A secondary purpose is to train future instructors that will be able to share with others the benefits of this practice. Therefore, this training is one of the prerequisites for a magical movement instructor in this tradition.

In the words of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche:

Trul khor is a wonderful daily practice, especially to control and handle the stress of our modern life in society. It has the power to balance the energies of mind and body and it also helps enormously to support one's meditation practices. I strongly encourage and recommend everyone to come to these retreats, either to learn for yourself or to become instructors.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵² "The Voice of Clear Light," Ligmincha Institute's Newsletter, Charlottesville, VA: Ligmincha Institute, 2000.

III. From *Dharma* to Medicine

As mentioned in earlier chapters, the twentieth century also brought the medicalization of different kinds of yoga and contemplative practices. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche had a long interest in the healing capacity of meditative practices from his tradition, as well as quantifying and verifying their effects. In the early 1990s, as a Rockefeller Fellow at Rice University, he begun conversations with Ellen Gritz, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Behavioral Science at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson.⁵⁵³ That seed might have stayed dormant for a few years. In 2000, I met with Lorenzo Cohen, an Associate Professor in that department, and since then also the Director of the Integrative Medicine Program at that institution. He asked me to create a Tibetan Yoga program for cancer patients. When I reviewed it with Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak and Tenzin Rinpoche in the summer of 2000, they were extremely supportive, and so I decided to go forward with this project.⁵⁵⁴ The seed had begun to germinate.

A CIM Application with Cancer Patients

Tenzin Rinpoche's open-mindedness and support were crucial for the development of the study at MD Anderson.⁵⁵⁵ Viewing the main goals of magical

⁵⁵³ Other people from both institutions attended that meeting, Dr. Payne from M.D. Anderson and Dr. Anne Klein from Rice University, among them.

⁵⁵⁴ Had they not been supportive, I had told Dr. Cohen, I would not pursue it.

⁵⁵⁵ I think that he is in line with HH the Dalai Lama in terms of his open-mindedness to science and modern medicine.

movement as dispelling mental and physical obstacles, the enhancing of meditative practice and their integration into daily life, the M.D. Anderson team⁵⁵⁶ began a study applying the 7-week Tibetan Yoga program referred to earlier with lymphoma patients.⁵⁵⁷ The movements chosen were simple, and yet they constituted complete cycles: the five external channels-breaths movements from the *Mother Tantra*, and foundational cycle magical movements from *Shardza's Commentary*. Tenzin Rinpoche reviewed the Tibetan Yoga intervention program before patient recruitment began.

i. The Study

In the first study of Tibetan Yoga at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, 39 lymphoma patients were randomly assigned to be either in a Tibetan yoga intervention group or in a wait-listed control group.⁵⁵⁸ The intervention group received the 7-week Tibetan yoga program, while the latter did not. Measurements were taken of both groups to compare any significant health or behavior related changes between participants of one group and the other. In order to be eligible, lymphoma patients had to be currently undergoing treatment or had to have concluded treatment, consisting mostly of radiation

⁵⁵⁶ Lorenzo Cohen, Ph.D.; Carla Warneke, M.P.H.; Rachel Fouladi, Ph.D.; M. Alma Rodriguez, M.D.; M. Alejandro. Chaoul. M. Alma Rodriguez deserves a special mention. As a medical doctor at M.D. Anderson and a practitioner at Ligmincha, and knowing my interest, she introduced me to Place of Wellness. When we began the research project, she was very open to be the MD of the team and present it to the doctors and patients of the lymphoma clinic. Also I would like to thank Laura Baynham, Director of Place of Wellness, for referring me to Dr. Cohen.

⁵⁵⁷ The study was funded by a grant from the Bruce S. Gelb Foundation.

and/or chemotherapy, within the past twelve months. There was an even distribution of severity of disease between the two groups among those who were under active treatment. There were 15 patients in each group who were not receiving treatment for their lymphoma at the time of the study.⁵⁵⁹

Patients of both groups completed self-reported evaluations at baseline (i.e., before they began the program) as well as one-week, one-month, and three-months after the 7-week program. The whole study took almost a full year to complete, including patient recruitment at the lymphoma clinic at M. D. Anderson and various 7-week Tibetan yoga interventions at Place of Wellness, the clinic for CIM therapies at M. D. Anderson. We began the 7-week sessions after each recruitment cycle, which allowed us to teach the classes to four to nine people in each session.

ii. Results

Eighty-nine percent of Tibetan Yoga participants completed at least two to three yoga sessions; fifty-eight percent completed at least five sessions. Overall, the results indicated that the Tibetan yoga program was realistic/reasonable and well liked by the patients. The majority of participants indicated that the program was “a little” or “definitely” beneficial, with no one indicating “not beneficial,” and they continued practicing at least once a week, with many

⁵⁵⁸ The control group participants had the opportunity to receive the Tibetan yoga intervention after the 3-month follow-up assessment, and that is why it is called wait-list.

⁵⁵⁹ Of course, they had concluded treatment within the past twelve months.

continuing to practice twice a week or more.⁵⁶⁰ (See charts in article, appendix IV.) It is worthwhile to mention that none of the patients involved in these studies had any previous knowledge of even the existence of channels-breaths practices or magical movement, and the majority of the patients had never engaged in any other meditative or yoga practice before.

Patients in the Tibetan Yoga group reported significantly lower sleep disturbance scores during the follow-up period than did the patients in the wait-list control group. This included better subjective sleep quality, faster sleep latency (i.e., from the moment one decides to sleep until when one actually falls asleep), sleep duration and less use of sleep medications. Improving sleep quality in a cancer population may be particularly salient as sleep is crucial for recovery. Fatigue and sleep disturbances are common problems for patients with cancer. This research focused on behavioral changes and quality of life improvement. In the future, it is possible that changes in immune function, blood pressure and eventually even disease progression could be measured.

Dr. Cohen, the principal investigator of the study, was optimistic about the results. "Theoretically, if the Tibetan yoga intervention is found to decrease the patient's stress level, it could, therefore, have an impact on their immune

⁵⁶⁰ For the complete results of this study, please see Cohen L, Warneke C, Fouladi R, Rodriguez MA, Chaoul-Reich A., "Psychological Adjustment and Sleep Quality in a Randomized Trial of the Effects of a Tibetan Yoga Intervention in Patients with Lymphoma," *Cancer: Interdisciplinary Journal of the American Cancer Society*, Volume 100, Number 10, New York, N.Y., April 16, 2004 (online), May 15, 2004 (print) pp. 2253-60.

system," he said. "There is evidence to suggest that stress suppresses cell-mediated immunity, a component of the immune system involved in tumor surveillance. Yoga might also have an impact on patients' hormonal activity.'"⁵⁶¹

As the investigators of this study acknowledged,

Although research into the efficacy and mechanisms of yoga is in its beginning stages, the findings reported to date are supportive⁵⁶² and, along with our finding of improved sleep, suggest that the health effects of yoga in cancer patients should be explored further. The benefits that have been documented and the potential impact of these benefits on the psychologic and physical sequelae of cancer are important enough to warrant the further study of developing such programs for cancer patients.⁵⁶³

IV. Looking Into the Future

The clinical study mentioned above shows encouraging signs for the positive effect that magical movement might have with cancer patients. Furthermore, it is possible to do similar studies, extending them to other cancer or medical populations. Scientific validity will help convey the practice to a larger audience, including general public and western Buddhist practitioners.

A second study is now examining the benefits of this Tibetan yoga program on both psychological and physiological (immune and hormone function) outcomes in women with breast cancer. This is a larger study with 59

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁶² Telles S, Naveen K.V, "Yoga for rehabilitation: an overview," *Indian Journal of Medical Science*, 1997; 51: 123-127.

participants with eligibility factors similar to the lymphoma study. It follows the same 7-week Tibetan Yoga program, as well as the self-reported forms of measurement and structure of assessment. These pilot programs are among the few studies of yoga in a cancer patient population and the only scientific study of magical movement in any population. The fact that the first study was published in a mainstream medical journal such as *Cancer* (see appendix VI) is another promising sign fostering the inclusion of Tibetan practices within the CIM clinical services and research possibilities. A grant proposal to the NIH (National Institutes of Health) is awaiting approval for funding, which will allow a five-year study of magical movement with breast cancer patients.

The uniqueness of this research is the direct involvement from representatives of the Western biomedical and behavioral sciences communities and representatives of the Bön tradition in integrating and expanding upon the source of Tibetan Yoga practices.⁵⁶⁴ In the last couple of meetings, attended by both Dr. Lorenzo Cohen and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, we began exploring research tools that could assess not only what is interesting from the biomedical and behavioral scientific approaches, but also whether the benefits mentioned in

⁵⁶³ Cohen L, Warneke C, Fouladi R, Rodriguez MA, Chaoul-Reich A., "Psychological Adjustment and Sleep Quality in a Randomized Trial of the Effects of a Tibetan Yoga Intervention in Patients with Lymphoma," p. 2259.

⁵⁶⁴ Interestingly, some Tibetan doctors are still today engaged in learning and utilizing *rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor* practices. According to Mona Schrempf's research with Tibetan lineage doctors in Nag chu (TAR), a particular doctor who also happened to be a Bon monk used *rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor* practices for himself and his patients (Schrempf in personal communication). The potential

the magical movement texts can actually be proven to be true outcomes for these cancer patients. In fact, dialoguing also with Tibetan Dr. Yeshe Dhonden, former physician to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, we discussed the possibility of including Tibetan medical assessments to a sub-group of the breast cancer population of the study. In that way, one could also evaluate, according to patients humoral constitution, to whom the magical movements would be more beneficial, or detrimental, and perhaps, indicating different movements for different patients.⁵⁶⁵ I consider this kind of interaction and mutual participation an important step towards a more integrative model of applying Tibetan traditional modalities of healing together with western science and research methods.⁵⁶⁶

practice of *rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor* within the Tibetan medical community is another very interesting subject that I hope to explore further in the future.

⁵⁶⁵ The meeting took place under the Integrative Medicine Program at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, September 20, 2005.

⁵⁶⁶ A pioneering effort in this matter is the work of the Life-Mind Institute and especially their "Investigating the Mind" conference at MIT University, Boston, MA (September 2003). At that time, clinical research was presented and opened the dialogue amongst western researchers, Buddhist scholars and practitioners, and the presence and input of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, raising the importance of this kind of collaboration to both scientific and public awareness. In November, 2005, there was a follow-up conference in Washington, D.C, focused on "The Science and Clinical Applications of Meditation."

Chapter 5: Let the Magic Continue

The Bön ZZ *Oral Transmission* is clearly an oral tradition dating before the eighth century CE. However, it is around that time that it comes into writing for the first time thanks to the master Nangzher Lopo. Pongyal Tsenpo, who probably lived a century or century and a half after Nangzher Lopo, is mentioned by Reynolds⁵⁶⁷ as the first master of that tradition to put into writing the magical movement teachings. However, since not extant, it is not clear in what form or how many movements were included in his version. The ZZ *Oral Transmission* compendium as we know it today is largely identical to Bumjeo's compilation in the 11th-12th centuries, and it included the magical movement text, *Quintessential Instructions*, in its present form. As I mention in chapters 3 and 4, I believe that Bumjeo is also the compiler and author of *Quintessential Instructions*. This text, the 13th century Drugyalwa's *Experiential Transmission* and the 20th century *Commentary* by Shardza are the main sources of the ZZ *Oral Transmission's* magical movement to the present day Bönpo lay and monastics.

The magical movements contained in these texts are unique, although they share similarities with other Tibetan magical movement, such as *Sun and Moon* and those of the *Six Yogas*. The holding of the breath and the moving postures seem to be characteristics common to all Tibetan yogic practices, in

⁵⁶⁷ See chapter 3, in the section of colophon to the texts.

distinction to its Indian and Chinese counterparts, as I discussed in chapters 1 and 2.

In pursuing the comparison of Tibetan magical movement with Indian yoga, the theories of the subtle body dynamics became clear, at least as speculations. Chapter 2 is largely the development of those theories. Supported by and departing from the *kuṇḍalini*-dynamics that White describes in terms of pneumatic and hydraulic, I arrive to what I am calling *maṇḍala*-dynamism, mostly pneumatic, which I see as the underlying principle of magical movement, certainly for those in the *ZZ Oral Transmission*. In fact, that way of understanding the body led me to question the literal meaning of “magic” in *‘phrul ‘khor* and propose that, in these magical movements, magic can have the external meaning of magic, the internal meaning of medicine and the most internal, also called secret (*gsang*), of mysticism. Thus, the “perfection” of the body through magical movement encompasses all three components without having to be an either-or choice. These magical movements work as a body-energy-mind system, thus having its effects pervade the whole system.

The pervasive vital breath current is, as Shardza emphasizes, the principal breath in magical movement, enabling this body-energy-mind system to take different mandalic forms. Magical movement could be said to be an “advanced

technology” that brings forth this magic that is not limited to the external.⁵⁶⁸ The actual movements, presented in chapter 3, clearly show this “breaking” or going beyond the limitations of the body. Some movements state this clearly in their names, like Extending the Limits of the Four Continents (i.e., limbs) and Collecting the Four [limbs] Clearing Away Limitations.⁵⁶⁹ Other movements express this beyond the human body, relating to the animal movements (or the animal aspect in our humanity), as is the case of all the movements in the root magical movement set that clears away obstacles and many in other sets, relating to duck, peacock, crow, hawk, yak, donkey, tigress, deer, antelope, and even the mythical garuda. There are some other names that relate to nature, such as Collecting the Four Stalks, the Natural Descent of the Four Elements and Stirring the Depths of the Ocean. Eliade and Alter following him relate the names of animals and nature in Indian āsanās to a shamanic modality of relating to and imitating the natural environment and having mastery over it.⁵⁷⁰ Alter mentions that there are no Indian āsana names in reference to humans. However, we do see reference to humans and body parts within the names of different magical movements. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk is part of the last set and human body parts such as Purification of the Arms, and so forth are mentioned as part of the foundational and first special sets. There are also names referring to man-

⁵⁶⁸ I am appropriating Arthur Clarke’s words, although in a slightly different context.

⁵⁶⁹ Both within the branch magical movement set that clears away obstacles,

⁵⁷⁰ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 320 and J. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, p. 238.

made elements like Spinning like a Wheel, Skylight of Wisdom, Athlete's Hammer, and so forth, and others that include a human emotion or affliction to be overcome, such as those in the root magical movement set—although in the Bön and Buddhist ideology these afflictions are not limited to humans; animals, hungry ghosts, hell beings and even godly beings also have them.⁵⁷¹

Therefore, all magical movements, whether having names relating to nature, animals, human, etc., have the intention of breaking through one's usual limitations to then abide in that state of mind "beyond" habitual patterns and more related to one's natural state. This objective is usually described in a Tibetan saying that Ponlob said in English: "If you squeeze a snake with your hands, you will see its legs coming out," which refers how through the squeezing and twisting of the body in magical movement, visionary experiences manifest.⁵⁷² In other words, all these movements have the potential for the yogin to bring forth the mystical experiences—besides the magical and healing discussed earlier. This, I believe, is similar to what Eliade states of yoga expressing the "magico-religious spirituality of India."⁵⁷³

Alter, on the other hand, emphasizes yoga's aspects of science and religion in its search for a "Universal Truth." In that sense, I feel he underscores a

⁵⁷¹ Godly beings are still unenlightened, not related to the idea of God in monotheistic religions.

⁵⁷² Ponlob Thinley Nyima, confirmed also by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung.

⁵⁷³ M. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 319.

uniqueness of yoga that can also be applied to magical movement, when he writes:

It [yoga] claims to articulate a kind of truth based on universal laws that extend “beyond” nature and beyond the attribution of power to God. Yet the experience of these laws through the medium of the embodied self is extremely “personal” and therefore “local” on a subcultural, purely experiential level.⁵⁷⁴

This is also very significant in magical movement and all meditative practices of the Bön and Buddhist traditions. In other words, besides what we can see with our scholar hat or eyes from a third-person perspective, there is the first-person phenomenological perspective of the yogin or practitioner, which can also be brought into conversation with the former and expand one’s understanding of the phenomena in question, in this case, magical movement.

In fact, this is a point that H.H. the Dalai Lama and Chilean biologist Francisco Varela, among others, have been emphasizing for almost two decades as an important component in the dialogue between science and spirituality “to reinstate first-person experience as a source of scientific knowledge, and open scientific inquiry to methods such as meditation.”⁵⁷⁵ In the series of dialogues from the Mind-Life Institute, mentioned in chapter 4, that began in 1987 with “Dialogues between Buddhism and Cognitive Sciences,” many scientists, Buddhists, and buddhologists have met over the years trying to find common

⁵⁷⁴ J. Alter, *Yoga in Modern India*, p. 238.

⁵⁷⁵ Computer Scientist Eleanor Rosch talking about Varela in “Two Sciences of Mind,” *Shambhala Sun*, September 2005, p. 36.

ground between the two empirical traditions of bio-behavioral western science and the, at least, 2500-year old Buddhist study of the mind.

In “Studying Mind from the Inside,” H.H. the Dalai Lama states:

The problem of describing the subjective experiences of consciousness is complex indeed. For we risk objectivizing what is essentially and internal set of experiences and excluding the necessary presence of the experiencer. We cannot remove ourselves from the equation.⁵⁷⁶

So, when we read the benefits stated at the end of each magical movement set, they are described from that first person “experiencer” perspective. Nevertheless, as scholars we tend to read them, or want to read them, as if they were objective benefits. In other words, everyone who practices these movements should accomplish these benefits. And I believe that is also true. The text is implying that those are the fruits that can be expected, not guaranteed though, when practicing as the texts and the lamas instruct.

As we move into its applications in the field of western medicine, it is even more expected that this “intervention,” as would be called in bio-behavioral research, or this “mind-body therapy,” in clinical setting, could be reproduced with the same “outcomes” – their word for benefits.

Also, the types of results they are looking for are different. Tibetan texts do not explicitly mention concepts of stress reduction, the elimination of

⁵⁷⁶ His Holiness the Dalai Lama, “Studying Mind from the Inside,” *Shambhala Sun*, September 2005, pp. 45 – 46. (excerpt from His Holiness The Dalai Lama, *The Universe in a Single Atom*, Morgan Road Books, 2005).

intrusive thoughts, or improvement of sleep as benefits. However, as Ponlob Thinley Nyima agrees, these and other related outcomes may be included as secondary benefits related to the clearing away of obscurations.⁵⁷⁷ Namkhai Norbu also mentions these outcomes as secondary benefits from yogic practices, writing that they “help one to approach contemplation...or to achieve some specific aim, such as healing oneself and others.”⁵⁷⁸

The application of the Bön magical movement practices from the *ZZ Oral Transmission* in contemporary medical settings, such as M.D. Anderson, have shown, as I point out in this dissertation, that now these ancient yogic practices can be said to have an impact in those important measurements from the psycho-behavioral (or bio-behavioral) perspective. Are these benefits solely under the realm of medicine? Have we lost the magic and contemplative/mystical benefits by bringing them to this modern setting?

I would like to propose that it is not necessarily the case that we need to use a reductionist model of one or the other side. Rather, I believe that there is a possibility of an inclusive dialogue where both kinds of perspectives are integrated. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama writes:

what is required...is nothing short of a paradigm shift. That is, the third-person perspective which we can measure phenomena from the point of view of an independent observer, must be integrated with a first-person perspective, which will allow the incorporation of subjectivity and the qualities that characterize the experience of

⁵⁷⁷ Ponlob Thinley Nyima, “Mind-body practices of the ancient Tibetan Bön tradition.”

⁵⁷⁸ Namkhai Norbu, *The Crystal and the Way of Light*, pp. 93-94.

consciousness. I am suggesting the need for the method of our investigation to be appropriate to the object of inquiry.⁵⁷⁹

In some sense, this is a direction that some are taking. Certainly it is the way that these dialogues are intended, even if not yet there. The same is true with the pilot study on magical movement mentioned here. The measurements were all subjective; yet they are forms that have validation within the bio-behavioral sciences as the same outcomes can be replicated. In the second study, some objective measurements, testing blood and saliva, were done together with the subjective ones, and eventually more objective and subjective measurements done together will provide us with better well-rounded information. Most studies of this kind are following the same route. I believe this dissertation opens a larger dialog on magical movement, one that extends the conversation to the fields of medical humanity and integrative medicine. And possibly to others too.

So, it is quite startling the traveling of magical movements from Zhang Zhung to Tibet, to India and Nepal, and now to the USA, Latin America and Europe. From an oral tradition of one master to his disciple through a bamboo cane, to an opening even beyond the dharma/Buddhist setting, the magic seems to touch in many ways from mystical Tibet to Western applied scientific model. As it helps patients sleep better, let us hope it also helps in spiritual awakening.

⁵⁷⁹ His Holiness the Dalai Lama, "Studying Mind from the Inside," p. 48.

APPENDIX SECTION

APPENDIX I

Annotated Bibliographical Sources

I. Tibetan Sources

“Quintessential Instructions of the Oral Wisdom of Magical Movements” (*‘phrul ‘khor zhal shes man ngag*, here referred to as *Quintessential Instructions*).¹ Last chapter of *ZZ Oral Transmission*.

Magical Movements, Channels, and Vital Breath of the Oral Transmission [of Zhang Zhung] (*Snyan rgyud rtsa rlung ‘khrul ‘khor*, here referred as *Commentary*),² by the famous Bönpo scholar Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen (*Shar rdza bkhra shis rgyal mtshan*, 1859-1934).³

Gyalwa’s Instruction Manual of the Experiential Transmission [of Zhang Zhung] (*Nyams rgyud rgyal ba’i phyag khrid bzhugs so*, known as *Experiential Transmission*),⁴ by the famous 13th-century Bönpo master Drugyalwa Yungdrung (Bru rgyal ba G.yung drung).⁵ I focus on chapter 10: “Magical Movements Stages that Clear Away the Obstacles” (*Gegs sel ‘phrul ‘khor rim*), which claims to be identical to *Quintessential Instructions*.⁶

¹ “The Great Perfection Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung,” pp. 631-643. As noted earlier, I will be using “Great Completion” instead of Great Perfection.

² Although the title of the text does not include the word “commentary,” I feel comfortable referring to it as such in the context of this dissertation, since I feel that it clearly marks its relation to *Quintessential Instructions*.

³ Gyaltsen, Shardza T. *Byang zab nam mkha’ mdzod chen las Snyan rgyud rtsa rlung ‘phrul ‘khor* In: *NAM MKHA MDZOD* Vol. I-III, ed. by Sonam N, Gyaltsen PLS, Gyatso K, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre: New Thobgyal, 1974, pp. 321-346. *Commentary* is thus included within Shardza’s collection “*Vast Profound Sky’s Great Treasury*” (*Byang zab nam mkha’ mdzod chen*).

⁴ Although sometimes it is also known as “Instruction Manual” (*Phyag khrid*). Some lamas, and thus their students, call it *Nyams rgyud* while others call it *Phyag khrid*, and sometimes they use both terms indistinctively. An “Experiential Transmission,” is usually a compilation of excerpts from a text, focusing on the experiential aspects *vis a vis* the more theoretical components. An “Instruction Manual” is a guideline of practices for the adept to follow in step-by-step manner. This text is both.

⁵ Edited by Dra rtsa bstan ‘dzin dar rgyas, Kathmandu, Nepal: Tritan Norbutse Bönpo Monastery, 2002

⁶ The full title is *Snyan rgyud gegs sel ‘phrul ‘khor rim*, and is Ch.10 of *Experiential Transmission*, pp. 253-264. As we will see in the next section, Drugyalwa makes a few changes, but in essence it is as he presents it, the same text: *Quintessential Instructions*.

Shardza's "Mass of Fire Primordial Wisdom: Bringing Into Experience the Common Inner Heat" (*Thun mong gtum mo'i nyams len ye shes me dpung*, hereafter *Mass of Fire*).⁷

Shardza's "The Oral Wisdom of the Main Points of Channels-Breaths [practices]" (*Rtsa rlung gnad kyi zhal shes*, hereafter *Main Points*). An auto-commentary or explanation of *Mass of Fire*. It includes practical guidance on following the practices of *Mass of Fire* during a 100-day retreat, part of which I explain in chapter 4.⁸

II. Magical Movement in Western Translations

Namkhai Norbu's *Yantra Yoga* describes the preliminary or foundational (*sngon 'gro*) set of eight movements found in the text by Vairocana (*Be ro tsa na*), *Magical Movements of Union of Sun and Moon* (*'Phrul 'khor nyi zla kha byor*, hereafter *Sun and Moon*).⁹

⁷ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, "Thun mong gdum mi'i nyams len ye shes me dpung," *Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar gyi khrid gdams skor*, ed. by K. Gyatso, Delhi: TBMC, 1974, pp. 551-597. Thus, *Mass of Fire* is included in Shardza's collection called *Great Completeness Cycle of Instructions on the Three Self Dawning Dimensions* (*Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar gyi khrid gdams skor*, hereafter *Self-Dawning*).

⁸ Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Rtsa rlung gnad kyi zhal shes Main Points*, like *Commentary*, is part of Shardza's *Vast Profound Sky's Great Treasury*, pp. 281-319. Page 282 provides this text's full name, making clear that it is also a commentary on *Mass of Fire*: *rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar gyi rtsa rlung thig le zhal shes dogs sel cung zang 'bri ba la thun mong gtum mo'i nyams len shes pa'i thun mong*.

⁹ Namkhai Norbu, *Yantra Yoga*. I have heard, however, that Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente are soon to publish the translation of *Sun and Moon* (*Yantra Yoga: The Tibetan Yoga of Movement*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, forthcoming 2005). In its foreword, Adriano Clemente explains that it seems that a text on inner heat was once part of the training system known as "The Oral Transmission of Vairocana," but it is "currently unavailable." Thus it is not clear precisely what the relation between inner heat and magical movements might have been in that system. I am grateful to Snow Lion Publications for sharing their marketing package of this forthcoming text.

There are a few scholarly expositions in English on the famous Six Yogas or Teachings of Naropa (*Naro chos drug*, hereafter *Six Yogas*), by Evans-Wentz, Garma C.C. Chang and Herbert Guenther.¹⁰

Working outside the academy, Glenn Mullin has done extensive work on the *Six Yogas* and especially on Tsongkhapa's (*Tsong kha pa*) commentary on the *Six Yogas* and related works.¹¹ And Geshe Michael Roach in a book for practitioners

¹⁰ Evans-Wentz, W. Y. *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1935, rp. 1958 and 1967 (translations were done by Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup and interpretation by Evans-Wentz. In the 1967 edition they added more explanation by Garma C.C. Chang).

Chang, in collaboration with Charles Muses, translated Tsongkhapa's commentary to it (see footnote 2) in Muses, Charles, *Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra*, [Lausanne, Switzerland]: Falcon Wings Press, 1961.

Herbert Guenther also includes a translation of the Six Yogas in *The Life and Teachings of Naropa* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1963). It does not include any translation of magical movement. However, at the end of the *gtum mo* (which he translates as 'mystic heat'), he mentions the qualities of the five kinds of vital breath currents, which as we will see later are intimately related to the channels-breaths practices (p. 61).

Note: Guenther's translation and interpretation is considered a superior work of scholarship due to his own preparation and training both in Tibetan language and philosophy. Evans-Wentz' and Chang's translations and interpretations were nonetheless important pioneering works. Having to rely on others for the translation (mostly Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup), they encountered the limitations and difficulties that, as they acknowledge, could be expected of translating concepts that were "new to Western thought" (W.Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga: Secret Doctrines*, 1967, Preface to the first edition (1934), p.vii).

¹¹ Mullin re-translated Tsongkhapa's text in Glenn Mullin, *Tsongkhapa's Six Yogas of Naropa*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publication, 1996, and then wrote a companion to it, mentioned earlier, *Readings on the Six Yogas of Naropa*. In it he mentions that although "[e]arly scholars such as Dr. Evans-Wentz, Prof. Herbert Guenther, and Garma C.C. Chang used the term "yoga" in their translation of the Tibetan word "*chos*" and consequently established it as a standard in the Western Buddhist world," (Glenn Mullin, *Readings on the Six Yogas of Naropa*, p.13). I believe that the multivalent term *chos* could be better understood as "teachings" or "doctrines" here. This is quite a complex issue, since both the Tibetan term *chos* and the Sanskrit *yoga* have a variety of meanings and are not necessarily synonymous. *Yoga*, in Tibetan, is more often translated as *snal byor*; and *chos* would be more often equivalent of *dharma*.

He notes that among the Six Yogas traditions, not all texts included magical movements (Glenn Mullin, *Tsongkhapa's Six Yogas of Naropa*, p. 133). Apparently it is primarily in texts from systems taught by the earlier masters, such as the twelfth century lama Pakmo Drupa (*Dpal phag mo gru pa*), who included magical movements, and in such cases they were placed either within or immediately following the inner heat yoga. In his manual, *Verses on the Path Technology: A*

called *Tibetan Heart Yoga* presents a series of six movements that he recommends to be “piggybacked” to hatha yoga postures.¹²

III. Scientific Studies on Mind-Body Practices

Elizabeth De Michelis, “Notes on Some Formative Aspects of Modern Yoga: The Problem of Knowledge Transmission and Modern Yoga’s Relation to Western Scientific Thought.”¹³ De Michelis emphasizes that it is the Indian themselves, and not the Westerners, that started the “scientific approach to yoga,” which she claims was fueled by Swami Vivekananda’s *Raja Yoga* (1896). She states that the Yoga Institute of Bombay (1918) by Shri Yogendra (born Manibhai H. Desai) and the Kaivalyadhama Institute in Lonavla (1924) by Swami Kuvalayananda (born J.G. Gune) are important pioneers in this scientific approach to yoga. See also Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004).

Joseph Alter, *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy*,¹⁴ goes deeper into the scientific research of yoga by Shri Yogendra and Swami Kuvalayananda, mentioning their studies as early as the 1920’s using “microscopes, X-ray machines, and blood pressure gauges” (p. 77). See also Joseph Alter, “Modern Medical Yoga” (*Asian Medicine: Tradition and Modernity*, vol.1, No.1, 2005, pp. 119-146).

Michael Murphy, *The Future of the Body: Explorations Into the Further Evolution of Human Nature*,¹⁵ mentions the studies above as well as other scientific studies that have been done on contemplative experiences not only with Indian yogis but also with Japanese Zen Buddhist monks. Especially in his chapter on “Scientific Studies of Contemplative Experience”¹⁶ Murphy also mentions “contemporary meditation research” by Hebert Benson, Keith Wallace and Jon Kabat-Zinn, among others. They also expanded their research to include Tibetan

Supplement (*Thabs lam tshigs bcad ma’i lhan thabs*), he describes “six exercises for purifying the body” (Glenn Mullin, *Tsongkhapa’s Six Yogas of Naropa*, p. 134).

¹² Geshe Michael Roach, *The Tibetan Book of Yoga: Ancient Buddhist Teachings on the Philosophy and Practice of Yoga*, USA: Doubleday, 2004.

¹³ Paper presented at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, May 23, 2002.

¹⁴ Joseph Alter, *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, 2004.

¹⁵ Michael Murphy, *The Future of the Body: Explorations Into the Further Evolution of Human Nature*, New York: Penguin Putnam, 1992.

¹⁶ Michael Murphy, *The Future of the Body*, pp. 527 – 539.

monks, Buddhist practitioners, as well as training and research in non-meditators.

It is important to bear in mind that Murphy's book was published more than a decade ago, and so new studies of this kind have emerged, including studies with Qigong, the main Chinese mind-body technique.¹⁷ In other words, there are studies of this kind with mind-body practices of all over Asia.

A Brief List of Scientific Studies of Asian Mind-Body Practices

Monro, Robin, A.K. Gosh, and Daniel Kalish 1989, *Yoga Research Bibliography: Scientific Studies on Yoga and Meditation* (Cambridge: Yoga Biomedical Trust). This is a very good synopsis of the research studies with Indian yoga, including the studies by Shri yogendra and Swami Kuvalayananda.

Herbert Benson, et al, "Three Case Reports of the Metabolic and Electroencephalographic Changes During Advanced Buddhist Meditation Techniques," *Behavioral Medicine*, 16:2 (1990), pp.90-95.

Herbert Benson, and Jeffrey Hopkins, "Body temperature changes during the practice of gTum-mo yoga," *Nature*, 295 (21 January, 1982), pp.234-236. This was done with Tibetan monks in the lower Indian Himalayas. A follow-up study is in process with monks of Tritan Norbutse monastery, mentioned in this dissertation.

Kabat-Zinn, J. "An outpatient program in behavioral medicine for chronic pain patients based on the practice of mindfulness meditation: Theoretical considerations and preliminary results." *General Hospital Psychiatry*, 4 (1982), pp. 33-47.

Kabat-Zinn, J., Lipworth, L., & Burney, R. "The clinical use of mindfulness meditation for the self-regulation of chronic pain," *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 8(2), (1985), pp. 163-190.

Kabat-Zinn, J., Massion, A.O., Kristeller, J., Peterson, L.G., Fletcher, K.E., Pbert, L., et al. "Effectiveness of a meditation-based stress reduction program in the treatment of anxiety disorders," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 149(7), (1992), pp. 936-942).

¹⁷ See Kevin Chen, and Raphael Yeung, "Exploratory Studies of Qigong Therapy for Cancer in China," *Integrative Cancer Therapies*, 1(4); 2002, pp. 345-370.

APPENDIX II

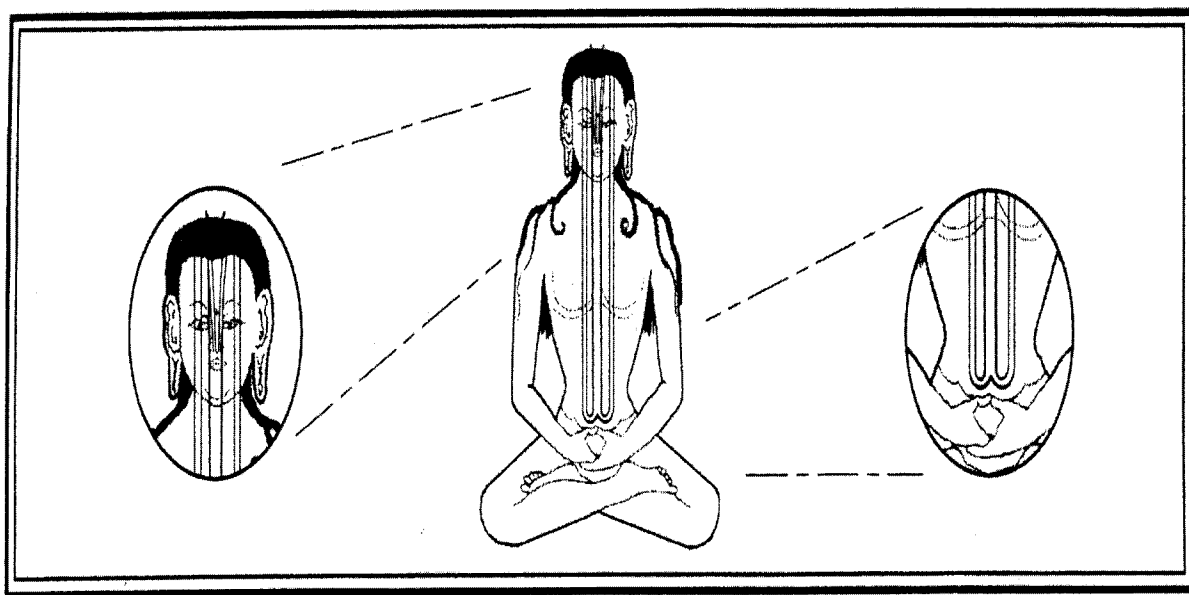
I. The Three Channels¹⁸

Figure 1

¹⁸ Picture from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*, p. 47.

II. Channels-Breaths Correlation Chart.¹⁹

	UPWARD MOVING	LIFE FORCE	PERVASIVE	FIRE-LIKE	DOWNWARD MOVING
COLOR and ELEMENT	YELLOW earth wind	WHITE space wind	GREEN air wind	RED fire wind	BLUE water wind
WHERE THE PRANA ABIDES	Throat and brain	Heart	Entire body	Navel and intestines	Anus and sexual organs
ENERGETIC SHAPE	Similar to brain	Jewel like the heart	Diffused shape like radiating sunlight	Triangular with flames	Bellows-like
ACTION OF THE PRANA	Able to breathe and speak	Able to accomplish- willpower	Energetic communications throughout the body	Digestion, produces heat	Elimination, love making
HIGHER LEVEL OF FUNCTION	Opens higher dimension in crown chakra	Prolongs life, strengthens memories	Increase of magical powers	Produces bliss	Opens dimension of secret level of practice; controlled use of energy utilized to achieve a practice outcome
BENEFIT	Sharpen senses, reduce headaches	Increases life force, sharpens the mind	Energizes, strengthens	Nourishes body	Grounding
NEGATIVE EFFECT OF ABSENCE	Loss of hearing and sight	Short memory, early death	Paralysis	Poor digestion, vomiting	Constipation, urinary tract problems
MEDITATIVE EFFECT	Uplifted soul, lots of laughter, ability to sing	Wisdom qualities, good contemplation	Increased magical powers	Experiences of spaciousness. Produces heat, joy, bliss	Ability to achieve higher tantric practices with partner or not
NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL EFFECT- WHEN PRANA IS MOVING POORLY	Negative speech	Anger in the heart, hurtful speech	Jealousy, jumping to conclusions	Sleepy, dullness	Misuse of desire
SIGNS OF REALIZING FIVE PRANIC QUALITIES- MYSTIC EXPERIENCES IN DREAM PRACTICE	Dreams of master, giving/receiving teachings, going to heaven	Long life, can transfer consciousness at times of death	Reincarnation	Developing positive relationships to fire and water	Walking fast, levitation, clearing, eliminating things from our lives

¹⁹ From Ligmincha Institute, Charlottesville, VA, 2001.

III. The Nine Kinds of Vital Breath Currents.²⁰

NAME OF LUNG	TIBETAN NAME	PRONUNCIATION	ACTION
ESSENTIAL LUNG OF BÖN NATURE	བོན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིགས་རྩུང་།	<i>Bon nyi gyi ying lung</i>	Action of essential nature
BLISSFUL WISDOM LUNG	ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་བདེ་རྩུང་།	<i>Ye she gyi de lung</i>	Cultivates wisdom
SPONTANEOUS LUNG OF INNATE AWARENESS	རིག་པའི་རང་རྩུང་།	<i>Rig pai rang lung</i>	Self-arising nature
WINDHORSE: LUNG OF MOVING MIND	ཡིད་ཀྱི་རྩུང་།	<i>Yid gyi ta lung</i>	Movement of thoughts
FORCEFUL KARMIC LUNG	ལས་ཀྱི་བྱགས་རྩུང་།	<i>Lé gyi shug lung</i>	Transitions in life and the intermediate state of the bardo after death
GROSS EMOTIONAL LUNG	ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་རྩུབ་རྩུང་།	<i>Nyon mong pai tsub lung</i>	Actions of the five poisons
DISEASE- CAUSING LUNG	དབུ་པའི་ལྷག་རྩུང་།	<i>Du bai trug lung</i>	Imbalance through excess or deficiency
POWERFUL LUNG OF EXISTENCE	སྤྲིད་པའི་སྟོབས་རྩུང་།	<i>Sid pai tob lung</i>	Actions of natural law
ERA-DESTROYING LUNG	ཀལ་པའི་འཛིགས་རྩུང་།	<i>Kal pai jig lung</i>	Actions of destruction that end an era of time

²⁰ From Ligmincha Institute, Charlottesville, VA, 2001.

Appendix III

I. Translation: Shardza's *Commentary*

Title (321)

The Channels and Vital Breath Currents' Magical Movement from the Oral Transmission [of Zhang Zhung], in *The Very Profound Sky Great Treasury*.¹

Homage and Introduction (322)

Homage to the Ever-Excellent One (*Kun tu bzang po*), who clears the outer and inner interruptions (*bar chod*).² Regarding this *Oral Transmission* [of Zhang Zhung]'s channels and vital breath currents' magical movement, *Quintessential Instructions* states:

Regarding rooting out (phyung) poisons associated with the vital breath currents and training the channels, [first] forcefully expel ('bud) the coarse breath current through the right [channel/nostril], [and then] leisurely inhale long breath currents through the left [channel/nostril].³

¹ *Commentary*, p. 321. Title in *Quintessential Instructions* (p. 631) reads: Quintessential Instructions of the Magical Movements from the Great Completion Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung (*Rdzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud las 'phrul 'khor zhal shes man ngag*). Notice that Shardza uses the spelling of 'khrul 'khor instead of 'phrul 'khor in *Quintessential Instructions*. As mentioned in Chapter 1, 'phrul 'khor is the appropriate spelling.

² *Commentary*, p. 322. Secret interruptions are included within the inner, asserts Ponlob Thinley Nyima (personal communication, Houston, October 2002).

³ *Quintessential Instructions* 632,2-632.3. Note that in *Quintessential Instructions* it is *bsdu* meaning "draw," "dissolve," or "gather," while in *Commentary* it is *rngubs* meaning "inhale." I feel that the meaning is the same, but I am just pointing to the fact that Shardza chooses another word.

This is the method for rooting away poisons of the vital breath currents; oral explanation from a teacher [is needed].⁴ Holding pervasively (*khyab par*) the neutral (*ma ning*)/non-dual [vital-breath] through one's entire body is the primary vital-breath: the smooth [holding] vital-breath (*'jam rlung*), the middle [holding] vital-breath (*bar rlung*) and the coarse (*rtsub rlung*) or forceful [holding] vital-breath (*drag rlung*) are the three [kinds of breath retention]. All three, the smooth, coarse and middle [holdings], are done in four sessions drawing in 108 times and expelling; at the end of each [session] the magical movement is performed, which has four [cycles]: foundational (*sngon 'gro*), root (*rtsa ba*), branch (*yan lag*) and special (*bye brag*).

Foundational Cycle (323)

Although the foundational [movements] are described as being six in *Quintessential Instructions*, according to oral explanation (*zhal shes*),⁵ they are condensed into five: Purification of the Head (*mgo sbyang*), Purification of the Legs (*rkang sbyang*), Purification of the Arms (*lag sbyang*), Purification of the

⁴ Here I am translating "oral" for *zhal*, literally "from mouth." This can be thought to be the counterpart of "listening" (*snyan*) within the orality process referred to earlier.

⁵ It is unclear the source of these oral explanations, i.e., if they come from Shardza's own teacher or from earlier ones. Furthermore, Ponlob Thinley Nyima points out that *zhal shes* in this context should actually be *zhal las shes*, meaning "oral wisdom or explication" from a lama. This can be confusing in *Commentary*, since the text itself refers to *Quintessential Instructions* as *zhal shes* when citing from it. Ponlob unequivocally asserts that *zhal shes* should refer to *Quintessential Instructions* and *zhal las shes* to oral explanation by a lama, and thus this is clearly a mistake in *Commentary* here, and it should be *zhal las shes* (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Houston, August 2003).

Upper Torso (*stod sbyang*), and Purification of the Lower Part [of the body] (*smad sbyang*).⁶

1. Purification of the Head.⁷

Sit in the cross-legged meditation posture (*skyil krung*)⁸ and sweep (*byug*) your two hands downward from the head to the body in three directions: to the right, to the left and directly in front, one time each sequentially. In order to send out (*'don*) the illnesses and harmful disturbances from afflictive obstructions (*sdig sgrib*) and spirits (*gdon*), sound *ha* and, stirring from the depth of cyclic existence, while at the same time shaking the body and limbs, reflect (*bsam*) on all sentient beings as Buddhas sounding *phat*. Implement (*'dres*)⁹ these vocalizations to all the magical movements.

2. Purification of the Legs.¹⁰

Sit with both legs extended, with the fingers of the left hand (*lag sor*) circling (*'khyud*) at the waist; and with the right hand sweep vigorously the right side of the body down the right leg, hold (*bzung*) the top (*mo*) of the toes (*rkang*

⁶ *Commentary* 323.3 – 323.4 for the listing, followed by the description ending in 326.2. Shardza's explanation is a welcome clarification for practitioners. While in *Quintessential Instructions* the foundational cycle seems solely a preparation for the main three cycles that follow, in *Commentary* it is not a simple preparation, but is actually one of the magical movement cycles. Shardza makes a clear distinction between each movement within this initial set. In other words, the six stages referred to in *Quintessential Instructions* seem more of a single magical movement with six parts, rather than six distinct magical movements.

⁷ *Commentary* 323.5 – 324.2.

⁸ *Skyil krung* can sometimes mean half-lotus, or full lotus, also called *g.yung drung* or *vajra* (Menri Abbot Lungtok Tenpa'i Nyima and Ponlob Thinley Nyima, personal communication, Menri monastery, February 2002).

⁹ It seems that *'dres* and *'gres* are used indistinctively.

¹⁰ *Commentary* 324.2 – 324.4.

pa'i sor) and shake (*sprugs*). Do seven times and then apply (*'gres*) likewise (*bzhin*) to the left.

3. Purification of the Arms.¹¹

Sit in the cross-legged posture and, with the thumb (*mthe bong*)¹² of the right hand pressing (*nan*) the ring finger (*srin mdzub ma*), maintain (*bcangs pa*) a fist (*khu tshur*). Merely touching at the armpit (*mchan khung*) with this fist, which is called diamond-scepter fist (or *vajra*-fist), forcefully extend it outwards releasing (*bkrol*) the fingers. Perform in this way (*ltar*) seven times, and apply likewise also to the left.

4. Purification of the Upper Torso.¹³

Maintain the cross-legged sitting posture bringing both forearms (*lag ngar*) parallel (*gshibs*) and the two palms facing (*bsten*) to the ground. Extend them out (*phar*) in front and draw (*bkug*) them inwards (*tshur*) touching the chest with the back bottom of the hand (*lag mgo*).¹⁴ After doing this seven times, shake the entire body and, simultaneously send out (*'don*) the sound *ha* three times consecutively (*thebs gsum*).

¹¹ Ibid, 324.4 – 325.1.

¹² In line 324.5 I am reading *gyis* for *gi* (after *mthe bong*).

¹³ Ibid, 325.1 – 325.3.

¹⁴ Literally *lag mgo* means head of the hand, referring to the back of the wrist.

5. Purification of the Lower Body.¹⁵

Sit with both legs extended and, with both hands together, sweep downwards rubbing from the top of the body and stir the four limbs¹⁶ extending seven times. Afterwards exhale sounding *ha* and *phat*, applying ('*gres*) this to all.

Benefits (*yon tan*).¹⁷

Regarding the benefits of the five foundational magical movements, *Quintessential Instructions* states:

[Their performance] balances¹⁸ the channels and vital breath currents, clearing the interior of the channels.¹⁹ All four²⁰ elements are in balance, the points of the body (*phung po*) functioning well.²¹ Awareness (*rig pa*) is lucid (*dwangs*) and the special or subtler²² vital breath currents open up (*phyed*). These foundational magical movements are ascribed to the state of mind (*dgongs pa*) of Pongyal Tsenpo (*Dpon rgyal btsan po*, "Sovereign King of Scholars").²³

¹⁵ *Commentary*, 325.3 – 325.5.

¹⁶ Here the word is *gzugs*, usually rendered as 'form', but in this context it means the limbs.

¹⁷ *Commentary* 325.5 – 326.2. Benefits works better in English, although usually benefits is used more for *phan yon* and qualities for *yon tan*, denoting good qualities.

¹⁸ *Commentary* reads *snyoms* ("equally") while *Quintessential Instructions* reads *bsnyam* ("even"), and Ponlob says that *Commentary* is correct and that *Quintessential Instructions* has probably a 'carvo' (not his word), typing or carving mistake.

¹⁹ I'm reading *sbugs* here as in *Quintessential Instructions* 633.3 instead of *Commentary*'s *sbu bas*, which again I believe it is a carving mistake.

²⁰ *Commentary* 326.1; *Quintessential Instructions* does not mention four (*bzhi*) but just "elements."

²¹ Ponlob says that *nad du tshud* is a phrase meaning that all functions well or runs smoothly (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston 2003).

²² Although the Tibetan word here is *bye drag*, usually translated as "special" or "particular," Ponlob explains that here it refers to the minor or subtler channels that branch out from the root and the branch channels.

²³ *Quintessential Instructions* 633.2-3. This line seems to apply to the following set in *Quintessential Instructions* 633.3. In other words, it seems it mentions Pongyal Tsenpo not for the foundational magical movements but for the first set of the root magical movements. In *Commentary* however, Shardza makes it clear that Pongyal Tsenpo designed or compiled both of these sets, mentioning him at the end of each set.

Root Cycle (326)²⁴

[Root Magical Movement Set]²⁵

The six root magical movements are:²⁶ Striking (*brdeg*) the Athlete's (*gyad*) hammer [to overcome] anger; the Skylight of Primordial Wisdom [that overcomes] Mental Foggiess (*gti mug*); Rolling (*sgril*) the Four (upper) Energetic Centers²⁷ [to overcome] Pride; Loosening²⁸ the Corner (*zur*) Knot (*rgya mdud*) [to overcome] Desire²⁹; Waving Upward (*gyen sprugs*) the Silk Tassel (*tar lce*) [to overcome] Jealousy; and the Stance (*stabs*) of a Tigress' Leap [to overcome] Drowsiness (*bying*) and Agitation (*rgod*).³⁰

6. Striking the Athlete's Hammer [to Overcome] Anger.³¹

Wrapping (*khud du*) the two hands around the nape of the neck (*ltag*), hold ('*khyud*) by interlacing (*bsnol*) the fingers. Having planted (*btsug*) both knees on the ground, cross (*bsnol*) the two ankles (*rkan pa'i bol tshig*) behind oneself (*rgyab*

²⁴ *Commentary* 326.2 – 333.2; *Quintessential Instructions*, 633.3 – 637.4.

²⁵ *Commentary* 326.4 – 329.3, *Quintessential instructions* 633.3- 635.1. *Commentary* maintains a continuous enumeration, and so the next magical movement is number six. However, following *Quintessential Instructions*, and for simplicity's sake, I will number the magical movements set by set, but at the beginning of each new set will also note the numbers of the magical movements according to *Commentary* in order to maintain its sense of continuity.

²⁶ It could be interesting to use the *stabs* at the end of the name, which is also related to *thabs* as method, distributing it (i.e., these are the ways or methods of such magical movement). However, when explained individually later (pp. 326-329), *stabs* appears only in the last exercise, which I believe means that we should understand it as referring only to that exercise.

²⁷ Probably relates to crown, heart, navel, and secret centers. Yes, says Ponlob.

²⁸ I am reading *dgrol* for *dkrol*. The text reads *dkrol*, which means "playing," as in an instrument, but here *dgrol*, as in freeing or loosening a knot, seems more appropriate.

²⁹ *Chags* means trapped by or entrapment. That is why sometimes it is translated as attachment. I think trapped by desire gives a good sense of it.

³⁰ *Commentary* 326.2 – 326.4; *Quintessential Instructions*, 633.3 – 633.4.

³¹ *Commentary* 326.4 – 327.1. *Commentary* maintains a continuous enumeration, and so this magical movement is number six.

tu). Load (*bkal*) all weight (*ljid rnam*) on the knees and straighten (*bsrang*) up from the waist (*rkad pa*); bend (*dgyed*) the neck (*mjing pa*) backward and drawing it in (*bkug pa*) forward (*nang du*), and with both elbows (*gru mo*) touch both knees. Perform in this way (*'dra*)³² seven times.

7. The Skylight of Primordial Wisdom that Overcomes Mental Foggiess.³³

Assume the cross-legged posture. Place (*sbyar*) the four fingers of each hand on the stomach, clasping the right and left hip bones (*dpyi mgo*) with the two thumbs. The inner cavity (*khug tu*) of the (bent) elbows (*gru mo*) forms a tight (*dong pa*) 3-sided skylight by placing the elbows on top of right and left knees. Then roll backward, until the crown (*sbyi bo*) is on the ground,³⁴ and roll forward until the forehead (*dbrel*) is on the ground. Repeat seven times.

8. Rolling the Four [Limbs like] Wheels, to Overcome Pride.³⁵

Assume in the bodhisattva cross-legged posture (*sems dpa'i skyil krung*)³⁶ and press the forepart of both feet (*rkang mgo*) beneath the right and left thighs

³² Notice that here *'dra* is used while previously we had *ltar*, both having a very close meaning.

³³ Ponlob remarks that Tibetan windows are usually 3-sided, without a glass, and generally in the ceiling as a skylight.

³⁴ The word *gtsug*, usually translated as 'planting' or 'placing' here has the sense of bringing that part of the body to the ground, with effort or force. Therefore, since here it is not that the head is planted and stays on the ground, you move trying to reach it, I am rendering it as "until" it is on the ground.

³⁵ *Commentary*, 327.4 – 328.1. There are two possible ways of understanding this title. One is that the four wheels refer to the crown, the heart, the navel, and the secret centers, and the other is that the limbs are rotating like wheels. In the last visit Ponlob leaned more to this explanation (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, August 2003 and April 2005).

³⁶ Here *Commentary* (327.4) specifically mentions Bodhisattva posture but *Quintessential Instructions* (634.4) just says *skyil krung*.

(*brla*). The fingers (*chang pa*)³⁷ of both hands grab the right and left toes, and one rolls backwards (*phyi ru*), until [or toward] the nape of the neck is on the ground. Rolling forward (*nang du*), plant the knees, bent (*khug*) at their joint (*sgyid*), straightening (*bsrang*) through being upright (*shad*)³⁸ from the waist (*rkad pa*). Roll backwards and roll forwards in this way (*de ltar*), repeating seven times.

9. Loosening³⁹ the Corner Knot to Overcome Attachment.⁴⁰

Assume the bodhisattva cross-legged posture and extend both elbows. With both thumbs press under right and left armpits; the tips of the four fingers--of each hand--pointing (*sprad*) at the heart. Reach (*thug pa*) the right elbow to the left knee and reach the left (elbow) to the right (knee). That is (*ste*), twist (*gcus*) to the right and twist (*bcus*)⁴¹ to the left seven times (to each side, alternating).

10. Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel to Overcome Jealousy.⁴²

Plant (*gtsug*)⁴³ both the left sole of the foot and left palm of the hand, and face the chest (*brang*),⁴⁴ to the ground. Extend both the right leg and arm, waving

³⁷ I am taking *chang pa* to mean the group of fingers closing, similar to the manner it is referred to in the *chang bu* offering ritual to dispel negativities--especially done at the end of the year--, where it refers to the five fingers leaving their impression in the dough (made of *rtsam pa*).

³⁸ It seems that there is a play of words here with *shad* as straightening or aligning and as the straight stroke of for example the *A*.

³⁹ I am reading *dgrol* for *dkrol*. Both texts reads *dkrol*, which means 'playing,' as in an instrument, but here *dgrol* as in freeing or loosening a knot seems more appropriate.

⁴⁰ *Commentary* 328.1 – 4.

⁴¹ I think that *bcus* here should be read as *gcus*, in the same manner it is written a few words before. It means that one twists to one side and then the other alternating. Although *bcus* also has the meaning of twisting.

⁴² *Commentary* 328.4 – 329.1.

⁴³ The text reads *gtsug*, but I believe that is *btsug*, as we find it earlier and also in the sentence following this one.

them skywards seven times. Also then plant (*btsug*) both the right foot and hand on the ground extending the two left (i.e., arm and leg), waving them skywards seven times.

11. The Stance of a Tigress' Leap to Overcome Drowsiness and Agitation.⁴⁵

Bring (*drangs*) the two hands from the outside of the knee-joints to their inside, seize (*'jus*) the two ears and bend (*bkug*) the head. With both soles of the feet⁴⁶ planted on the ground, jump forward seven times and then also jump backwards seven times in the same manner (*ltar*). Apply the shaking and stirring, vocalizing the sounds *ha* and *phat*, in all [the magical movements explained above].

These five root magical movements are the exalted perspective (*dgongs*) of Pongyal Tsenpo.⁴⁷

Benefits.⁴⁸

The benefits of these five, condensing them here from those in *Quintessential Instructions*, are: the door to the channel of the five poisons closes and the door to the channel of primordial wisdom opens (*'byed*). The five

⁴⁴ *Commentary* (328.4) actually reads *brangng*, which is certainly a typo. The meaning of *brang* is chest, so, looking at how the posture is performed, I am assuming that it means the chest also facing to the ground. *Quintessential instructions* (634.6) does not mention the chest.

⁴⁵ *Commentary*, 329.1 – 3.

⁴⁶ It reads *rkang thil*, but I think it should be *rkang mthil*.

⁴⁷ *Commentary* 329.3. Here Shardza is referring to the first five movements of this cycle, which have specific correlations, and was shown in chapter 3 and in the chart in appendix III. Thus, he will describe the benefits of the first five together and then the benefit of the Stance of a Tigress' Leap magical movement.

aggregates are purified in their place (*gnas su dag*) and the celestial sphere (*dkyil 'khor, mandala*) of the five Buddha dimensions (*sku*) is completed (*rdzogs*). The five elements are mastered (*dbang du 'dus*) and the five essential⁴⁹ lights dawn (*'char*).

Regarding the Stance of a Tigress' Leap [to overcome] Drowsiness and Agitation, the force (*shugs*) of the powerful (*stobs*) vital breath currents⁵⁰ is completed (*rdzogs*), purifying drowsiness and agitation in its own place. The vital breath currents and the mind enter (*tshud*) the central channel from below (*mar*) freeing/liberating (*grol*) the moving (*'gyu byed*)⁵¹ conceptual formations (*rtog tshogs*).⁵²

[Root Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles] (330)

The six root magical movements that clear away obstacles are: Duck Drinking Water, Wild Yak (*drong mo*) Butting Sideways, Female Donkey in the [reclining] to Sleep Stance, Holding (*'dzin*) the Breath [like] a Sparrow-Hawk, Rolling Up the Limits of the Four Continents and Extending the Limits of the Four Continents.⁵³

⁴⁸ *Commentary* 329.3 – 5.

⁴⁹ I'm reading *dangs ma* for *dang ma*, supported also by *Quintessential Instructions* (p. 635.1-636.2).

⁵⁰ *Commentary* uses the better known *srog rlung*.

⁵¹ Ponlop Thinley Nyima corrected it as *'gyu byed*, (Houston, June 20, 2001). *Quintessential Instructions* supports it too (p. 636.2).

⁵² *Quintessential Instructions* 636.1 – 2.

⁵³ *Commentary*, 330.1 – 333.2, Shardza adds the last movement which is not in *Quintessential Instruction* (636.2 – 637.4).

12. Duck Drinking Water.⁵⁴

Straighten (*bsrang*) the [standing] body and grasp the waist with the fingers-group (*chang pa*) [of both hands], the two thumbs pointing forward. Through stooping forward, reach (*reg pa*) the crown towards the ground and [then] bend the head backwards at the nape by (*sa*) standing up straight (awaken straightening like a *shad* [*shad kyis langs*]). In that way bend backwards and stoop forwards seven times.⁵⁵ Shake and stir, and apply the *ha phat*.

13. Wild Yak Butting Sideways.⁵⁶

Stand up and having pointed the fingers to the front, hold at the waist. Lean (*bkal*) the torso, the shoulder (*dpung*) and head on to the right knee, and performs the butting style with the head from the right side, crossing the leg with a jumping stance and twisting (*dkyus*) [the torso], and performing similarly to the left. Alternate (*res mos*) twisting and jumping seven times.

14. Female Donkey [reclining] to Sleep.⁵⁷

Bring your body to the upright posture (*lus po langs*), fingers pointing forward, holding at the waist. Turn with the torso merely touching the left knee with the right elbow, and [then] merely touching the right [knee] with the left

⁵⁴ *Commentary*, 330.3 – 5.

⁵⁵ I'm taking *rgur reg mo* to be an abbreviation of the *rgur nas spyil bos sa la reg pa* mentioned the line above.

⁵⁶ *Commentary*, 330.5 – 331.2. In line 330.5 I am reading *zur* instead of *thur*; confirmed by the spelling earlier in 330.2 as well as *Quintessential Instructions*, p. 636.2.

⁵⁷ *Commentary*, 331.2 – 4.

[elbow]. Change the legs evenly [each time], crossing the right and left, twisting (*dkyus*) the upper and lower [i.e., torso and legs] and repeat seven times.

15. The Sparrow-Hawk Soaring in the Wind.⁵⁸

Stand (*langs*) with both feet together, hold the finger-grouping at the waist, pointing the thumb forward. Lift (*btegs*) the soles⁵⁹ of the feet just slightly (*cung tsam*) and turn⁶⁰ the head and torso to the right, to the left and to the back, respectively, jumping upwards (*'phag pa*) to the sky each time. Perform likewise seven times.

16. Rolling Up the Limits of the Four Continents.⁶¹

Rise up (*langs*) and merely touch with the right leg above the left knee, and similarly with the left [above the right]. Circle by crossing (*bsnol mar bsgril*) the right and left arms into the [opposite] armpits, performing seven times.

17. Extending the Limits of the Four Continents.⁶²

Assume the adamantine (*rdo rje*) cross-legged posture and pressing the thumbs with the ring finger (*srin lag*) of both hands [into a fist] plant the wrists on the ground. Having loaded all [one's] weight (*ljid rnam*) on the hands, raise up (*yar la btegs*) the body and descend (*'beb*) rotating. Perform seven times.

⁵⁸ *Commentary*, 331.4 – 332.1.

⁵⁹ In the oral instructions I received in Tritan Norbutse monastery (January 1994) as well as in New Mexico (July 1996) and Nepal (June 1995) it was shown as if the heels were the ones raised or lifted.

⁶⁰ Here reads *brgyur*, which is probably a typo or 'carvo' for *bsgyur* that is also what is used in the next line. Ponlob also mentioned that sometimes, as one turns to the right and the left, one also shakes the torso slightly, with a sense of soaring (Houston, October 2002).

⁶¹ *Commentary*, 332.1 – 2.

Benefits. ⁶³

The benefits of these, according to the *Quintessential Instructions*, are:

The Duck [drinking water movement] liberates from the four collections (*bsdus*)⁶⁴ of diseases and opens the doorway (*sgo*) of the channel of sky; the Wild Yak [butting movement]⁶⁵ liberates from the diseases of phlegm (*bad kan*)⁶⁶ and opens the doorway of the channel of earth; the Female Donkey [lying down to sleep movement] liberates from diseases of bile (*mkhris pa*)⁶⁷ and opens the doorway of the channel of air; the Sparrow-Hawk [upholding the wind movement] liberates from diseases of heat and opens the doorway of the channel of fire⁶⁸; and the Four continents [magical movement(s)] liberate from diseases of cold and open the doorway of the channel of water.⁶⁹

As for the common or general [benefits, these magical movements] will cause (*'gyur*) one to possess the power of speed-walking (*bang mgyogs*), ignite the warmth [of one's body] (*drod 'ba*) and reverse the aging process/life span (*tshe ring log po*).⁷⁰ Stated by Togme Shigpo (*Rtog med zhig po*, "Destroyer beyond conceptuality").⁷¹

⁶²Commentary, 332.2 - 4.

⁶³ Commentary, 332.4 – 333.2.

⁶⁴ *Quintessential Instructions* reads '*dus*.

⁶⁵ *Commentary* reads '*brang mo* (332.5) but is certainly a typo, and should be '*brong mo* (as in 330.2, and 330.5).

⁶⁶ *Quintessential Instructions* (637.2) reads here *tshad pa'i nad las grol*, meaning "liberates or frees from the diseases of heat," which includes but is not limited to fever.

⁶⁷ *Quintessential Instructions* says it liberates from phlegm and bile (637.2)

⁶⁸ *Me mi rtsa* is a typo and should be *me'i rtsa* as in *Quintessential Instructions* 637.2.

⁶⁹ He quotes from *Quintessential Instructions* 637.1 – 637.4. I believe that Shardza here applies the benefits of the Four Continents to both movements (i.e., the last two of this set).

⁷⁰ *Quintessential Instructions* (637.4) reads *tshe lo log 'gyur thub par*, "power over the reversing of one's years of one's life."

⁷¹ *Quintessential Instructions* 637.3 – 4, *Commentary*, 333.2.

Branch Cycle (333)⁷²

The branch magical movement [cycle] is composed by the five root or main branch magical movements and the five movements that clear away obstacles.⁷³

[Main Branches Set]⁷⁴

The five main branch magical movements are: the Natural Descent (*rang 'beb*) of the Four Elements, the Peacock Drinking Water;⁷⁵ Collecting the Four Stalks (*sdong po*); Rolling (*bsgril*) the Four Upper and Lower [limbs] and Striking (*rdeg*) the Four Knots (*rgya mdud*).

18. Natural Descent of the Four Elements.⁷⁶

Sit in the cross-legged position, with both palms pressing down upon the thighs, and straighten the body and forearms. Shake the head and upper body forward and lean back up, performing that seven times.

19. Peacock Drinking Water.⁷⁷

Align the both legs [extended forward together]. Join (*snol*) the forearms at the back, thumbs pressing the ring fingers. Bend the body forward, the forehead merely touching in between the knees, and raising the head, look

⁷² *Commentary*, 333.2, Quintessential Instructions 637.4.

⁷³ *Quintessential Instructions* begins by calling them root and branches (637.4) and later (638.5) calls them *gag sel*, and probably that's why in *Commentary* the latter classification is used.

⁷⁴ *Commentary*, 333.2 – 335.5, Quintessential Instructions 637.4 – 638.5.

⁷⁵ *Quintessential Instructions* as '*chung* instead of '*thung* in *Commentary*, which is correct. In fact *Quintessential Instructions* itself has it in the following line as '*thung* (637.5).

⁷⁶ 334.1

⁷⁷ *Commentary*, 333.5 – 334.2.

alternating to the right over the shoulder and left [over the shoulder]. And looking skywards each time, perform alternating these three [i.e., right, left and skyward]. Perform in this way seven times.

20. Collecting the Four Stalks.⁷⁸

From a seated position (*'dug*), having grabbed the big toes with the two hands, place the backbone on the ground, extending skywards the four, arms and legs, and performing the mode of radiating. Perform in this way seven times.⁷⁹

21. Rolling the Four Upper and Lower [limbs].⁸⁰

Hold the upper right and left feet with the two set of fingers, and rolling backward, plant the top of the feet on the ground. Then, rolling forward, plant the forehead on the ground. Similarly, repeat seven times.

22. Striking the Four Knots.⁸¹

Perform⁸² the adamantine cross-legged posture and, bringing the right and left hand in between the cove (*khug*) of the knees, hold [the forelegs] with both hands from under the calf (*byin pa*). Perform the rotating descent (*'beb bskor*) seven times. Shaking vigorously (*sbrugs*) the four forms (*gsugs*, i.e., limbs) and reciting the sounds *ha phat* are required (*dgos*) for all [movements].

⁷⁸ *Commentary*, 334.2 – 4.

⁷⁹ *Quintessential Instructions* reads also “perform rolling backward and rolling forward” (638.2).

⁸⁰ *Commentary*, 334.4 – 5.

⁸¹ *Commentary*, 334.5 – 335.2.

⁸² In 335.1 I’m reading *bya* for *phyä*.

Benefits

As for these benefits, *Quintessential Instructions* states:

[One] liberates from diseases of the four elements [allowing] the vital breath currents together with the mind to enter the essential points (*gnad du tshud*).⁸³ Appearances magically liberate and adherence to mistaken appearances is reversed (*zlog*). The strength of the body extends and one gains natural mastery over the four elements. External and internal obstacles are cleared allowing the channels and the vital breath currents to function well. The strengths of body oil (*snum*),⁸⁴ its heat and excellent luminosity, extend.⁸⁵

[Branch Magical Movement Set that Clears Away Obstacles] (335).⁸⁶

The five [branch magical movements] that clear away obstacles are: the Great Garuda Flapping (*rdeb*) its Wings, Peacock Stirring Water, Collecting (*'dus*) the Four [limbs] Clearing Away the Limitations, the One-Sided Gallop of the Antelope (*e na*) and the One-Sided Pulse (*sprugs*)⁸⁷ of the *Sha ri* Deer.⁸⁸

23. Great Garuda Flapping its Wings.⁸⁹

Standing (*langs*) upright, extend the right arm skyward and simultaneously touch the buttocks (*'phongs zhabs*) with the back of the right foot's

⁸³ *Quintessential Instructions* 638.3 has *chud*, which I believe is lack of ink or carving error.

⁸⁴ I am following *Quintessential Instructions* 638.4, instead of *Commentary's* spelling as *bsnum*, which is a typo as far as I can tell.

⁸⁵ *Commentary*, 335.2 – 5, *Quintessential Instructions* 638.3 – 6.

⁸⁶ *Commentary* 335.5– 338.3, *Quintessential Instructions* 638.5 – 639.4.

⁸⁷ In this case, I am rendering *sprug* as “pulse” instead of “stirring” in order to describe better the movement.

⁸⁸ It is not too clear the exact word or its origins but it seems to describe a kind of deer. *Quintessential Instructions* has two different spellings for it, *sha na'i* (638.5) and *sha ra na*, and probably following the latter *Commentary* has *sha ra* or *sha ra'i*.

⁸⁹ *Commentary* 336.1 – 3.

heel. Directing (*thad*) the left arm to the hip (*dpyi*), extend downwardly. In this manner, perform alternating right and left, repeating seven times [each].

24. Peacock Shaking the Water.⁹⁰

In the standing [posture], having both arms [extended] parallel in front, palms facing to the ground, simultaneously shake both hands, from the wrists, one time to [each of] the three: front, right and left. Repeat seven times.

25. Collecting the Four [limbs] Clearing Away Limitations.⁹¹

Having the soles of both feet together, sit (*'dug*)⁹² and hold the top of the feet (*rkang mgo*) with both hands. Then jump forward seven times and jump backward seven times.

26. One-Sided Gallop of the Antelope.⁹³

Hold the top of the left foot with the left hand, and place the sole of that foot in the right leg cavity or below intestine (*rgyu zhabs*). Hop forward on the

⁹⁰ *Commentary* 336.3 – 5.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 336.5 – 337.1.

⁹² There are different ways to understand the sitting here. When I was originally introduced to this magical movement it was described as the buttocks not touching the ground. However, later I have also seen it where it is sitting on the ground. The texts do not bring clarity here, since as we see from above *Commentary* just says “sit” or “stay” and *Quintessential Instructions* (639.1) explains “in the mode of the cross-legged posture” (*skyil krung tshul*). Obviously jumping without having the buttocks touch the ground is more difficult (and actually tougher on the ankles too), but having them touch has the advantage of that falling (*'beb*) at each step helping grounding and exerting the secret chakra. Thus, at this point both seem to be viable options. In 1993, when I saw this practice for the first time, in Tritan Norbutse, the monk demonstrating it lifted his buttocks off the ground while maintaining the posture of holding the toes of both feet with both hands. However, in 1995 Yundrung Gyaltzen at Tritan Norbutse and then Ponlob Thinley Nyima in Menri (2003) demonstrated it as lifting it only with every jump. In 1996 the then Khenpo of Tritan Norbutse and under whose guidance I was shown originally the magical movements there in 1993, came to the US and said that in this movement either of the alternatives was correct (oral teachings, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Ligmincha Summer Retreat, 1996).

right foot while simultaneously swatting (*sbrugs*) the right hand towards (*thad nas*) the hip. In this manner, take seven small hops forward. Having turned around take another seven small hops to the back side. Perform again shifting (*brje*) in a similar way also with the left.⁹⁴

27. The One-Sided Pulse of the *Sha ri* Deer.⁹⁵

Standing upright with the sole of the right foot pressing (*mnan*) [against] the bare nook (*ther khug*) [of the left leg], bring both arms from the side (*zur nas*) in a downwards clearing [movement]. Racing (going forward) (*sdun*)⁹⁶ seven times, bend (*bkug*) the torso, shoulder and head with each small hop of the left leg, meeting (*sprad*) three times [for each step] in the mode of bowing down (*rgur*) the torso. Having turned around (to the backside) make seven small hops. Shifting [sides/feet], apply similarly with the left. Perform [this whole pattern] with one drawing (*khu*) of the breath.

Benefits⁹⁷

As for the benefits of these, from the former (*snga ma*, i.e., *Quintessential*

Instructions):

The obstacles from the four elements are liberated and the door to the channel of the elements is opened. The elements are balanced and [thus] the collection of the four diseases is harmless (*mi tshugs*).⁹⁸

⁹³ *Commentary* 337.1 – 3.

⁹⁴ In this movement there are 28 hops altogether, 14 on the right leg (7 hops to the front and seven to the back) and another 14 on the left leg.

⁹⁵ *Commentary* 337.4 – 338.1.

⁹⁶ It might be that instead of *sdun* it is *sngun*, which is an archaic form of *mdun*, meaning forward.

⁹⁷ *Commentary*, 338.1 – 3.

These ten branch magical movements [i.e. five root and five branches] are [in accordance with] the intent (*dgongs*) of Lhundrub Muthur (*Lhun grub Mu thur*,⁹⁹ “Spontaneously perfected [one], holder of the *Mu* lineage”).¹⁰⁰

Special Magical Movement Cycle. (338).¹⁰¹

The special magical movement [cycle] is composed by [the set of movements] that clear away the individual obstacles of the head, the body and the limbs and [the set of movements] that clear away common obstacles.¹⁰²

There are five [magical movements] that clear away the [individual] obstacles of the head, torso, arms, lower body and legs.

[Special magical movement set that clears away individual obstacles].¹⁰³

28. Clearing Away [obstacles] From the Head: Rotating (*ril*) and Nodding (*lcog*) the Head.¹⁰⁴

In the cross-legged posture, raise (*bsgrengs*) both hands on top of the thighs (*brla*). Rotate (*bskor*) the head to right and left seven times each, and then bend to the front and back seven times.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ In *Quintessential Instructions*, 639.4 – 5 there are some minor differences from the way Shardza quotes it.

⁹⁹ I am reading ‘*thur*’ instead of *thur* both in *Commentary*, 338.2 and in *Quintessential Instructions* 639.4.

¹⁰⁰ *Commentary*, 338.2 – 3. *Mu* is one of the five Bönpo family lineages.

¹⁰¹ *Commentary* 338.3 – 346.2, *Quintessential Instructions* 639.4 – 643.1.

¹⁰² *Commentary* 338.3.

¹⁰³ *Commentary* 338.4 – 340.3, *Quintessential Instructions* 639.4 – 640.4. Instead of “individual,” *Quintessential Instructions* calls this set “the gradual clearing of obstacles” (*gags sel rim pa*).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 338.4 – 5.

¹⁰⁵ *Dkyed* here seems to be a typo and understood either as *bkyed*, which means bent backwards and so together with *bkug* pairs with *mdun rgyab* meaning “front and back,” meaning together “bending to the front and to the back.” Tibetologist Greg Hillis points out that it could be read as

29. Swinging (*ling*) the Binding Chains (*sgrog chings*) of the Torso.¹⁰⁶

Staying put (*'dug*) with both arms crossed at (*khar*) the heart, hold the shoulders (*'phrag*)¹⁰⁷ to the right and left [sides] of the head. Having planted both knees on the ground, twist (*gcus*) the torso and rotate seven times to the right and seven to the left.

30. Grasping [like] the Raven's Claws, [clearing away the obstacles of] the Arms.¹⁰⁸

Sit in the bodhisattva posture, bristle (*gzings*) the palms (*sbar mo*) of both hands, and alternating¹⁰⁹ between the right and left, stretch out and draw in (*brkyang brkum*) releasing [and bringing back] the fingers; performing seven times.

31. Adamantine Self-Rotation of the Stomach (*pho ba*).¹¹⁰

Establish (*bca'*) in the bodhisattva position and crossing the right and left elbows hold [the stomach] with the group of fingers of each hand. Having folded (*rtsegs*) the forearms, embrace (*bsdom*) the waist and rotate the stomach seven times to the right and seven times to the left.

dgyed and if so it might be a condensed version of *mdun tu bkug dang rgyab tu dgyed*, a typical way for Tibetan language to say "bend to the front and back." *Quintessential Instructions* (6395) does not describe it in such a detail and so there is no word or phrase to compare it in its "original version."

¹⁰⁶ *Commentary* 339.1 – 2.

¹⁰⁷ I am rendering from *sku 'phrag* meaning shoulder in honorific language.

¹⁰⁸ *Commentary* 339.2 – 3. *Commentary* does not specify in the title here that this movement clears away the obstacles of the arm, just mentions arm, but it is clear from the above context plus it is mentioned in this way in *Quintessential Instructions* (639.6). Also, the latter uses *bya rog* for crow or raven, while *Commentary* uses its synonym *pho rog*.

¹⁰⁹ I'm reading *res mos* instead of *reg mos* (which I believe it is a typo).

¹¹⁰ *Quintessential Instructions* (639.6 – 640.1) has it as both waist (*rked pa*) and stomach.

32. Camel's (*rnga mong*) Fighting Stance (*'dor stabs*) [that clears away the obstacles of the] Legs [and whole body].¹¹¹

Sitting squatting (*tsog pur*), raise the forearms between the legs, and grasp the big toes with both hands. Rolling backwards, plant the legs and head to the ground, [then] shake and extend with the legs and arms straight (like a *shad*). Perform in this manner seven times. Shake the four forms [i.e., limbs] and [sound] *ha* and *phat*. Accompany (*'gro*, literally “go”) with all other [movements].

Benefits.¹¹²

As for the benefits of these, [in accordance with] the intent of Orgom Kundul (*'Or sgom kun 'dul*, “Meditator of Or [clan/family] Tamer of All [obstructions]”), all the cooperative conditions (*rkyen*) of temperature (heat and cold), wind, bile, and demons become clear as well as the diseases of each of the branches [i.e. limbs/parts of the body] become clear.¹¹³

[Special magical movement set that clears away common obstacles] (340).¹¹⁴

The [magical movements] that clear away common obstacles are: Stirring the Depths of the Ocean, Freeing the Nine Knots (*rgya mdud*), Binding/Training

¹¹¹ *Commentary*, 339.5 – 340.2. *Quintessential Instructions* does not mention the legs in the title of this movement, probably meaning that it is to purify the whole body, which I believe it does too, since the whole body is clearly engaged in its performance.

¹¹² *Commentary*, 340.2 – 3.

¹¹³ *Quintessential Instructions* (640.3 – 4) has a more extensive set of benefits that claims to be red instructions from oral wisdom.

¹¹⁴ *Commentary* 340.3 – 346.2, *Quintessential Instructions* 640.5 – 643.1.

(‘*dul*) and Freeing (*bkrol*) the Channels, Chinese Woman Weaving Silk (*dar thag*), First, Second and Third [parts] and the Bouncing Jewel (*nor bu ‘phar len*).¹¹⁵

33. Stirring the Depths of the Ocean.¹¹⁶

Establish in the bodhisattva posture, showing the forearms outwardly (*lag ngar phyir*). Hold from under the clavicles (*rkang ngar*) with the group of fingers of both hands and rotate seven times to the right and seven times to the left. Then, by bringing the calves and waist upright, raise up the entire body and shake as many times as possible (*ci mang bya*).

34. Freeing the Nine Knots.¹¹⁷

Sitting with both legs slightly (*tsam*) semi-extended (*phyed brgyad*),¹¹⁸ tap (*brdeg*) with both palms alternating, seven times each: the crown of the head, the forehead, the base of the nape (*ltag khung*), the top of the right and left shoulders, the right and left hip bone (*dpyi mig*), above the right and left knees. Tap the ground with the heels (*rkang pa’i rting*), and then plant the palms of both hands on the ground, elevating (*‘phang*) three times the lower part of the body (*ro*

¹¹⁵ *Commentary* 340.3 – 4.

¹¹⁶ *Commentary* 340.5 – 341.2. It is unclear why *Commentary* (341.1) uses “then” (*de nas*) to continue the description that seems to be part of the rotation explained. In fact, neither *Quintessential Instructions* nor *Experiential Transmission* mention the *de nas*. *Experiential Transmission* (262.1 – 4) has a clearer description of this part of this magical movement. However, its last line is puzzling, saying “repeat seven, nine, ten, three or as many times as possible, whatever you can do (*ci thub bya*)” (*Experiential Transmission*, 262.4). This phrase does not appear in *Quintessential Instructions*, making it harder to understand Drugyalwa’s intention in adding it there.

¹¹⁷ *Commentary*, 341.2 – 5.

¹¹⁸ *Quintessential Instructions* (640.6) uses *bcung tsam brkyang*, while *Commentary* has *phyed brkyang tsam*, lit. “slightly half-extended.”

smad)¹¹⁹ to the sky and fall (*brdab*) with the soles of the feet to the ground. Following that, stand upright striking (*rgyab*) three times the great descent (*'beb chen*). Annotation (*mchan*): in the air (*bar snang* "from earth to stars") assume the bodhisattva cross-legged posture and sit (*'dug pa*) three [times]. Shake, stir, and so forth, likewise [as in all magical movements].

35. Training and Freeing the Channels.¹²⁰

Stand, and grab the waist with both hands directing the thumbs forward (inwards). Visualize (*gsal gdab*, literally, "confirm clearly") the three channels, six wheels (*'khor lo*), and the essential spheres (*thig le*) of method and wisdom as follows: at the principal wheel of the crown an *A*, at the throat an *Om*, at the heart a *Hung*, at the wheel of the soles¹²¹ of the feet a *Yam*, at the secret [wheel] a *Ram*, and at the navel a *Kham*. Then, heating (*dros*) the channel(s) and the elements (*kham*s), by the fire of the inner heat (*gtum mo*), the three [syllables] *A*, *Om*, and *Hung* melt into light. Having transformed into three essential spheres, white, red, and azure (*mthing*) [respectively], they dissolve (*thim*) in the *Yam* at the soles of the feet. Spreading (*g.yos*) the vital breath from the *Yam*, blazes (*'bar*) the fire from the *Ram*, [making] the nectar of the *Kham* fall (*babs*). From that, having arisen the aspects (*rnam*) of vital breath current, fire, and golden light, imagine (*bsam*) that all the [karmic] predispositions and obstacles of the three

¹¹⁹ *Ro smad* is synonym to *lus kyi smad* (see *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, Mi rigs dpe skun khang, 1993, p. 2724).

¹²⁰ *Commentary*, 342.1 – 343.1.

times are a pure (*dag*) burnt offering (*sreg gtor*). Jump upwards (*rnam mchongs*), and while striking (*brdeg*) the buttocks with both heels, gallop (*rgyug*) facing forward seven times, then turn and perform facing to the other side.

These three magical movements were spoken by Yangton Chenpo (*Yang ston chen po*, “Great Teacher of Yang”) to his son Bum Je ‘Od (*‘Bum rje ‘Od* “Luminous Lord of the Scriptures”).¹²²

Benefits.¹²³

[One is] liberated from all kinds of disease (*nas rigs kun*) as well as from all cooperative conditions (*rkyen*) [due to imbalance of] the elements, and all external and internal obstacles. All flaws (*skyon*) of the channels, vital-breath and essential spheres are cleared away; [and] the five vital breaths penetrate (*tshud*) the 5 points (*gnad*). [One] achieves the self/natural power of speed-walking (*bag mgyogs*), of the ignition of the warmth of bliss and of [control] over the four elements. The erratic collection of thoughts purify (*sangs*) into the natural abode (*rang sar*) and the non-conceptual experiences of bliss and clarity dawn.¹²⁴

36. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, *Part One*.¹²⁵

¹²¹ I’m reading *mthil* for *mthing* taking the latter as a typo (or a “carvo”).

¹²² *Commentary*, 343.1 – 2. *Yang* is an abbreviation for *Ya ngal* (see S. Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy*, p. 29).

¹²³ *Commentary*, 343.2 – 4.

¹²⁴ Although *Commentary* does not attribute these benefits explicitly to *Quintessential Instructions*, as in previous sets, they clearly come from it (see *Quintessential Instructions*, 641.1 – 3).

¹²⁵ *Commentary*, 343.4 – 344.1. The next three magical movements of this set are called Chinese woman weaving silk parts 1, 2, & 3 respectively. And although each one is a distinct magical movement, they are related. In fact *Quintessential Instructions* (and *Experiential Transmission* following it) name them as three gradual parts (*rim pa gsum*). See *Quintessential Instructions* 641.6 and *Experiential Transmission*, 262.10.

Sitting down, place both legs in front. With the right hand grab the right ankle (*bol tshigs*) [and] drawing the left hand out from the inside of the knee-creek (*sgyid khug*) of the left leg, grab the second toe.¹²⁶ Having done so, rotate [the leg] seven times inward and seven times outward. Likewise, understand that the right and the left should be switched (*brje*).

37. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, *Part Two*.¹²⁷

Lie down (*bsnyal*) with the right side of the head and body on the ground. Close the right nostril (*sna khung*) with the forefinger (*srin mdzub*)¹²⁸ of the right hand and bind (*sdom*) the carotid artery (*'phar rtsa*) with the thumb. Drawing the left arm inside the left knee-creek, grab the second toe with both the thumb and forefinger. Rotate [the leg] seven times outward and seven times inward. Likewise repeat switching also to the left.

38. Chinese Woman Weaving Silk, *Part Three*.¹²⁹

Sitting in a crouching position (*tsog pu*), having both arms between the legs, stretch them and grab the big toes of both feet.¹³⁰ Planting the external part of the buttocks on the ground, with the legs and arms slightly lifted, pound

¹²⁶ In Tibetan fingers are both of hands and feet. Here *mdzub mo* refers to the 'forefinger' of the toes, in other words. The "index" toe, next to the thumb.

¹²⁷ *Commentary*, 344.1 – 3.

¹²⁸ In the previous magical movement it was described as just *mdzub* (*Commentary*, 344.5). I am not totally sure if it is still the index or is it another finger. His Holiness Lungtok Tenpa Nyima explained it to me as with the 'ring' finger (New Mexico, 1997 and Menri monastery, 2002).

¹²⁹ *Commentary*, 344.3 – 5.

lightly (*rgyob*)¹³¹ alternating with both heels toward the hips repeating seven times with each [heel]. Shake and stir the four limbs, and so forth, same [as before].

Benefits.¹³²

[From *Quintessential Instructions*:]¹³³

The first [part of the Chinese Woman Weaving Silk magical movement] opens the door of the left channel, and insight (*shes rab*) increases (*'phel*); the female (*mo*) [left] vital-breath penetrates the vital points and discursive thoughts (*'phro rgod*) are pacified.¹³⁴

The second [part] closes (*'gag*) the door of the right channel and cuts off the continuity of the path of afflictions (*nyon mongs*).¹³⁵ [One] obtains natural power over the harsh vital breath (*rtsub rlung*) and purifies torpor and dullness (*bying rmugs*).

The third [part] opens the door of the central channel and masters (*'byongs*) the neutral vital breath (*ma ning rlung*). [One] obtains natural power over appearances and mind (*snang sems*) and non-conceptual primordial wisdom (*ye shes*) dawns.

¹³⁰ I am reading *rkang* for *rkyad* here (*Commentary* 344.4). This is also confirmed in *Quintessential Instruction* (642.3) and *Experiential Transmission* (264.1), both reading *rkang pa'i mthe bong*.

¹³¹ *Commentary* (344.5) has *rgyob* meaning “like sound of hitting,” while *Quintessential Instructions* (642.3) and *Experiential Transmission* (264.2) have *rgyab* meaning “to strike.” *Commentary* (344.5) has *tib* after the word for hip (*dpyi*), which I believe is an error, maybe for the word *rtasar*, which appears in both *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission*, meaning “near.” Also the former (mis) spells *dpyi* as *spyid*.

¹³² *Commentary*, 345.1 – 3.

¹³³ Although there is no direct reference to *Quintessential Instructions* here, the *shes so* at the end of this benefit section (345.3) is a clear marker that it is quote. Also, see *Quintessential Instructions* (642.3 – 642.5).

¹³⁴ *Mo rlung* is another way of saying *'jam rlung* or soft breath (Yongzin Tenzin Namdak, Charlottesville, VA, October, 2005, Ponlob Thinley Nyima, Houston, TX, April 2005). *Quintessential Instructions* (642.3–4) has it as distilled or gathered vital-breath (*bsdu rlung*) and *Experiential Transmission* (264.4) as harsh vital-breath (*rtsub rlung*).

¹³⁵ *Commentary* has *chad* instead of *chod* as found both in *Quintessential Instructions* and *Experiential Transmission*, which again could be bad ink transferring of the *naro*, but in any case the meaning remains the same.

39. Bouncing Jewel.¹³⁶

Assume the bodhisattva posture. Having the fingers of [both] hands interlaced with the two forefingers parallel, [finger] tips (*rtse mo*) touching, press and cross the right [thumb] with the left thumb [i.e., left thumb over the right one]. Then, extend both hands straight and bent them inward, hitting with the back joints (*rgyab tshigs*) of the thumbs, the right, left and center of the chest (*brang*); and in particular (*khyad par*) hitting everywhere and simultaneously vocalizing the *phat* sound as many times as possible. [Then] stir and shake with *ha phat*, etc., that extends to all of the magical movements.¹³⁷

Concluding Advice (346).¹³⁸

Thus, afterward [i.e., having done these practices, one] effortlessly (*rtsol med*) self-liberates in an uncontrived (*bya med*) manner beyond intellect (*blo med*) and instantly one finds rest (*ngal gso*),¹³⁹ entering into a meditative equipoise.

Colophon (346).¹⁴⁰

Due to my disciple's (*slob ma*) request (*bskul*), [and] in through (*du*) the unmistakable ('*phyug med*) oral instruction (*shal khrid*) of the higher (*gong ma*) great

¹³⁶ *Commentary*, 345.3 – 346.1.

¹³⁷ The odd way it is written it seems that it might have been dictated, and as for quotes from *Quintessential Instructions*, probably done by memory and not necessarily with the *Quintessential Instructions* text in front.

¹³⁸ *Commentary*, 346.1 – 2. *Commentary* does not have a benefit specific to this movement. *Quintessential Instructions* (642.6) and *Experiential Transmission* (263.9) have a very brief one “The benefits are maintaining the heart vital breath current in the chest treasure and liberating from the impure diseases.” However, it has this advise that is absent in both of the other texts.

¹³⁹ I am reading *ngal gso* for *ngar gso*.

masters (*grub chen*), [I, Shardza] set forth (*bkod*) as clear (*gsal*) [as possible] the application of the practices (*lag len*) of the uncommon path, of the [Zhang Zhung] *Oral Transmission's* magical movement.¹⁴¹ I admit (*bshags*) the contradictions (*'gal gyur*) [that I made here] to the skygoers and protectors.

[In a smaller typeface the colophon continues]:¹⁴²

Amplifying on this, a nephew of the *dra* [family], Namgyal Dragpa (*rNam rgyal grags pa*) and a student of the *dra*, Tsultrim Gyaltzen (*Tshul khrims gyal mtshan*),¹⁴³ both having met [and received]¹⁴⁴ this profound oral instructions, and with the great intention of preventing the lineage to degenerate or stop, exhorted [me, Shardza] to write these oral instructions down, and thus [I] the renunciant/ascetic Shardza'i Chadrag Tashi Gyaltzen (*Shar rda'i Bya bral Bkris Rgyal mtshan*), composed it (*bkod*) at the Blissful Beautiful Yungdrung mountain hermitage (*G.Yung [drung] Lhun po'i De chen ri khrod*).¹⁴⁵ May this practice become

¹⁴⁰ *Commentary*, 346.2 – 3.

¹⁴¹ There is an obvious typo here since it reads *'khul 'khor* instead of *'khrul 'khor*. And of course italics are mine.

¹⁴² *Commentary*, 346.3–6. I am not sure if there is a specific reason for the smaller typeface—sometimes that is found in colophons—, or very possibly, for lack of space. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak corrected many lines of this last part, and stated that there should be better blockprints of this text available (Charlottesville, VA, October, 2004). I will look into finding a better copy.

¹⁴³ Probably this is a typo and it should be spelled *rgyal mthsan*. *Dra* here refers to the family name, and it could also specifically refer to Ratrul Tenzin Wangyal (*Ra sprul Bstan 'dzin dbang rgyal*), a famous teacher in that family, probably the uncle of Namgyal Dragpa and teacher of Tsultrim Gyaltzen (Yongzin Tenzin Namdak, personal communication, Charlottesville, VA, October 2004). Ponlob remarks that also within that lineage was Raton Kalzang Tenpa Gyaltzen (*Ra ston sKal bzang bstan pa rgyal mtshan*), who was one of Shardza's famous students and who wrote his biography.

¹⁴⁴ I'm reading *mjal* for *mjol*

¹⁴⁵ I am not sure if "Blissful Beautiful" is part of the name of the hermitage or qualifiers to it.

a condition whereby the yogis might integrate in their continuum whatever extraordinary (*khyab par can*) experiences and realizations generating of the unity (*zung 'jug*) mind and vital breath currents. *Sarva Mangalam!*¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Both *Commentary* (346.6) and *Quintessential Instructions* (643.1) use the Sanskrit, while Drugyalwa uses the Tibetan equivalent *dge'o*, "May it be virtuous!" (*Experiential Transmission*, 264.11).

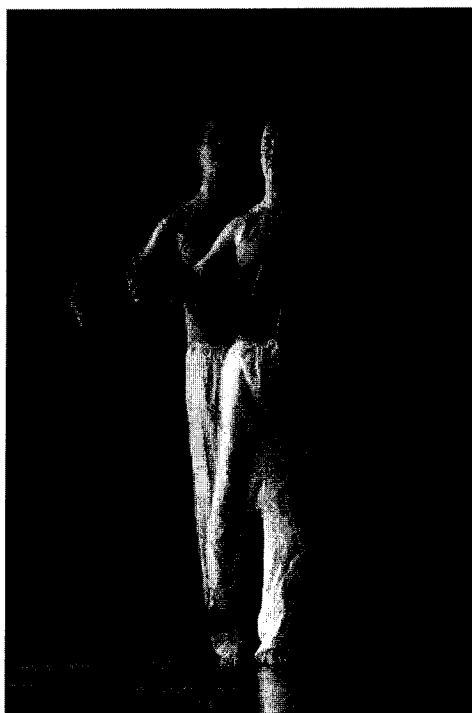
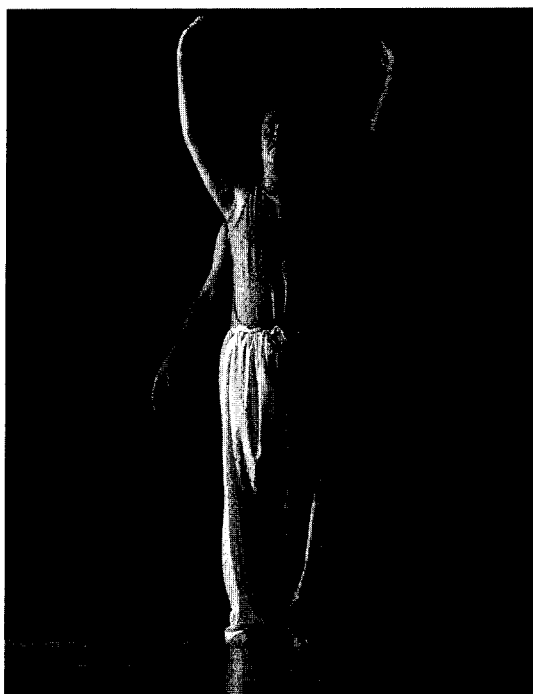
II. Preparatory Breaths Posture.¹



¹ Drawing by Katy Chamberlain. I am very grateful to her for drawing it specifically for this project.

III. Magical Movement Concluding Posture.²

Figures 5 and 6.



² From "Into the Mystic," *Yoga Journal*, May/June, 2000, pp. 108 – 109.
(Photos by Michael Sexton.)

IV. Table of Correlations of Root Magical Movement Set.

Magical Movement	Element dawns/ channel opens	Poison clears/ channel closes	Aggregate liberated	Wisdom dawns/ accomplishment	Buddha dimension dawns/seen
<i>Striking the Athlete's Hammer</i>	Space	Anger	Consciousness	Emptiness	Truth (<i>Bon</i>)
<i>Skylight of Primordial Wisdom</i>	Earth	Mental fogginess	Form	Mirror-like	Complete (<i>rdzogs</i>)
<i>Rolling the Four Limbs like Wheels</i>	Air	Pride	Formations	Knowing things as they are	Essential (<i>ngo bo nyid</i>)
<i>Loosening the Corner Knot</i>	Fire	Desire/ attachment	Feeling	Discrimination	Manifested (<i>sprul sku</i>)
<i>Skyward Waving the Silk Tassel</i>	Water	Jealousy	Conceptions	Of [knowing] the varieties	Truly/fully awakened ¹ (<i>mngon par byang chub</i>)

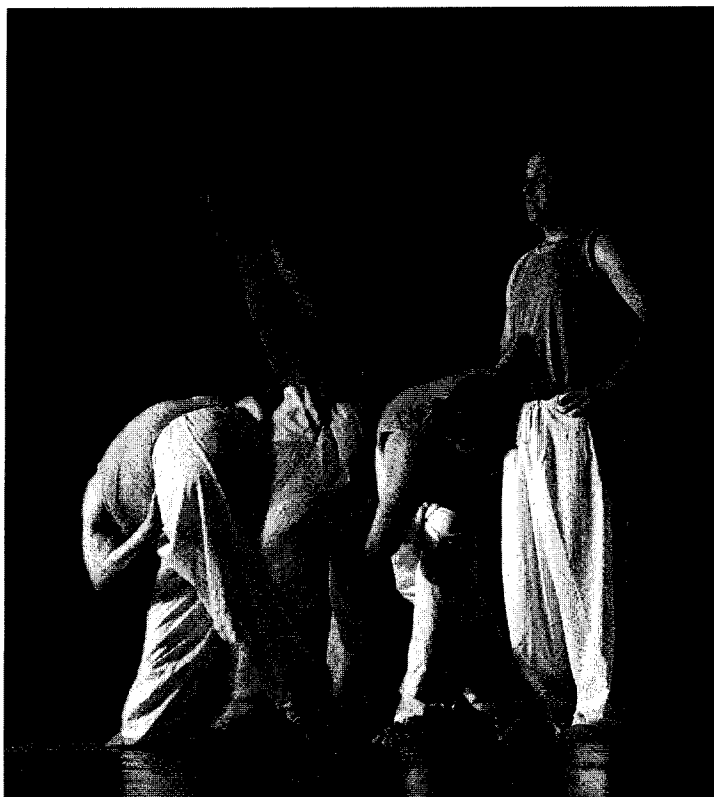
¹ When used the classic tripartite division of the Truth, Complete, and Manifested dimensions, the Fully Awakened and the Essential dimensions are part of the Truth dimension (Ponlob Thinley Nyima, oral commentary, Houston, TX, April, 2005). In his *Treasury of Knowledge*, Jamgön Kongtrül says about the last one, it is a “manifold manifestation in accordance with the karma of those to be

V. Rolling The Four Limbs Like a Wheel.³



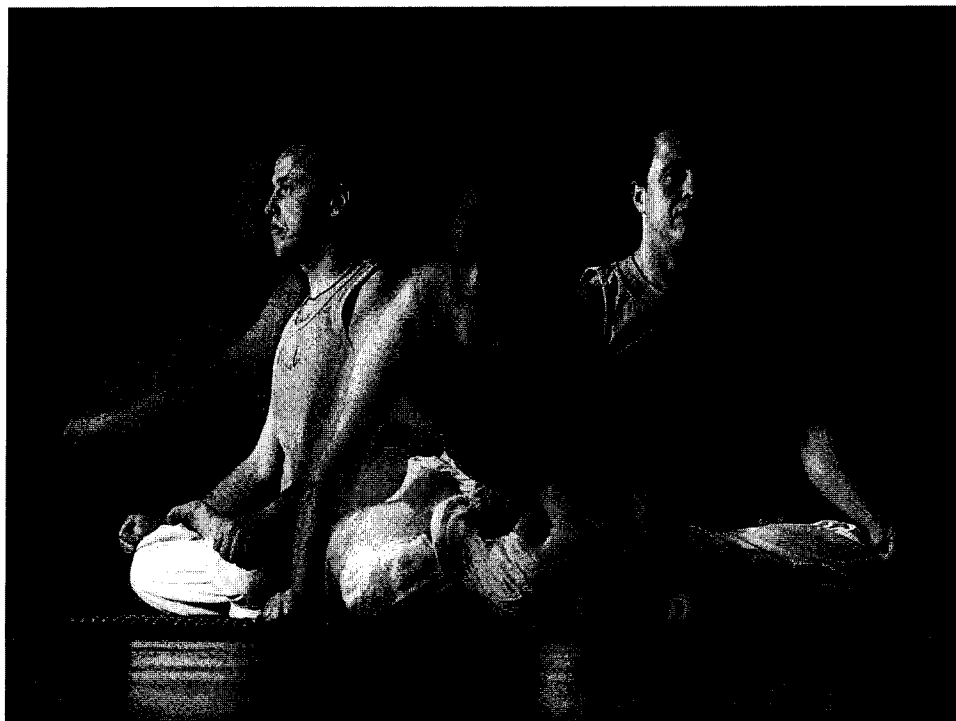
³ From "Into the Mystic," p. 107.
(Photo by Michael Sexton.)

VI. Female Donkey Reclining to Sleep.⁴



⁴ From "Into the Mystic," p. 108.
(Photo by Michael Sexton.)

VII. Extending the Limits of the Four Continents.⁵



⁵ From "Into the Mystic," p. 107.
(Photo by Michael Sexton.)

VIII. Correlations of both Root Magical Movement Sets.

Athlete's hammer	Overcoming anger	Opening the door of space	Female goose drinking water	Liberates from the collection of 4 diseases
Window of wisdom	Overcoming ignorance	Opening the door of earth	<i>Dro mo</i> (female yak) butting	Liberates from the diseases of phlegm (<i>bad kan</i>)
Spinning the four wheels	Overcoming pride	Opening the door of air	Female wild donkey lying down	Liberates from the diseases of bile (<i>mkhris pa</i>)
Loosening the corner knot	Overcoming attachment	Opening the door of fire	Hawk upholding the wind	Liberates from the diseases of heat (<i>ts ba</i>)
Fluttering the silk tasse	Overcoming jealousy	Opening the door of water	Rolling of the 4 continents	Liberates from the diseases of cold (<i>grang ba</i>)
Stance of a tigress' spring	Overcoming agitation and drowsiness	Vital breath and mind enter the central channel	Extending the limits of the 4 continents	Liberates from the diseases of cold (<i>grang ba</i>)

IX. *Tsakli* of the ZZ Oral Transmission masters.⁶

Pongyal Tsenpo



Togme Shigpo



Lhundrup Muthur

⁶ Copied from Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak's personal set, Tritan Norbutse monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal. I am very grateful to Yongdzin Rinpoche for allowing me to copy his whole set of the masters of the Transmission of the Experience (NyG). Togme Shigpo is from the Transmission of the Word (KG), so he was not among those *tsakli*. His picture is from Samten Karmay, *Little Luminous Boy*.

Orgom Kundul



Yangton Sherab Gyaltsen



Bumjeo

321

३

ཡང་ཐབ་རུ་མཁའ་མཛེད་ཆེན་པོས།

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ॥

323

3

बाह्य

၂၆၆

[illegible]

325

る

॥३॥

[illegible]

333

७७।	॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥ श्रुतवो न तव मे कृ दित्तो न तव मे कृ दित्तो ॥ ॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥ ॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥
-----	--

335

७७।	॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥ श्रुतवो न तव मे कृ दित्तो न तव मे कृ दित्तो ॥ ॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥ ॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥
-----	--

337

७७।	॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥ श्रुतवो न तव मे कृ दित्तो न तव मे कृ दित्तो ॥ ॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥ ॥ यथा श्रुतिविदो मे मी कृ श्रुतवो ॥
-----	--

Appendix IV

I. *Cancer Journal* article (page numbers will be from publication 2253-2260).

Psychological Adjustment and Sleep Quality in a Randomized Trial of the Effects of a Tibetan Yoga Intervention in Patients with Lymphoma

Lorenzo Cohen, Ph.D.^{1,2}

Carla Warneke, M.P.H.³

Rachel T. Fouladi, Ph.D.⁴

M. Alma Rodriguez, M.D.⁵

Alejandro Chaoul-Reich⁶

¹ Department of Behavioral Science, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.

² Department of Palliative Care and Rehabilitation Medicine, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.

³ Department of Biostatistics, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.

⁴ Department of Psychology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada.

⁵ Department of Lymphoma, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.

⁶ Department of Religion, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

Presented in part at the Sixth World Congress of Psycho-Oncology, Banff, Alberta, Canada, April 23–27, 2003.

Supported in part by a grant from the Bruce S. Gelb Foundation.

The authors thank Beth Notzon (Department of Scientific Publications, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX) for her helpful editorial comments and Rachel Boone for her assistance with data collection. They are grateful to Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for his intellectual support and keeping this study true to the tradition in which these practices are imbedded.

Address for reprints: Lorenzo Cohen, Ph.D., Department of Behavioral Science, Unit 243, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, 1515 Holcombe Boulevard, Houston, TX 77030; Fax: (713) 745-4286; E-mail: lcohen@mdanderson.org

Received September 18, 2003; revision received February 24, 2004; accepted March 1, 2004.

BACKGROUND. Research suggests that stress-reduction programs tailored to the cancer setting help patients cope with the effects of treatment and improve their quality of life. Yoga, an ancient Eastern science, incorporates stress-reduction techniques that include regulated breathing, visual imagery, and meditation as well as various postures. The authors examined the effects of the Tibetan yoga (TY) practices of *Tsa lung* and *Trul khor*, which incorporate controlled breathing and visualization, mindfulness techniques, and low-impact postures in patients with lymphoma.

METHODS. Thirty-nine patients with lymphoma who were undergoing treatment or who had concluded treatment within the past 12 months were assigned to a TY group or to a wait-list control group. Patients in the TY group participated in 7 weekly yoga sessions, and patients in the wait-list control group were free to participate in the TY program after the 3-month follow-up assessment.

RESULTS. Eighty nine percent of TY participants completed at least 2–3 three yoga sessions, and 58% completed at least 5 sessions. Patients in the TY group reported significantly lower sleep disturbance scores during follow-up compared with patients in the wait-list control group (5.8 vs. 8.1; $P < 0.004$). This included better subjective sleep quality ($P < 0.02$), faster sleep latency ($P < 0.01$), longer sleep duration ($P < 0.03$), and less use of sleep medications ($P < 0.02$). There were no significant differences between groups in terms of intrusion or avoidance, state anxiety, depression, or fatigue.

CONCLUSIONS. The participation rates suggested that a TY program is feasible for patients with cancer and that such a program significantly improves sleep-related outcomes. However, there were no significant differences between groups for the other outcomes. *Cancer* 2004;100:2253–60. © 2004 American Cancer Society.

KEYWORDS: yoga, Tibet, lymphoma, sleep, distress.

Yoga is an ancient Eastern tradition that usually includes regulated breathing, moving through various postures, and meditation.¹ Although different forms of yoga are practiced in many Eastern countries, the yoga practiced in the West primarily comes from the Indian tradition, specifically the form known as Hatha yoga. Hatha yoga typically focuses on postures (asanas) and breathing exercises (pranayama). Less commonly practiced are the yogic practices from Tibet, which are known best for their meditative techniques. Now, however, there is growing interest in the Tibetan physical yogas or mind-body practices. For thousands of years, Tibetans have been employing what we call *mind-body techniques* today. Two Tibetan practices, known as *Tsa lung* (*rtsa rlung*; channels and vital breath) and *Trul khor* (*'phrul 'khor*; magical wheel [of the channels and vital

breath]), originating from the Mother Tantra (*Ma rgyud*)² and the Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung (*Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*),^{3,4} respectively, incorporate controlled breathing and visualization, mindfulness techniques, and postures. Little is known about this form of yoga, however, and to our knowledge no research published to date has examined the benefits of Tsa lung or Trul khor. We believe that this form of yoga may be particularly useful for cancer patients who are undergoing and recovering from chemotherapy, because the movements are gentle and simple, and there is an emphasis on controlled breathing, visualization, and mindfulness techniques.

There has been some research into the benefits of Indian-based yoga in healthy populations and medical populations. Early texts described yoga's physical and mental health benefits,¹ whereas modern studies of yoga-based interventions performed in healthy populations have shown that the interventions decrease depression and anxiety,⁵⁻⁷ increase motor control,^{8,9} improve subjective measures of well being,¹⁰ and improve lung function.¹¹

Although yoga has been used for centuries in the East to treat disease,^{12,13} it has gained recognition for this purpose only recently in the West. In particular, it has been found that yoga is useful for treating various forms of arthritis,¹⁴ lessening the severity of musculoskeletal disease,^{14,15} decreasing the frequency and severity of asthma attacks,¹⁶ improving peak expiratory flow rates in patients with bronchial asthma,¹⁷ and improving the lipid profile of patients with coronary artery disease¹⁸; and one small study showed that yoga was useful for controlling aspects of hypertension.¹⁹ There is also some research suggesting that yoga may be useful for decreasing the frequency and duration of epileptic seizures, although the findings remain equivocal.²⁰

Although there has been interest in the therapeutic application of yoga to patients with cancer,²¹ few studies actually have examined the benefits of yoga in this group. In an early study, 125 patients undergoing radiotherapy participated in group therapy, meditation, or yoga.²² The patients in the yoga group found that their quality of life was improved during radiotherapy and for some time immediately after the completion of radiotherapy. In particular, the patients reported increased appetite, increased tolerance to radiotherapy, improved sleep, improved bowel habits, and a feeling of peace and tranquility. In a more recent trial, 109 patients with early-stage or late-stage cancer were randomly assigned to either a 7-week intervention, which included group support and discussion, mindfulness meditation, visualization and imagery, and yoga stretches, or to a wait-list control group.²³ At

the end of the 7-week program, participants in the intervention group were experiencing lower total mood disturbance and decreased overall distress compared with the experience in the control group.

In the current study, we conducted a clinical trial of Tibetan yoga (TY) in patients with lymphoma. We incorporated poses from the Tsa lung and Trul khor into a 7-week program that included controlled breathing, visualization, and mindfulness. The techniques were low impact and easy to integrate into daily living and could be particularly useful for patients with cancer who were either receiving treatment or had recently completed treatment. We hypothesized that patients assigned to the TY group would demonstrate better psychologic adjustment and lower levels of fatigue and sleep disturbances during the weeks after the intervention compared with patients in a wait-list control group.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

Patients with lymphoma who were either receiving chemotherapy or had received it within the past 12 months were recruited through the Lymphoma Center at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. Patients had to be receiving either a regimen with combined cyclophosphamide, doxorubicin, vincristine, and prednisone (CHOP) or regimens with the same drug classes to control for the more severe side effects associated with certain regimens. Patients also had to be age ≥ 18 years and had to be able to read and speak English. Patients with any major psychotic illnesses were excluded. The proposed total sample size for the study was 38 evaluable patients. Nineteen patients per group provides 80% power to detect a difference of 0.82 standard deviation units, which is viewed as a large effect size.

Procedures

Potential study participants were identified and either were approached in the clinic or were sent a letter about participating in the study. Patients who met the inclusion criteria and expressed an interest in the study were then scheduled for the baseline assessment, at which time the study was explained, patients' questions were answered, and written consent was obtained. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board. The baseline assessment included a battery of questionnaires. Patients were assigned to either the TY group or the wait-list control group once they had completed the baseline questionnaires. Group assignment was conducted sequentially using minimization,^{24,25} a form of adaptive assignment that results in better group balance on selected patient

characteristics compared with random assignment or stratification,²⁶ unbiased estimates of treatment effect, and as good as or better power than stratified randomization.^{26–29} Patient characteristics used for group assignment were the type of cancer (Hodgkin or non-Hodgkin lymphoma), the status of treatment (active treatment or completed), gender, age, and baseline state anxiety scores. The allocation process was concealed from all investigators because all the relevant information was entered into a computer program and group assignment was determined by the program. Patients were notified of their group assignment by telephone, and patients in the TY group were scheduled for their first yoga session, which was held approximately 1–3 weeks after the baseline assessment. Three separate cohorts of patients were assigned to one of the two groups. After completion of the TY program, participants completed the postintervention assessment questionnaires. The follow-up assessments were conducted 1 week, 1 month, and 3 months after the last session. Patients in the wait-list control group completed these assessments at comparable intervals.

TY program.

Participants in the TY group were asked to attend seven weekly yoga sessions at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center in the Place...of *Wellness*, a center for the clinical delivery of complementary programs. Each class was conducted by an experienced TY instructor (A.C.R.). All of the practices come from a tradition practiced for centuries by Tibetan monks and lay practitioners and employ imagery and exercises that are not demanding physically. The program was divided into four aspects: 1) controlled breathing and visualization, 2) mindfulness, 3) postures from the *Tsa lung*, and 4) the preliminary set of postures from the *Trul khor* (*sngon 'gro*). The exercises are simple motions done with specific breathing patterns that are easy to perform by individuals undergoing cancer treatment. Participants also were provided with printed materials after each class that covered a new area of the program. After the last class, patients also were given an audiotape that walked them through all of the techniques. They were encouraged to practice the techniques at least once per day. Participants who missed a class were encouraged to attend a make-up class at another time.

Wait-list control group.

Participants in the wait-list control group did not have any contact research personnel except during the follow-up assessments. They were offered the opportunity

to take part in the TY program after the 3-month follow-up assessment was completed.

Measures

Psychological adjustment was assessed across several domains, including distress (Impact of Events Scale [IES]), anxiety (Spielberger State Anxiety Inventory [STATE]), and depression (Centers for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression [CES-D]). Fatigue (Brief Fatigue Inventory [BFI]) and sleep disturbances (Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index [PSQI]) were assessed, because these are common problems for patients with cancer. Because it is hypothesized that yoga has an affect on multiple outcomes and because, to some extent, this was a feasibility study, a primary outcome measure was not prespecified. Other measures assessing some proposed mediators of the benefits of the yoga program were administered but are not reported on here.

The IES is a 15-item, self-report scale that measures 2 categories of cognitive responses to stressful events: Intrusion (7 items assessing intrusively experienced ideas, images, feelings, or bad dreams) and Avoidance (8 items assessing consciously recognized avoidance of certain ideas, feelings, or situations).³⁰ Patients in the current study rated the frequency of intrusive thoughts and avoidance in relation to their cancer. Because the correlation between the Intrusion and Avoidance subscales at each time was modest (correlation coefficient [r] = 0.21–0.59), the total and subscale scores are given. Higher scores indicate more intrusive thoughts and avoidance behaviors. In this study, the baseline Cronbach α estimates were 0.87, 0.85, and 0.78 for the total IES score and for the Intrusion and Avoidance subscales, respectively.

The STATE is a 20-item scale that assesses an individual's current level of anxiety.³¹ Participants rate the frequency of feelings or symptoms using a four-point scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of anxiety. In this study, the baseline Cronbach α estimate for the STATE was 0.95.

The CES-D is a well validated, 20-item, self-report measure of depression that focuses on affective components of depression.³² Respondents rate the frequency of the specified behavior or feeling using a four-point, Likert-type scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of depressive symptoms. In this study, the baseline Cronbach α estimate for the CES-D was 0.93.

The BFI is a nine-item questionnaire that was designed to be used in the clinical setting to rapidly assess fatigue severity. The items are ranked from 0 to 10. Three questions ask patients to rate their fatigue at the moment and at its "worst" and "usual" over the past 24 hours. Four items ask patients to rate how

much in the past 24 hours their fatigue has interfered with their everyday life. In this study, the baseline Cronbach α estimate for the BFI was 0.96.

The PSQI is an 18-item, self-rated questionnaire that assesses quality of sleep and sleep disturbances over 1 month.³³ A total score is derived as well as seven subscales that include Subjective Sleep Quality (1 item), Sleep Latency (2 items), Sleep Duration (1 item), Habitual Sleep Efficiency (ratio of 2 items), Sleep Disturbances (9 items), Use of Sleeping Medications (1 item), and Daytime Dysfunction (2 items). Scores ≥ 5 on the PSQI total scale, computed as a sum of the 7 subscales, are associated with clinically significant sleep disruptions, including insomnia and major mood disorders.³³ In this study, the baseline Cronbach α estimate was 0.84 for the total scale, 0.79 for the 9-item Sleep Disturbance subscale, and 0.77 for the 2-item Sleep Latency scale, for which the interitem correlation was 0.70. There was no correlation ($r = 0.00$) between the 2 items on the baseline Daytime Dysfunction subscale (trouble staying awake, trouble keeping enthusiasm).

Participants in the TY group also were asked about their satisfaction with the program, the perceived degree of benefit, and their frequency of practice outside the class for each of the four areas of practice (breathing and visualization, mindfulness, Tsa lung, and Trul khor). Participants were asked to indicate whether they felt any benefit from the practice on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 - "no, definitely not beneficial"; 2 - "no, not really beneficial"; 3 - "not sure if beneficial"; 4 - "yes, a little beneficial"; 5 - "yes, definitely beneficial"; they also could indicate "does not apply, I did not practice") and how often in the past week they had practiced on a scale from 1 to 6 (1 - not at all; 2 - once; 3 - twice; 4 - more than twice, but not every day; 5 - every day; 6 - more than once a day).

At baseline, all patients were asked whether they had ever practiced yoga. At each time point, patients also indicated whether they had engaged in any particular techniques to manage their stress (other than TY for the patients in the TY group).

Data analyses

Descriptive analyses were conducted to characterize the study participants and the feasibility of conducting a TY trial in patients with lymphoma. Analyses of the impact of the TY intervention relative to a wait-list control group were conducted on follow-up IES, state anxiety, depression symptomology, fatigue, and sleep disturbance scores using mixed-model regression analyses by regressing follow-up assessments on group, time of follow-up assessment, and the corresponding baseline measure as well as the patient char-

acteristics used in the minimization-adaptive assignment procedure.³⁴ The presence of group by time interactions also was assessed for each outcome measure; however, no statistically significant interactions were obtained (all group-by-time interaction P values were > 0.05). Thus, the results are reported for the models with main-effect terms, and the group effect represents the average intervention effect across all follow-up time points adjusted for covariates. Correlations among observations from the same individual were modeled using a first-order, autoregressive form across the follow-up assessments; inspection of Akaike Information Criteria (AIC), Small-Sample (AICC), and Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC) values were used to select the optimal within-subject correlation structure to be used across the set of outcome measures. The implementation of mixed-model regression analysis in SAS 8.02 of restricted maximum-likelihood estimation with profile residual variances was used; tests of model fixed-effects parameters were conducted using the Prasad-Rao-Jeske-Kackar-Harville method for obtaining fixed-effects standard errors, and the Kenward-Roger approach was used to calculate degrees of freedom; this approach has been shown to yield good performance characteristics under small sample conditions in longitudinal analyses.^{35,36}

RESULTS

Twenty patients were randomized to the TY group, and 19 patients were randomized to the wait-list control group. One participant in the TY group dropped out of the study before attending any classes, making the number of patients in that group 19; therefore, we did not collect any follow-up data for this patient. There were no statistically significant differences between the groups with respect to any medical or demographic characteristics or the baseline dependent measures (for descriptive statistics on measures of adjustment and sleep quality, see Table 1). In both groups, the average patient age was 51 years, 12 patients were female, 7 patients had Hodgkin lymphoma, and 15 patients were not actively receiving treatment for their cancer. There also was an even distribution across disease stages between the groups (TY group: Stage I, 22%; Stage II, 39%; Stage III, 17%; Stage IV, 22%; control group: Stage I, 22%; Stage II, 33%; Stage III, 12%; Stage IV, 33% Ann Arbor Criteria). A chart review indicated that 10 patients in the TY group and 11 patients in the control group were not taking any medications. Medications that patients were taking included antidepressants (TY group, 2 patients; control group, 2 patients), supplements (TY group, 2 patients; control group, 3 patients), thyroid medication (TY group, 2 patients; control group, 3 patients), hormone therapy (TY group, 1 patient; control group, 2 patients), neupo-

TABLE 1
Baseline and Follow-Up Adjustment and Sleep Quality Scores by Intervention Group^a

Measure	Yoga group (mean ± SD)		Wait-list control group (mean ± SD)		P value	95% CI
	Baseline	Follow-up	Baseline	Follow-up		
Impact of Events Scale						
Total score	21.5 ± 14.8	10.2 ± 8.2	18.7 ± 11.1	10.5 ± 8.5	0.92	-5.4 to 4.9
Intrusive thoughts	9.0 ± 6.7	3.7 ± 4.4	9.1 ± 6.6	4.2 ± 4.6	0.77	-3.2 to 2.4
Avoidance	13.1 ± 9.2	6.1 ± 6.0	10.6 ± 6.6	6.1 ± 6.0	0.99	-3.8 to 3.7
State Anxiety	34.3 ± 12.3	34.1 ± 8.4	37.8 ± 14.6	33.8 ± 8.5	0.90	-5.0 to 5.7
Depression (CES-D)	10.2 ± 11.0	9.0 ± 4.2	9.6 ± 8.57	9.7 ± 3.8	0.56	-3.3 to 1.9
BFI	3.1 ± 2.4	3.1 ± 1.5	2.8 ± 2.2	3.1 ± 1.5	0.93	-0.99 to 0.9
Sleep disturbance (PSQI)						
Total score	6.5 ± 5.0	5.8 ± 2.3	7.2 ± 4.7	8.1 ± 2.4	0.004	-3.8 to -0.8
Sleep quality	0.90 ± 0.85	0.81 ± 0.52	1.11 ± 0.94	1.22 ± 0.56	0.02	-0.7 to -0.08
Sleep latency	1.10 ± 0.97	0.75 ± 0.68	1.05 ± 0.91	1.33 ± 0.71	0.01	-1.0 to -0.1
Sleep duration	0.85 ± 1.09	0.89 ± 0.64	1.32 ± 1.29	1.35 ± 0.64	0.03	-0.9 to -0.04
Sleep efficiency	0.65 ± 1.09	0.87 ± 0.68	0.84 ± 1.07	0.95 ± 0.67	0.72	-0.5 to 0.4
Sleep disturbances	1.40 ± 0.68	1.23 ± 0.40	1.37 ± 0.76	1.33 ± 0.37	0.47	-0.3 to 0.16
Sleeping medications	0.80 ± 1.28	0.48 ± 0.88	0.58 ± 1.07	1.21 ± 0.93	0.02	-1.3 to -0.2
Daytime dysfunction	0.80 ± 0.62	0.96 ± 0.60	0.95 ± 0.71	0.93 ± 0.64	0.89	-0.4 to 0.4

SD: standard deviation; 95% CI: 95% confidence interval; CES-D: Centers for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression; BFI: Brief Fatigue Inventory; PSQI: Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index.

^a P values and 95% confidence intervals are in relation to the group comparisons for the follow-up data. Note that follow-up adjustment scores represent least-squares means adjusted for the baseline value of the outcome measure and state anxiety, age, gender, treatment status, and the type of cancer (Hodgkin or non-Hodgkin lymphoma) using the final, mixed-model regression models (*n* = 16 patients in the yoga group; *n* = 14 patients in the control group).

gen/procrit (TY group, 2 patients; control group, 1 patient), hypertension medication (TY group, 2 patients; control group, 1 patient), steroids (TY group, 2 patients), antiemetic medication (TY group, 1 patient), diabetes medication (TY group, 2 patients; control group, 1 patient), cholesterol medication (TY group, 2 patients), antiseizure medication (control group, 1 patient), and antibiotics (control group, 2 patients).

Three patients in each group also indicated that they had practiced yoga in the past; however, none were practicing yoga currently. Nine patients in the TY group and 14 patients in the control group indicated that they did something to manage their stress before the start of the study, including exercise (TY group, 4 patients; control group, 8 patients), meditation (TY group, 1 patient), breathing exercises (TY group, 1 patient; control group, 2 patients) relaxation tapes (control group, 1 patient), and hobbies (TY group, 3 patients; control group, 3 patients). Eight patients in the TY group and nine patients in the control group indicated that they used some technique(s) to manage their stress at some time during the follow-up period, including exercise (TY group, 7 patients; control group, 7 patients), meditation (TY group, 1 patient; control group, 1 patient), breathing exercises (control group, 2 patients), support group (control group, 1 patient), and hobbies (TY group, 3 patients; control group, 2 patients).

All 19 TY participants attended at least 1 yoga session. Six participants (32%) attended all 7 sessions through attendance at either the primary session or through a make-up class; 5 participants (26%) attended 5 or 6 sessions; 6 participants (32%) attended 2 or 3 sessions; and 2 participants (10%) attended only 1 session. Patients missed classes for the following reasons: they were out of town, they had conflicts with their work schedule, they had a cancer treatment-related reason, they were too busy, they had transportation problems, or they had a health problem (not cancer-related). Sixteen of 19 patients (84%) in the TY group and 14 of 19 patients (74%) in the control group completed at least 1 of the 3 follow-up assessments, with an average of 2.0 (standard deviation [SD], 0.82) and 2.4 (SD, 0.65) assessments completed in the TY group and the control group, respectively (*P* = 0.13). There were no significant demographic, medical, or psychosocial differences between the 9 patients who did not complete any follow-up assessments and the 30 patients who did complete the assessments.

In their evaluations, participants indicated that they found the TY program beneficial. In fact, none of the participants had responses of 0 ("does not apply, I did not practice") or 1 ("no, definitely not beneficial") for any of the 4 aspects. Pooling across the postintervention assessments, the modal response for each of the 4 aspects was 5 ("yes, definitely beneficial"); 73%,

TABLE 2
Perceived Benefit and Practice Rates for Breathing and Visualization, Mindfulness, Tsa Lung, and Trul Khor

Exercise	Benefit ^a		Practice ^b	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Breathing and visualization	4.7	5.0	3.5	3.8
Mindfulness	4.5	4.7	3.1	3.3
Tsa lung	4.5	4.7	2.9	3.0
Trul khor	4.6	5.0	2.8	2.9

Tsa lung (*rtsa lung*): channels and vital breath; Trul khor (*phrul khor*): magical wheel of the channels and vital breath.

^a Benefit: 1 - no, definitely not beneficial; 2 - no, not really beneficial; 3 - not sure if beneficial; 4 - yes, a little beneficial; 5 - yes, definitely beneficial.

^b Practice: 1 - not at all; 2 - once; 3 - twice; 4 - more than twice, but not every day; 5 - every day; 6 - more than once daily.

64%, 64%, and 82% of respondents indicated 5 ("yes, definitely beneficial") to breathing and visualization, mindfulness, Tsa lung, and Trul khor, respectively. The mean and median responses were between 4 ("yes, a little beneficial") and 5 ("yes, definitely beneficial") (see Table 2). Similarly, pooling across intervention and postintervention periods, the participants indicated a fair amount of practice in each of the four aspects, averaging two times per week (see Table 2). The modal response regarding average weekly practice of breathing and visualization, Tsa lung, and Trul khor was 4 ("more than twice, but not every day"), with that level of specific practice reported by 39%, 31%, and 29% of participants, respectively; the second most common level of practice reported was 3 ("twice a week"; breathing and visualization, 28%; Tsa lung, 27%; Trul khor, 21%). For weekly practice of mindfulness, 31% of participants averaged practicing "more than twice, but not every day," and the same percentage averaged "twice a week."

Table 1 shows the overall follow-up results on psychologic adjustment, fatigue, and sleep disturbances by intervention group. The values are least-squares means that have been adjusted for the baseline value of the outcome measure and the minimization adaptive allocation factors (i.e., state anxiety, age, gender, status of treatment, and type of cancer [Hodgkin or non-Hodgkin lymphoma]), as well as time of follow-up assessment, which was not a statistically significant effect in any of the models. The mixed-model regression analyses revealed a statistically significant adjusted group effect for the PSQI total score ($P < 0.004$) and for 4 of the subscales, including Subjective Sleep Quality ($P < 0.02$), Sleep Latency ($P < 0.01$), Sleep Duration ($P < 0.03$), and Use of Sleep Medications ($P < 0.02$). This suggests that,

during follow-up, the TY group had significantly better overall sleep quality and that they perceived better sleep quality, fell asleep more quickly, slept longer, and used fewer sleep medications compared with patients in the control group (see Table 1). There were no statistically significant differences between the groups in terms of the Intrusion or Avoidance scores, state anxiety, depression, or fatigue scores.

DISCUSSION

The feasibility of conducting the seven-session TY program in patients with lymphoma was demonstrated clearly. In particular, although > 20% of patients were undergoing chemotherapy, the majority of patients attended > 50% of sessions. Patients also indicated that they found the program useful, and > 80% said they practiced some aspect of the program at least once per week during the 3-month follow-up. Most importantly, there was some indication that the TY program reduced patients' sleep disturbances. In particular, patients in the TY group reported significantly better overall sleep quality and subjective sleep quality, faster sleep latency, longer sleep duration, and less use of sleep medications during the follow-up compared with patients in the control group. However, there were no statistically significant group differences for the measures of psychological adjustment or fatigue.

To our knowledge this is the first study to examine TY in any population and one of the few studies to examine the effects of yoga in a cancer population. In other studies that have examined the benefits of including yoga, yoga constituted only one aspect of the intervention. For example, Specia et al.²³ designed an intervention that included group support and discussion, mindfulness meditation, visualization and imagery, and yoga stretches. Although they found that the participants in the intervention group experienced lower total mood disturbance and decreased overall distress, it is not clear whether the benefits were due to the yoga per se. It is noteworthy that the form of yoga we used in the current study was presented and taught in its traditional format, which includes a number of components (e.g., breathing and visualization, mindfulness, Tsa lung, and Trul khor). However, although the TY program that we designed appeared to be useful for this population, we cannot tell which particular aspects of the program were more or less useful for the participants.

There are several possible explanations for why we did not find an effect of TY on the measures of psychological adjustment (intrusion or avoidance, state anxiety, and depression) and fatigue. First, the TY program truly may not affect these outcomes for this population. Alternatively, the lack of effect also may reflect low sensitivity of the measures. For example, because both the

CES-D and the STATE are often used as clinical screening measures of mental health (for depression and anxiety, respectively), these instruments may not detect only subtle changes in mental health in a nonmental health population. Less clinically oriented measures, such as the Profile of Mood States³⁷ used by Spica et al.,²³ might have detected group differences in our population. Along these same lines, there also might have been a floor effect for some of these measures, because the scores were quite low at baseline and follow-up. In addition, most patients were off treatment at the start of the study (15 patients in each group), which may have contributed further to a floor effect. It is important to note that the study also may have been underpowered to detect differences for these outcomes when the effect size may have been smaller than the effect of the TY program on the measure of sleep disturbances.

There are several limitations to the current study, most significantly, the small sample size of just 30 patients for whom we had follow-up data on any of the selected outcome measures; however, as recent studies have shown, this level of sample size can yield adequate Type I error control and power.^{35,36} Nonetheless, this is one of the only studies examining the benefits of yoga in a cancer population, and 14–15 patients per group provides 80% power to detect a population effect size of 1.1 and 50% power to detect a population effect size of 0.7, with sample effect sizes ≥ 0.7 achieving statistical significance. It is also important to note that we had several outcome measures of interest in this trial. However, despite the examination of multiple outcomes, the strength of the finding that the TY intervention had an effect on sleep quality is greater than would be expected by chance alone. The study also was limited by the fact that we relied on self-reports to determine compliance and to assess the main outcomes. Although research using the PSQI suggests there is a good association between self-reports and polysomnographic sleep measures, future studies should incorporate some objective outcomes. We also cannot know from our data whether the benefits of the program were attributable directly to TY as a whole or to some nonspecific aspect of the program, such as attention, social support, relaxation, or stretching. To determine this, future studies will need to use more complex research designs.

Our findings that the TY program was associated with a decrease in overall sleep disturbances and an improvement in subjective sleep quality, sleep latency, sleep duration, and use of sleep medications are particularly salient in a cancer population. This is because sleep disturbances are a common and underinvestigated problem among cancer patients.³⁸ Indeed, in some studies, up to 75% of the cancer patients surveyed experienced disturbances in their sleep and rest cycle.³⁹ Eng-

strom et al.⁴⁰ found that the most common sleep problems were awakening during the night and difficulty falling back to sleep as well as not sleeping enough. Of particular concern is the possibility that there may be profound consequences of disturbed sleep for cancer patients, because sleep may mediate both psychologic health and physical health.^{38,41,42} In fact, sleep disturbances have been associated with worse quality of life in cancer patients, including increased depression and higher pain levels,^{40,43} and with depression in noncancer patients.⁴² Persistent sleep disturbances also may increase a cancer patient's risk for mood disorders, altered metabolic and endocrine function, and compromised immune functioning.^{38,41,43,44} It is noteworthy that sleep disruptions have been associated with adverse physical health outcomes, including increased morbidity and mortality.^{45–47} Potential changes in metabolic, endocrine, and immune function may have particularly important health consequences for patients with hematologic malignancies.

Although research into the efficacy and mechanisms of yoga is in its beginning stages, the findings reported to date are supportive¹³ and, along with our finding of improved sleep, suggest that the health effects of yoga in cancer patients should be explored further. The benefits that have been documented and the potential impact of these benefits on the psychologic and physical sequelae of cancer are important enough to warrant the further study of developing such programs for cancer patients.

REFERENCES

1. Taimini I. The science of yoga. Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1961.
2. Samlek M. The three basic Mother Tantras with commentaries (reproduced from the original XI century manuscript belonging to the Monastery of Samling, Dolpo, Nepal) [in Tibetan]. New Delhi: Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1971.
3. Chandra L, Namdak T, editors. The magical wheel oral wisdom quintessential instructions from the Great Perfection Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung (reproduced from an original XI century manuscript). In: Chandra L, Namdak T, editors. History and doctrines of Bonpo Yoga (Satapitaka series, volume 73) [in Tibetan]. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1968:631–643.
4. Sonam N, Gyaltzen PL, Gyatso K, editors. The Magical Wheel, channels and vitalbreath of the Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung. (Commentary on: The Magical Wheel oral wisdom quintessential instructions from the Great Perfection Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung) [in Tibetan]. In: Sonam N, Gyaltzen PL, Gyatso K, editors. The vast treasury of profound space. New Thobgyal: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1974:321–346.
5. Janakiramaiah N, Gangadhar BN, Naga Venkatesha Murthy PJ, Harish MG, Subbakrishna DK, Vedarurthachar A. Antidepressant efficacy of Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY) in melancholia: a randomized comparison with electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and imipramine. *J Affect Disord.* 2000;57:255–259.

6. Vahia NS, Doongaji DR, Jeste DV, Ravindranath S, Kapoor SN, Ardhapurkar I. Psychophysiologic therapy based on the concepts of Patanjali. A new approach to the treatment of neurotic and psychosomatic disorders. *Am J Psychother*. 1973;27:557-565.
7. Malathi A, Damodaran A. Stress due to exams in medical students—role of yoga. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 1999;43:218-224.
8. Telles S, Hanumanthaiah BH, Nagarathna R, Nagendra HR. Plasticity of motor control systems demonstrated by yoga training. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 1994;38:143-144.
9. Dash M, Telles S. Yoga training and motor speed based on a finger tapping task. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 1999;43:458-462.
10. Malathi A, Damodaran A, Shah N, Patil N, Maratha S. Effect of yogic practices on subjective well being. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 2000;44:202-206.
11. Joshi LN, Joshi VD, Gokhale LV. Effect of short term "Pranayam" practice on breathing rate and ventilatory functions of lung. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 1992;36:105-108.
12. Nagendra HR, Nagarathna R. Applications of integrated approach of yoga therapy—a review. A new light for asthmatics. Bangalore: Vivekananda Kendra, 1986.
13. Telles S, Naveen KV. Yoga for rehabilitation: an overview. *Indian J Med Sci*. 1997;51:123-127.
14. Garfinkel M, Schumacher HR Jr. Yoga. *Rheum Dis Clin North Am*. 2000;26:125-132.
15. Garfinkel MS, Schumacher HR Jr., Husain A, Levy M, Reshetar RA. Evaluation of a yoga based regimen for treatment of osteoarthritis of the hands. *J Rheumatol*. 1994;21:2341-2343.
16. Vedanthan PK, Kesavalu LN, Murthy KC, et al. Clinical study of yoga techniques in university students with asthma: a controlled study. *Allergy Asthma Proc*. 1998;19:3-9.
17. Nagarathna R, Nagendra HR. Yoga for bronchial asthma: a controlled study. *Br Med J (Clin Res Ed)*. 1985;291:1077-1079.
18. Mahajan AS, Reddy KS, Sachdeva U. Lipid profile of coronary risk subjects following yogic lifestyle intervention. *Indian Heart J*. 1999;51:37-40.
19. Murugesan R, Govindarajulu N, Bera TK. Effect of selected yogic practices on the management of hypertension. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 2000;44:207-210.
20. Ramaratnam S, Sridharan K. Yoga for epilepsy. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2000;(3):CD001524.
21. Collins C. Yoga: intuition, preventive medicine, and treatment. *J Obstet Gynecol Neonatal Nurs*. 1998;27:563-568.
22. Joseph CD. Psychological supportive therapy for cancer patients. *Indian J Cancer*. 1983;20:268-270.
23. Specia M, Carlson LE, Goodey E, Angen M. A randomized, wait-list controlled clinical trial: the effect of a mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction program on mood and symptoms of stress in cancer outpatients. *Psychosom Med*. 2000;62:613-622.
24. Taves DR. Minimization: a new method of assigning patients to treatment and control groups. *Clin Pharmacol Ther*. 1974;15:443-453.
25. Pocock SJ, Simon R. Sequential treatment assignment with balancing for prognostic factors in the controlled clinical trial. *Biometrics*. 1975;31:103-115.
26. Rovers MM. Comparison of balanced and random allocation in clinical trials. *Eur J Epidemiol*. 2000;16:1123-1129.
27. Forsythe AB. Validity and power of tests when groups have been balanced for prognostic factors. *Comput Stat Data Anal*. 1987;5:193-200.
28. Birkett NJ. Adaptive allocation in randomized controlled trials. *Control Clin Trials*. 1975;6:146-155.
29. Thernau TM. How many stratification factors are "too many" to use in a randomization plan? *Control Clin Trials*. 1993;14:98-108.
30. Horowitz M, Wilner N, Alvarez W. Impact of Events Scale: measure of subjective stress. *Psychosom Med*. 1979;41:209-218.
31. Spielberger CD, Gorsuch R, Lushene RE. STAI manual for the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1970.
32. Radloff LS. The CES-D scale: a new self-report depression scale for research in the general population. *Appl Psychol Meas*. 1977;1:385-401.
33. Buysse DJ, Reynolds CF, Monk TH, Berman SR. Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index: a new instrument for psychiatric practice and research. *Psychiatr Res*. 1989;28:193-213.
34. Friedman LM, Furberg CD, Demets DL. Fundamentals of clinical trials, 3rd ed. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1998.
35. Fouladi RT, Shieh YY. Power profiles of modified likelihood ratio tests on mixed linear model parameters. American Statistical Association, editor. Proceedings of the Joint Statistical Meetings, Biometrics Section [CD Rom]. Alexandria: American Statistical Association, 2001.
36. Kenward MG, Roger JH. Small sample inference for fixed effects from restricted maximum likelihood. *Biometrics*. 1997;53:983-997.
37. McNair DM, Lorr M, Droppleman LF. Profile of mood states. San Diego: Educational and Industrial Testing Service, 1981.
38. Savard J, Morin CM. Insomnia in the context of cancer: a review of a neglected problem. *J Clin Oncol*. 2001;19:895-908.
39. Malone M, Harris AL, Luscombe DK. Assessment of the impact of cancer on work, recreation, home management and sleep using a general health status measure. *J R Soc Med*. 1994;87:386-389.
40. Engstrom CA, Strohl RA, Rose L, Lewandowski L, Stefanek ME. Sleep alterations in cancer patients. *Cancer Nurs*. 1999;22:143-148.
41. Hall M, Baum A, Buysse DJ, Prigerson HG, Kupfer DJ, Reynolds CF. Sleep as a mediator of the stress-immune relationship. *Psychosom Med*. 1998;6:48-51.
42. Dew MA, Reynolds CF, Buysse DJ, Houck PR, Monk TH, Kupfer DJ. Electroencephalographic sleep profiles during depression. Effects of episode duration and other clinical and psychosocial factors in older adults. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 1996;53:148-156.
43. Koopman C, Nouriani B, Erickson V, et al. Sleep disturbances in women with metastatic breast cancer. *Breast J*. 2002;8:362-370.
44. Spiegel K, Leproult R, Van Couter E. Impact of sleep debt on metabolic and endocrine function. *Lancet*. 1999;354:1435-1439.
45. Dew MA, Hoch CC, Buysse DJ, et al. Healthy older adults' sleep predicts all-cause mortality at 4 to 19 years of follow-up. *Psychosom Med*. 2003;65:63-73.
46. Newman AB, Enright PL, Manolio TA. Sleep disturbance, psychosocial correlates and cardiovascular disease in 5201 older adults: the Cardiovascular Health Study. *J Am Geriatr Soc*. 1997;45:1-7.
47. Eaton WW, Badawi M, Melton B. Prodromes and precursors: epidemiologic data for primary prevention of disorders with slow onset. *Am J Psychiatry*. 1995;152:967-972.

Bibliography

Alter, Joseph S. *Yoga in Modern India: The Body Between Science and Philosophy*, Princeton, NJ, and Oxford, England: Princeton University Press, 2004.

_____. "Modern Medical Yoga," *Asian Medicine: Tradition and Modernity*, vol.1, No.1, 2005.

Avalon, Arthur (Sir John Woodroffe). *The Serpent Power*. Madras, India: Ganesh & Co., 1958.

Benson, Herbert, and Jeffrey Hopkins. "Body temperature changes during the practice of gTum-mo yoga." *Nature*, 295 (21 January 1982), pp.234-236.

Benson, Herbert et al. "Three Case Reports of the Metabolic and Electroencephalographic Changes During Advanced Buddhist Meditation Techniques", *Behavioral Medicine*, 16:2 (1990), pp.90-95.

Be ro tsa na and Nam mkha'i nor bu, *'Phrul 'khor nyi zla kha sbyor gyi rtsa 'grel*, Cheng-tu: mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1993.

Beyer, Stephan V. *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973.

Bharati, Agehananda. *The Tantric Tradition*. New York: Samuel Weiser, 1975.

Bhattacharya, Brajamadhava. *The World of Tantra*. New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1988.

Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo (Tibetan dictionary), Cheng-tu: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

Briggs, George Weston. *Gorakhnāth and the Kānpata Yogis*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.

Buddhaghosa, Bhadantācariya. *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, translated by Bhikkhu Ñyāṇamoli. Berkeley and London: Shambhala Publications, 1976.

Cabezón, José Ignacio. *Buddhism and Language: A Study of Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994.

Chang, Garma C. C. *Teachings of Tibetan Yoga*. New Hyde Park, New York: University Books, 1963.

Chaoul, M.A., "Tracing the origins of chö (*gcod*) in the Bön tradition: a dialogic approach cutting through sectarian boundaries," M.A. Thesis, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1999.

_____. "Tibetan Yoga from the Bon Tradition" in *SnowLion newsletter*. Ithaca, N.Y.: SnowLion Publications, Summer 2002.

_____. "Spinning the Magical Wheel" in *SnowLion newsletter*. Ithaca, N.Y.: SnowLion Publications, Winter/Spring 2001.

Chen, Kevin and Raphael Yeung, "Exploratory Studies of Qigong Therapy for Cancer in China," *Integrative Cancer Therapies*, 1(4); 2002.

Cleary, Thomas. *Buddhist Yoga: A Comprehensive Course*. Boston, MA: Shambhala, 1995.

Clarke, Sir Arthur C. *Profiles of the Future*, 1973.

Cohen L, Warneke C, Fouladi R, Rodriguez MA, Chaoul-Reich A., "Psychological Adjustment and Sleep Quality in a Randomized Trial of the Effects of a Tibetan Yoga Intervention in Patients with Lymphoma," *Cancer: Interdisciplinary Journal of the American Cancer Society*, New York, N.Y., April 16, 2004 (online), May 2004 (print).

Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1972.

_____. *The Origin of the Buddha Image*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1980.

_____. *Yakṣas*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1971 (first published, 1928-31).

Corbin, Henry. *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi'ite Iran*, translated by Nancy Pearson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Cozort, Daniel. *Highest Yoga Tantra: An Introduction to the Esoteric Buddhism of Tibet*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1986.

Daily Bon Prayers, *Rgyun khyer bon spyod phogs bsdus dad ldan thar lam 'dzegs pa'i them skas shes bya ba bshugs so*, Varanasi, India: Yungdrung Bon Students Committee, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2002.

Das, Chandra. *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, compact edition, Delhi: Book Faith India, 1992.

De Leon, Darcy. "Yoga stretches research in new directions." *CancerWise, The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center*. Houston, Texas, February 2003.
O n l i n e j o u r n a l :
http://www.cancerwise.org/february_2003/display.cfm?id=E6000974-9BA5-4068-B96F431751BBCF71&color=blue&method=displayFull&color=blue

De Michelis, Elizabeth. *A History of Modern Yoga*. London and New York: Continuum, 2004.

Demiéville, Paul . *Le Concile de Lhasa*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952

Dhonden, Dr. Yeshe. *Health Through Balance: An Introduction to Tibetan Medicine*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1986.

_____. *Healing from the Source*, tr. by B. Alan Wallace, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2000.

Downman, Keith. *Sky Dancer: The Secret Life and Songs of Lady Yeshe Tsogyel*. London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1984.

Eliade, Mircea. *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958 (rp.1990).

_____, editor. *Encyclopedia of Religion*. New York: Macmillan, 1987.

Evans-Wentz, W. Y. *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1935, rp. 1958.

Garrett, Frances Mary. "Narratives of embryology : becoming human in Tibetan literature." Ph.D. Dissertation. Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2004.

Garrett, Frances and Vincanne Adams, "The Three Channels in Tibetan Medicine," *Traditional South Asian Medicine*, forthcoming.

Germano, David. *Mini-Encyclopedia of Great Perfection Terminology*. Charlottesville, University of Virginia, 1993.

_____. "Elements, Insanity, and Subjectivity" in *Religions of Tibet in Practice*, ed. by Donald Lopez Jr., Princeton, 1997.

Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas, editor and translator. *Paracelsus: Essential Readings*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1999.

Goudriaan, Teun and Sanjukta Gupta. *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1981.

Gray, David B. *The Discourse of Sri Heruka: A Study and Annotated Translation of the Cakrasamvara Tantra*. American Institute of Buddhist Studies/Columbia University Press, forthcoming 2006.

_____. "Orality, Textuality, and Tantric Buddhist Origins: A Comparative Analysis." Paper presented at Rice University, April 21, 2005.

Griffiths, Paul J. *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Guenther, Herbert V. *The Life and Teaching of N_ropa*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1963.

Gupta, Sanjukta, "The *Maṇḍala* as an Image of Man." In Richard Gombrich, ed., *Indian Ritual and its Exegesis*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Gupta, Sanjukta and Teun Goudriaan, Dirk van Hoens, *Hindu Tantrism*. Leiden: Brill, 1979.

Gustchow, Kim. "A Study of 'Wind Disorder' or Madness in Zangskar, Northwest India," *Recent Research on Ladakh*, Vol. 7. Edited by T. Dodin and H. Raether. Ulm: Ulmer Kulturanthropologische Schriften, Band 9, 1997.

Gyaltsen, Shardza Tashi (*Shar rdza bkhra shis rgyal mtshan*). "Byang zab nam mkha' mdzod chen las Snyan rgyud rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor," *Nam mkha mdzod*, Vol. I-III. Edited by Sonam N, Gyaltsen PLS, Gyatso K, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre: New Thobgyal, 1974.

_____. Thun mong gdum mi'i nyams len ye shes me dpung, in *Rdogs pa chen po sku gsim rang shar gyi khrid gdams skor*. Edited by Khedup Gyatso, Delhi: TBMC, 1974, pp. 551-597.

Gyatso, Geshe Kelsang. *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*. London, England: Wisdom Publications, 1982.

_____. *Meaningful to Behold*. London: Tharpa Publications, 1986.

Gyatso, Janet. "The Authority of Empiricms and the Empiricism of Authority: Medicine and Buddhism in Tibet on the Eve of Modernity" IN *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24 (1), 2004.

Gyatso, Tenzin. The XIV Dalai Lama. *The Universe in a Single Atom*, Morgan Road Books, 2005.

_____. *A Flash of Lightning in the Dark of Night: A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 1994.

_____, Tsong-ka-pa, and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Tantra In Tibet*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1977.

_____. *Deity Yoga: in Action and Performance Tantra*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1981 (rp. from *The yoga of Tibet*, London: George Allen Unwin, Ltd., 1976).

Hastings-Edinburgh, James, editor. *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, T. & T. Clark, 1915, Vol. 8.

Hopkins, Jeffrey. *Emptiness Yoga: The Middle Way Consequence School*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1987.

_____. *Meditation on Emptiness*. London: Wisdom, 2nd ed., 1996.

Horowitz, Maryanne, editor. *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. Vol. 4. Detroit: Charles Scribner's sons, 2005.

Huber, Toni. "Putting the *gnas* back into *gnas-skor*: Rethinking Tibetan Buddhist Pilgrimage Practice," *The Tibet Journal*, XIX, 2, 1994.

Jackson, David. "Birds in the Egg and Newborn Lion Cubs: Metaphors for the Potentialities and Limitation of 'All-at-once' Enlightenment" IN *Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the 5th seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Narita, Japan, 1989, rp. 1992.

Jashke, H.A. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, New Delhi: Munshiram Monoharlal Publishers, 1998 (rpt. 1881).

Jones, Lindsay, editor. *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 8. 2nd edition. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005.

Jordan, Paper and L. Thompson. *The Chinese Way in Religion*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company (I.T.P.), 1998.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. "An outpatient program in behavioral medicine for chronic pain patients based on the practice of mindfulness meditation: Theoretical considerations and preliminary results." *General Hospital Psychiatry*, 4 (1982), pp. 33-47.

Kabat-Zinn, J., Lipworth, L., & Burney, R. "The clinical use of mindfulness meditation for the self-regulation of chronic pain," *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 8(2), (1985), pp. 163-190.

Kabat-Zinn, J., Massion, A.O., Kristeller, J., Peterson, L.G., Fletcher, K.E., Pbert, L., et al. "Effectiveness of a meditation-based stress reduction program in the treatment of anxiety disorders," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 149(7), (1992), pp. 936-942).

Kalweit, Holger. *Dreamtime and Inner Space*. Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 1988.

Karmay, Samten Gyaltzen. *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*, Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1988.

Karmay, Samten G. "A General Introduction to the Bon Doctrine," *The Memoirs of Toyo Bunko*, no. 33, 1975.

_____. *The Little Luminous Boy*. Bangkok, Thailand: Orchid Press, 1998.

_____. *A Catalogue of Bonpo Publications*. Tokyo, Japan: The Toyo Bunko, 1977.

Klein, Anne C. *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1995.

_____. "Fully engaged in Body, Speech, and Mind." *Buddhdharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly*, Winter 2003.

_____, trans. and ed. *Path to the Middle: Oral M_dhyamika Philosophy in Tibet—The Spoken Scholarship of Kensur Yeshey Tupden*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994.

Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, *Unbounded Wholeness: Dzogchen, Bon, and the Logic of the Nonconceptual*. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Kvaerne, Per, *The Bon Religion of Tibet: The Iconography of a Living Tradition*, Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1996

_____, "The Bon Religion of Tibet: A Survey of Research," *The Buddhist Forum*, vol. III, edited by T. Skorupski & U. Pagel, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1994

_____. "Bon." In *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. by Mircea Eliade. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987.

_____. "The Canon of the Bonpos." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16, 1975.

_____. "Aspects of the Origin of the Buddhist Tradition in Tibet," *Numen* 19,1:22-40, 1972

Lipson, Elaine (photos: Michael Sexton). "Into the Mystic." *Yoga Journal*, June 2000.

Longchenpa, *Kindly Bent To Ease Us Part 2*, Tr. by Herbert Güenther. Berkeley, California: Dharma Publishing, 1975.

Lopez, Donald S., Jr., ed. *Buddhism in Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.

_____, ed. *Buddhist Hermeneutics*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988.

Lorenzen, David N.. *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1972.

Lukianowicz, Andrew, editor. "Triten Norbutse Bön Monastery." Kathmandu, Nepal: Triten Norbutse Monastery, 1997.

Manjushrimitra, *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation*, tr. by Namkhai Norbu and Kennard Lipman, Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1983.

Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros, *Rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor* (Cheng tu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1995.

Martin, Dan. *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 2001.

_____. *Mandala Cosmogony, Human Body Good Thought and the Revelation of the Secret Mother Tantras of Bon*, Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994

_____. "The Emergence of Bon and the Tibetan Polemical Tradition," Ph. D. dissertation, Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991

Mimaki, Katsumi. "A Fourteenth Century Bon Po Doxography. The *Bon sgo byed* by Tre ston rgyal mtshan dpal--A Preliminary Report toward a Critical Edition." *Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the Association of Tibetan Studies* (Fagernes 1992), Vol. 2. Oslo, Norway: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994.

Monro, Robin, A.K. Gosh, and Daniel Kalish. *Yoga Research Bibliography: Scientific Studies on Yoga and Meditation*. Cambridge: Yoga Biomedical Trust, 1989.

Mullin, Glenn H., trans. and ed. *Readings on the Six Yogas of Naropa*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

_____. trans. and ed. *Tsongkhapa's Six Yogas of Naropa*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1996.

Murphy, Michael. *The Future of the Body* (New York, N.Y.: Penguin Putnam, 1992.

Napper, Elizabeth and Lati Rinbochay. *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1986.

Newland, Guy, editor. *Changing Minds: Contributions to the study of Buddhism and Tibet in honor of Jeffrey Hopkins*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2001.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Will To Power*, Book III, edited by Walter Kauffman, New York: Random House, 1968.

Norbu, Namkhai. *Drung, Deu and Bon: Narrations, Symbolic languages and the Bön tradition in ancient Tibet*. Tr. A. Clemente and A. Lukianowicz. Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1995.

_____. *Yantra Yoga: The Tibetan Yoga of Movement*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications (forthcoming 2006).

_____. *The Crystal and the Way of Light*. Ed. by John Shane, New York and London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986.

_____. *The Necklace of gZi: A Cultural History of Tibet*. Dharamsala, India: Narthang Publications, 1989 (first published, 1981).

_____. *Yantra Yoga*, edited by Oliver Leick. Arcidosso, Italy: Shang shung Edizioni, 1998.

_____. *The Song of the Vajra*, edited by Gina Perrini. Dzogchen Community, 1992.

Ong, Walter . *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London and New York: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1982.

Orofino, Giacomella. "The State of the Art in the Study on the Zhang zhung language." In *Annali*, 50 fasc. I, Italy: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1990.

Ranjung Yeshe, electronic Tibetan-English dictionary.

Reynolds, John Myrdhin. *The Oral Tradition from Zhang-Zhung*, Kathmandu, Nepal: Vajra Publications, 2005.

_____. "Yungdrung Bon, The Eternal Tradition: The Ancient Pre-Buddhist Religion of Central Asia and Tibet: Its History, Teachings, and Literature," Freehold, NJ: Bonpo Translation Project, 1991

_____. The Threefold Practice of the Primordial State of the Mother Tantra," "The Threefold Practice of the Primordial State of the Mother Tantra." San Diego and Amsterdam: Vidyadhara Publications, 1996.

Roach, Geshe Michael. *The Tibetan Book of Yoga: Ancient Buddhist Teachings on the Philosophy and Practice of Yoga*. USA: Doubleday, 2004.

Rossi, Donatella. *The Philosophical View of the Great Perfection in the Tibetan Bon Religion*. Ithaca, N.Y. : Snow Lion Publications, 1999.

Ruegg, David Seyfort. *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective: On the Transmission and Reception of Buddhism in India and Tibet*. London:Heritage/University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1989.

Samlek, Milu (*Rgyal gshen Mi lus bsam legs*). *Ma rgyud sangs rgyas rgyud gsum rtsa 'grel*. The Three Basic Mother Tantras with Commentaries of the Commentaries. Terma (*gter ma*) rediscovered by Guru Nontse (*Gu ru rnon rtse*) in the eleventh century. Reproduced from original manuscript belonging to the Samling Monastery (*bSam gling*), in Dolpo, N.W. Nepal. Delhi (Dolanji: Bonpo Monastic Centre, distributor), 1971.

_____. *Ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma'i rgyud skor*. Dolanji, India: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Community (TBMC). Ed. by Tshultrim Tashi, 1985.

Samuel, Geoffrey. *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993.

Sangpo, Khetsun. *Tantric Practices in Nyingma*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1986.

Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra* [Sanskrit and Tibetan], ed. by Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya, Calcutta, India: The Asiatic Society, 1966.

Śāntideva, *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*, tr. by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen. *The Treasury of Good Sayings (Legs bshad mdzod)*, translated by Samten Karmay, Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972.

_____. *Heartdrops of Dharmakaya*. Commentary by Lopon Tenzin Namdak, ed. By Richard Dixey, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1993.

_____. *Rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum rang shar las sngon 'gro rjes kyi tshig bshad thugs rjes myur gzigs bshugs*. Edited by Khedup Gyatso, Delhi: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1974.

_____. *Byang zab nam mkha' mdzod chen las Snyan rgyud rtsa rlung 'phrul 'khor In: NAM MKHA MDZOD Vol. I-III*, ed. by Sonam N, Gyaltzen PLS, Gyatso K, Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre: New Thobgyal, 1974.

Silburn, Lillian. *Kuṇḍalini: the energy of the depths* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY, 1988).

Snellgrove, David. *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1987).

_____. *The Nine Ways of Bon*, Boulder, Colorado: Prajñā Press, 1980

_____ and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, Boston and London: Shambhala Publications, 1968, 3rd edition, 1995

Solan, Matthew. "Comfort Zone: Tibetan yoga may help cancer patients overcome sleep disturbances and be more at ease." *Yoga Journal*. September/October, 2003.

Stein, Rolf, *Tibetan Civilization*, translated by J. E. Stapleton Driver, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972

Strong, John S. *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretation*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2nd ed., 2001.

Stutchbury, Elisabeth A. "Tibetan Meditation, Yoga and Healing practices: Mind-Body Interconnections," *The Embodiment of Mind: Eastern and Western Perspectives*, ed. M.M. Del Monte, & Y. Haruki, Delft, Holland: Eburon Publishers, 1998.

Telles S, Naveen K.V, "Yoga for rehabilitation: an overview," *Indian Journal of Medical Science*, 1997; 51: 123–127.

Taylor, Mark, editor. *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

"The Great Perfection Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung." *History and Doctrines of Bonpo Nispanna Yoga*. Edited by Lokesh Chandra and Tenzin Namdak. Satapitaka Series Vol. 73. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1968.

Tucci, Giuseppe, *The Religions of Tibet*, translated by Geoffrey Samuel, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980

_____. *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, tr. from Italian by Alan Houghton Brodrick, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2001 (rp. from New York: Samuel Weiser, 1969).

Varenne, Jean. *Yoga and the Hindu Tradition*, tr. by Derek Coltman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Varela, Francisco J., ed. *Sleeping, Dreaming, and Dying: An Exploration of Consciousness with the Dalai Lama*. Boston, MA: Wisdom, 1997.

Vaidyanathan, T.G. and Jeffrey J. Kripal, eds., *Vishnu on Freud's Desk: A Reader in Psychoanalysis and Hinduism*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Versnel, H.S. "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion," *Numen*, Vol. XXXVIII, Fasc. 2, Dec. 1991.

Wallace, B. Alan. *Choosing Reality: A Buddhist View of Physics and the Mind*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1996.

Wangyal, Tenzin Rinpoche. *Healing with Form, Energy, and Light*, Ithaca, NY and Boulder, CO: Snow Lion Publications, 2002.

_____. *The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1998.

_____. *Wonders of the Natural Mind*, Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill Publications, 1993.

_____. *Nyam Gyud Ngöndro: The Experiential Transmission [of Drugyalwa Yungdrung] Part I: Ngöndro*. Ed. by Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Stephen Dignan, Charlottesville, VA: Ligmincha Institute, 1998.

Wayman, Alex. *Yoga of the Guyasamājatantra: The Arcane Lore of Forty Verses*, New York: Samuel Weiser, 1977.

Wayman, Alex. *The Buddhist Tantras: Light on Indo-Tibetan Esotericism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996.

White, David Gordon. *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

_____, editor, *The Practice of Tantra: A Reader*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Wimbush, Vincent and Richard Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998 (rp. 2002.)

Wood, Ernest. *Great Systems of Yoga*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.

Worthington, Vivian. *A History of Yoga*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

Yungdrung, Dru Gyalwa (*Bru rgyal ba G.yung drung*). "Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung" (*Nyams rgyud rgyal ba'i phyag khrid bzhugs so*) edited by Dra rtsa bstan 'dzin dar rgyas, Kathmandu, Nepal: Tritan Norbutse Bönpo Monastery, 2002.

_____. *The Stages of A-khrid Meditation: Dzogchen Practice of the Bön Tradition*, translated by Per Kvaerne and Thupten K. Rikey. Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996.

_____. *The A Khrid Collection*, New Delhi, India, 1967.