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The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi

Bhagavannīlāmbaṛadharavajrapāṇitantra

བཙམ་ལྷན་འདས་ཕྱག་ན་དོ་རྗེ་གོས་སྒོན་པོ་ཅན་གྱི་རྒྱུད་ཅེས་བྱ་བ།

bcom ldan 'das phyag na rdo rje gos sngon po can gyi rgyud ces bya ba

The Tantra entitled “The Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi”

Bhagavannīlāmaradhara vajrapāṇitantranāma



Toh 498
Degé Kangyur, vol. 87 (rgyud 'bum, da), folios 158.a–167.a.

Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Group
under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

First published 2013
Current version v 3.28 (2019)
Generated by 84000 Reading Room v1.24.1

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co.

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SUMMARY

s.

- s.1 In the Kangyur and Tengyur collections there are more than forty titles centered on the form of Vajrapāṇi known as the “Blue-Clad One,” a measure of this figure’s great popularity in both India and Tibet. This text, *The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi*, is a scripture that belongs to the Conduct tantra (Caryātantra) class, the third of the four categories used by the Tibetans to organize their tantric canon. It introduces the practice of Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi, while also providing the practitioner with a number of rituals directed at suppressing, subduing, or eliminating ritual targets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.

- ac.1 This translation was produced by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche. Catherine Dalton and Andreas Doctor translated the text, with assistance from Ryan Damron and Wiesiek Mical.

This translation has been completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi* is a scripture that, in the fourfold classification that the Tibetans employed to organize their tantric canon, belongs to the “Conduct” or Caryātantra class. The small number of tantras in this category were grouped together because of their similarities in philosophical view and ritualistic conduct. The Caryātantra class is the second of the “three outer tantras.” It adopts features from both Kriyātantra and Yogatantra (the first and third, respectively), being characterized by its attention to worldly rituals (as found in Kriyātantra) as well as more soteriological insights (as emphasized in Yogatantra). From an historical perspective, the Caryātantras can also be viewed as exemplifying the transition in Indian tantric practice from a role of predominantly protecting against worldly calamities to one of providing a path toward personal awakening, as the later tantric systems promise. Generally the texts of the Caryātantra class have been tentatively dated to the early seventh century CE (Williams 2000, 207). There is, however, some evidence within this tantra (which will be discussed below) that might point to a slightly later date for this text.

i.2 More specifically, the tantra presented in this translation concerns a form of Vajrapāṇi known as the Blue-Clad One. In this form Vajrapāṇi is dark blue, with one face, three eyes, and two hands. His clothing is blue and his thick matted hair streams upward. His body is adorned with eight serpents in various places, and in his right hand he brandishes a vajra. For the Tibetans, and no doubt for Indian tantric practitioners, this form of Vajrapāṇi was highly popular—to the extent that the Kangyur contains no less than seven tantras and two dhāraṇī texts centered on this awakened figure. Of the seven tantras, three (Toh 498, 499, 501) belong to the Caryātantra class, while the remaining four (Toh 454, 456, 457, 461) are found in the class called the “Unexcelled tantras” (*bla na med pa'i rgyud*) by Tibetan exegetes. Seen from an historical standpoint, it seems likely that the Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi of the Caryātantras may have functioned as the prototype

for the later Unexcelled tantras associated with this figure. As such, the tantra translated here is of particular importance for understanding the early developments of this tradition.

i.3 The popularity of Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi can also be gleaned from the number of texts concerned with this figure in the Tengyur (the Indian commentarial collection in Tibetan translation), where we find no less than thirty-seven works that focus on Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi. They are made up of actual commentaries as well as of several shorter practice manuals and of various rituals. Almost all of these texts, and importantly all of the commentaries, relate to the later tantras found in the Unexcelled tantra section. We can therefore deduce that the tradition of this deity gained its primary popularity in the later days of the tantric movement in India, where it seems that a particularly colorful group of devotees took to wearing blue robes as the hallmark of their community¹. In the West, however, Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi has remained surprisingly unexplored, and to date hardly any mention of the deity can be found in modern scholarship.

i.4 The text begins with the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi requesting the Buddha Akṣobhya to teach a tantra that can tame all evil spirits that live beneath the ground. The notion that an underworld exists in which various forms of evil spirits flourish was well developed in Indian Buddhism since the very early days². Both of the two other Caryātantra tantras on Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi (Toh 499 in seven chapters and Toh 501 in five chapters) share the same theme, unfolding as Vajrapāṇi requests the Buddha to teach the rituals that can tame the nāgas and yakṣas below the ground and, in the process, accomplish the wealth that they guard and repel the disease that they inflict on humans. These two other tantras thus appear to be slightly condensed (or perhaps earlier) versions of *The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi*.³

i.5 The Buddha Akṣobhya agrees to Vajrapāṇi's request, and then prepares to teach the tantra known as *The Vajra that Subjugates the Evil Forces Below the Vajra Earth*, which throughout this text is synonymous with the main title of the tantra. Before he begins, however, he first blesses Vajrapāṇi with the ability to tame the various serpent beings living in the environment below, headed by the nāga king Anantaka (another name for Śesa, the serpent associated with Viṣṇu). Once tamed in this way, the serpent beings join in the request being put to the Buddha that he teach the tantra. With the stage thus set, the Buddha Akṣobhya proceeds to teach.

i.6 The instructions begin with a short, unnumbered chapter (here included at the end of the Prologue) called "Taming the Nāgas," which details a very brief ritual practice for taming nāgas, grahas, and other evil forces that live beneath the earth. After this initial instruction, the remainder of the tantra is structured in thirteen chapters, all of which are numbered and given titles in the tantra itself.

- i.7 Chapter 1, entitled “Accomplishing Peaceful Activity” or the “Chapter of the Gods,” presents the “ritual for the action deity,” which amounts to a succinct practice manual for the visualization of Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi and the recitation of his mantra. The practice manual is well structured and simple, and contains the tantra’s main iconographic description of Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi.
- i.8 Chapter 2, “The Oblation,” describes the ritual for making an oblation and other offerings to Vajrapāṇi and his retinue. This contains the offering mantra for Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi, as well as mantras for each of the nine yakṣas in his retinue named in this chapter.
- i.9 Chapter 3 is entitled “Vaiśravaṇa,” and focuses on the yakṣa Vaiśravaṇa who, according to the previous chapter, is the first among Vajrapāṇi’s retinue. In this chapter Vaiśravaṇa is encouraged by the Buddha (one assumes this is still Akṣobhya, as in the opening of the tantra, but this is not made explicit) to give instructions on his own practice, in which Vaiśravaṇa himself is the main figure and the other eight yakṣas are members of his retinue. The practices described include making offerings to Vaiśravaṇa and his retinue, as well as a wrathful suppression ritual performed with an effigy.
- i.10 Chapter 4, “The Wheel of Suppression,” describes a short ritual of suppression, connected with the yoga of Vajrapāṇi, which “strikes all wicked ones,” presumably clearing away evil or obstructing forces.
- i.11 Chapter 5, entitled “The Ritual for Drawing the Diagram,” outlines a wrathful ritual for killing a person or subduing a place, and is taught by the Vajra Holder (Tib. *rdo rje ’dzin pa*), an epithet that probably refers to Vajrapāṇi. The appropriate target for such wrathful practices is not mentioned explicitly in this chapter, but chapter 3 describes such a ritual target as “those hostile toward the teachings.”
- i.12 In chapter 6, “The Stages of the Fire Offering,” Vajrapāṇi asks the Blessed One (again, probably Akṣobhya) whether or not one is liberated through ritual practices such as the fire offering (Tib. *sbyin sreg*, Skt. *homa*). The Blessed One replies that one is indeed liberated through the performance of such ritual practices when they are combined with the maintenance of sacred commitments, and he proceeds to describe the stages of the fire-offering ritual.
- i.13 Chapter 7, “The Wheel of Expulsion,” describes a short ritual in which the practitioner visualizes himself as the activity deity (presumably Vajrapāṇi) and summons the target into an effigy, which is burned and then discarded in water.
- i.14 Chapter 8, entitled “Mantra,” is an extremely concise chapter that mentions Vajrapāṇi’s main mantra together with a claim that it “accomplishes all activity, even without practice.” The rest of the chapter is a list of activities that one might wish to accomplish (being affectionate toward all beings, killing all enemies, protecting against epidemics, accomplishing wealth, and so forth) and a concise statement of the method for accomplishing each of them.

- i.15 Chapter 9, “Certainty and Purity,” initially focuses on the recitation of mantras. Here several mantras are mentioned that are used in the practice of the activity deity (presumably according to the same ritual manual outlined in the first chapter of the tantra), and concise advice is given on the recitation of Vajrapāṇi’s mantra and its attendant visualization. In its later stanzas, however, this chapter stands out from the rest of the text in its use of a much more abstract and almost poetic language to describe the intended results of practice, with a perceptible shift to a more soteriological focus. For example, the “nondual nature” that is the result to be obtained in a single lifetime is described as “inexpressible, nonconceptual, the meaning of thatness.” This contrasts rather sharply with the more ritualistic language of the other chapters, where the emphasis is mostly on suppressing, subduing, or killing ritual targets. Here the use of terms like “natural luminosity” and “supreme awakening” suggests an orientation transcending mere worldly ritual. It is true that throughout the other chapters there are hints to be found of a more soteriological orientation, such as in the introductory section of the tantra when the nāga kings are made to generate the mind of enlightenment; in chapter 1 when the goal of the “supreme attainment” is mentioned; in chapter 6 when Vajrapāṇi asks the Blessed One if it is possible to be liberated through a ritual such as the fire offering; and in the final chapter when Vajrapāṇi asks Vajradhara to explain the secret of enlightened mind. However, it is in this ninth chapter that the whole tenor of the text changes most perceptibly, with the language and content reflecting what is only hinted at in other parts of the text.
- i.16 Chapter 10, “Protection,” describes a number of detailed protection rituals spoken by Vajradhara to Vajrapāṇi. Among the protection rituals described are those that seem intended to counteract possession—for “those beings who are seized by wicked ones”—as well as general negative influences, and to reverse obstacles.
- i.17 Chapter 11, “The Arrangement of Mantras,” describes the ritual arrangement of mantra syllables within a triangular maṇḍala and explains their ritual recitation. The arrangement describes syllables from the “first” through the “seventh,” but then later mentions the “thirteen syllables,” which are presumably the thirteen syllables of Vajrapāṇi’s root mantra, taught earlier in the tantra. The relationship between this thirteen-syllable mantra and the arrangement of the seven syllables described earlier in the chapter, however, remains unclear.
- i.18 Chapter 12, “Bestowing Empowerment on Students,” describes the ritual for performing initiation for the Vajrapāṇi practice. After discussing the preparation of the ground and the maṇḍala, the tantra mentions five initiations that are to be bestowed: the vase, vajra, bell, crown, and name initiations. These five initiations are characteristic of an early stage in the development of Buddhist initiatory rites

(Tib. *dbang*, Skt. *abhiṣeka*) in which these five initiations as a group constituted the full initiatory procedure, and the later, now well-known set of four consecrations (in which these earlier five were condensed into the first of the four, the vase initiation) had not yet developed (Isaacson 2010, 263–64). If, as it appears, the tantra is following this early system—which had, by this point, developed into the full form of the fivefold consecration—this might suggest a seventh-century or even early-eighth-century date, since the continued development of initiations, starting with the “secret initiation” (Skt. *guhyaḥbiṣeka*), took place with the mid-eighth century *Guhyasamājatantra*.

i.19 In chapter 13, the final chapter of the tantra, “Establishing the Secret,” Vajrapāṇi asks the Blessed One (again identified as Vajradhara, which we may assume here is a different name for Akṣobhya) to explain the secret of enlightened mind. The reply he receives is the instruction to generate the enlightened attitude and to gather the two accumulations of merit and wisdom, and then to perform a version of Vajrapāṇi’s ritual practice, which is described in brief and presented as a method for taming unruly beings and subduing obstructing forces. Then, after a brief verse lauding the qualities of this particular tantra, Vajrapāṇi and his retinue praise the words of the Blessed One, and the text concludes.

i.20 If we look at the structure of the tantra as a whole, the various chapters of *The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi*, with the exception of the ninth chapter, appear to be a collection of related ritual manuals centered on the figure of this particular form of Vajrapāṇi. The first chapter seems to be the foundational ritual manual for the visualization and mantra recitation of Blue-Clad Vajrapāṇi, while the later chapters describe ancillary rituals that, it seems, are to be connected with the framework of the main ritual manual. These ritual texts are all presented within the tantra’s larger narrative framework. While the initial introductory narrative framework (Tib. *gleng gzhi*, Skt. *nidāna*) of the tantra is somewhat detailed, its closing framework is very brief—a single sentence. Additionally, each of the chapters, again with the single exception of chapter 9, has its own short introductory narrative framework. These statements, ranging from a single sentence in some chapters to a few paragraphs in others, give the context for the rituals presented therein, stating what the ritual is for and who taught it, thus framing the actual ritual instructions as quotations of the words spoken by the teacher.

i.21 This presentation of teachings as a discourse by a particular teacher, or a dialogue between teacher and student, is a standard framework for both sūtras and tantras. What is interesting here, however, is that the content presented within this framework is almost entirely ritual instruction. In a recent article, Jacob Dalton has argued convincingly that ritual manuals were often a major source upon which the tantras themselves were based, rather than the other way

around as traditional scholarship mostly holds (Dalton 2016, 4). Here we see what seems to be a clear example of this inversion, since apart from its narrative framework, the content of the tantra is nearly exclusively ritual instruction.

i.22 In this tantra, the ninth chapter is the single exception to both the presence of this narrative framework and the exclusive ritual content (here we include within “ritual content” laudatory words praising the efficacy of the ritual, which are commonly found within ritual works). This chapter names no teacher as the one imparting the instructions; it simply begins, “Then, moreover, the certainty of recitation / will be taught now.”

i.23 As discussed above, the initial part of chapter 9 is a description of the visualization for mantra recitation, followed by a short list of the mantras required for the practice. This part of the chapter can be considered as ritual content, though it does not contain a full or self-contained ritual as the other chapters do; instead it appears to be a sort of supplemental instruction to be integrated into the practice described in chapter 1. The text then shifts, however, in both content and tone to an overtly soteriological orientation with the use of abstract language that is not found in other parts of the tantra. The lack of the narrative framework found in the other chapters combined with the overt soteriological orientation and abstract language single out chapter 9 as being, perhaps, a later addition to the tantra.

i.24 Although the language of the text is sometimes obscure and difficult, *The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi* represents a fascinating stage in the historical development of Buddhist tantra and offers a beautiful example of early tantric literature. We hope that this English translation will open the doors to further engagement with this and other tantras, by both practitioners and scholars of Buddhist tantra alike.

tr.

THE TRANSLATION

**The Tantra of the Blue-Clad Blessed
Vajrapāṇi**

PROLOGUE

pl.

pl.1 [F.158.a] I prostrate to the Blue-Clad Blessed Vajrapāṇi!
I prostrate to the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three times!

pl.2 Thus have I heard at one time. Blessed Akṣobhya, the buddha of the vajra family, was residing in the palace in Alakāvātī together with a retinue of millions of bodhisattvas, including Vajrapāṇi, [F.158.b] Vajra Regiment, Constant Vajra Holder, Vajra Tamer, Terrible Vajra Conqueror, Vajra Tamer of All Evil, Vajra Victor of Basic Space, Vajra Joyfully Abiding Protector, and others.

pl.3 At that time, the great being, the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi himself, brandished a vajra three times at his heart center. He made three circumambulations of the Blessed One and prostrated himself.

pl.4 Then, kneeling on his right knee, Vajrapāṇi requested, “Blessed One, Thus-Gone One, Great Vajra Holder, please explain the great tantra called *The All-Subjugating Vajra* that subjugates all bhūtas and that tames the evil ones that dwell beneath the earth. Great Vajra Holder, I supplicate you to teach! Great Lord of All, I supplicate you to teach! Great Tamer of All Evil Forces, I supplicate you to teach! Great Dispeller of All Darkness, I supplicate you to teach!”

pl.5 At this request from Vajrapāṇi, the Blessed One declared, “It is excellent that you, Great Vajradhara, Secret One, have, for the benefit of sentient beings, requested from me the tantra called *The All-Subjugating Vajra*. Lord of Secrets, that is excellent! Great Bodhisattva, that is excellent! Thus, you who share Vajrapāṇi’s lineage, listen and remember this! I will reveal and explain the tantra called *The Vajra that Subjugates the Evil Forces Below the Vajra Earth*. Receive it!”

pl.6 After pronouncing these words, the Blessed One, by means of the absorption of the all-subjugating vajra, entered equipoise in the absorption called *vanquishing all grahas and bhūtas from below the earth*.

No sooner had the Blessed One entered equipoise than a multitude of wrathful subjugators of evil forces emanated from all the pores of his body and filled the space under the earth, on the earth, and above the earth. The entire land of the

underground nāgas was filled with the horrible sound *hūṃ*. [F.159.a] The eight nāga kings together with their retinues were tamed, and bowed before the Blessed One.

pl.7 But the nāga king Anantaka then gave rise to an evil thought, intending to release a scalding breath. But the Blessed One knew his intention and blessed the Lord of Secrets, Vajrapāṇi, who spoke this mantra called *the mantra that completely pacifies the anger of all nāgas*: “*Oṃ nīlavajra krodhanāga hūṃ phaṭ.*”

Now the mind of the nāga Anantaka was completely pacified; he became endowed with the awakened mind, through which the minds of all the nāgas were completely pacified. Then all of the nāga kings like Anantaka, who live below the earth, supplicated the Blessed One, the Great Vajra Holder, with these words:

pl.8 “Blessed One, we supplicate you to explain a ritual that will, in future times and onward, prevent the grahas that are living below the earth from making obstacles for sentient beings, and that will also pacify the evil of those spirits. We supplicate you to explain why we, the nāga kings and our retinues, are unable to create obstacles for that great being. We supplicate you to explain to us, the nāga kings, our purpose.”

pl.9 The Blessed One, the Great Vajra Holder, glanced at the nāga kings and replied, “Nāga kings, that is excellent! Your request is timely. I will reveal this for the benefit of sentient beings. I will explain; listen!”

The nāgas and the others replied, “Excellent, Blessed One!”

They then listened appropriately. At that point, the Blessed One explained the following chapter called “Taming the Nāgas.”

Taming the Nāgas

pl.10 *Hūṃ!*

For the benefit of all sentient beings,
The Teacher, the Great Vajra Holder,
Carefully observed his own retinue,
Projected light into all directions,
And then taught the method for destroying all grahas:

pl.11 “On the eighth day of the waxing moon,
Or likewise on the fourteenth and fifteenth days,
In an extremely isolated place,
Contemplate wrathful Vajrapāṇi,
Youthful and with majestic poise. [F.159.b]

pl.12 “Next, purify gold and so forth, the seven precious things,
And place these in a jeweled vessel or clay pot.

Recite 108 mantras.

- pl.13 “Resorting to the true utterance of the Three Jewels,
Give an oblation to the bhūtas.
Bury it in firm ground wherever they abide,
And the bhūtas and evil nāgas will be pacified.
- pl.14 “When these peaceful methods are not sufficient,
With terrible weapons
Set their homes ablaze.
- pl.15 “This fierce, unbearable suffering
Will remind them of their previous intentions,
And they will undoubtedly be pacified.”

Chapter 1

1.

Accomplishing Peaceful Activity

1.1 Then the Blessed One explained the ritual for the action deity:

“Always in possession of the awakened mind,
And endowed with all commitments and vows,
Engage in all of the acts of bathing.

1.2 “In a clean and pure place,
Beautify the maṇḍala as is fitting.
Visualize an iron hook that emerges from the syllable *hūṃ*,
Bringing the buddhas and bodhisattvas instantaneously before you.
Make offerings and so forth to them.

1.3 “*Oṃ śūnyatājñānavajrasvabhāvātmake 'haṃ*
Meditate on the absorption of emptiness.

1.4 “In the expanse of space, visualize the letter *āḥ*,
And the first moon, the letter *hūṃ*
Blazing with great light.
This purifies the negative emotions of the six classes of beings,
Definitively placing them in the state of complete liberation.

1.5 “Imagine the light gathered back in the form of *hūṃ*
Marked with a five-pronged vajra.
A garland of light shines forth from this,
Causing all sentient beings
To dissolve into the vajra essence.

1.6 “From this the Great Wrathful One
Blue in color, blazes forth.
Seated with his left leg extended, he is sixteen years of age.
He is adorned with eight ornaments, Anantaka, and so forth.

- 1.7 “His form is dark in color,
With one face and two hands, holding a vajra.
His clothing is blue and luminous,
His three eyes are beautifully red and looking upward.
His dreadlocks stream upward
Bound by a vajra ornament—imagine him like this.
- 1.8 “Then great wrathful wisdom
Is invoked and ushered in with *jaḥ hūṃ vaṃ hoḥ*
- 1.9 “Visualize, at his head, throat, and heart center,
A wheel, a lotus, and a vajra
Marked by the syllables *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*, [F.160.a]
Ornamented with the thirteen-syllable mantra.
- 1.10 “Visualize that Akṣobhya-Vajra confers empowerment,
And all is conquered and perfectly purified.”
- 1.11 Then the Blessed One resolutely spoke his root mantra, the statement of all
activity:
“Oṃ nīlāambaradhara vajrapāṇi hūṃ hūṃ phaḥ.
- 1.12 “The garlands of mantra as well
Should be white for peaceful, red for magnetizing,
Yellow for increasing, and black for wrathful activity.
Completely abandon thoughts and recite this.
- 1.13 “With the distinct techniques of emanating and absorbing,
Engage in concentration on whatever you wish for.
Give up the practice of what you do not desire.
- 1.14 “The wrathful king Vajrapāṇi
Will benefit this mind, the support of all virtues,
With whatever is striven for!
- 1.15 “The stages such as Perfect Joy,
And abilities such as invisibility, will be accomplished.
The support of everything is virtuous
And the supported is devoid of activity.⁴
The supreme attainment will be perfectly accomplished!”
- 1.16 *This was the first chapter from “The Glorious Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld,”
“Accomplishing Peaceful Activity” or the “Chapter of the Gods.”*

Chapter 2

2.

The Oblation

2.1 Then the great bodhisattva, the great being Vajrapāṇi, supplicated the Blessed One with these words:

“Blessed One, Teacher, Vajra Holder,
Please explain the supreme ritual
For the oblation that pacifies obstacles.
Make this effort for the benefit of beings!”

2.2 Then the Blessed One said:

“Excellent, principal Vajra Holder!
I will explain the basis of all oblations:
The ritual for pacifying obstacles,
And the ritual that is a method for gaining spiritual accomplishment.

2.3 “In a beautiful vessel,
Place many excellent articles
Such as food, drink, and so forth.

2.4 “Through entering the absorption of emptiness,
From *brum̐* generate a beautiful vessel.
With *kham* visualize food and drink
Filling all of space, and recite this mantra:
Oṃ āḥkāro mukhaṃ sarvadharmāṇām ādyantapanna tathā oṃ āḥ hūṃ phaḥ svāhā.

2.5 “Visualizing it as nectar, expand it greatly.
Through two expansions, purify it.
In space, from the letter *hrīḥ*
Visualize eight lotuses, immeasurably large. [F.160.b]

2.6 “Then invite the protector Vaiśravaṇa,

The central figure surrounded by a retinue of ten million yakṣas,
The recipient of the offerings of the eight nāga kings.

- 2.7 “Imagine that the yakṣa kings—
Jambhala and Pūrṇabhadra,
Maṇibhadra, Kubera,
Samprajñāna, Guhyasthāna, Pāñcika,
And Bījakuṇḍalī—
Gather round the central figure like a retinue
In all the main and intermediate directions.
- 2.8 “The common retinue of ten million
Are behind the eight nāgas and yakṣas.
Next, for the invitation, use hooks
That are conjoined from the central deity.
- 2.9 “Imagine them on mounts of lions and horses,
All with one face and two hands,
With victory banners, blazing with gems
And the vase of precious jewels.
- 2.10 “They hold swords blazing with gems,
Daggers and spears, celestial chariots, swords, and shields,
And various weaponry raised on high; visualize them thus.
- 2.11 “At the time of invitation, offer drum
And trumpet music, fruits and incense.
- Oṃ vaiśravaṇa saparivāra samāja jaḥ hūṃ vaṃ hoḥ*
Oṃ ve svāhā
Oṃ vaiśravaṇa ākarṣaya hūṃ jaḥ
Is the mantra for the invitation.
- 2.12 “*Oṃ amṛtakuṇḍalī hana hana hūṃ phaḥ*
Is the mantra for dispelling obstructors.
- 2.13 “Then with flowers and so forth,
Make pure offerings in the sky,
Offering them with joy.
- 2.14 “*Oṃ nīlāambaradhara vajrapāṇi ājñāpayati imaṃ baligṛhṇantu*
Samayarakṣantu
Mama sarvasiddhiṃ me prayacchantu mama karmāmogha svāhā
Oṃ vaiśravaṇāyā svāhā
Oṃ jambhalāya svāhā

Oṃ pūrṇavadrāya svāhā

Oṃ maṇibadrāya svāhā

Oṃ kuberāya svāhā

Oṃ samprajñānāya svāhā

Oṃ guhyasthānāya svāhā

Oṃ pāñcikāya svāhā

Oṃ bījakuṇḍaline svāhā

These are the mantras for offering the oblation.

2.15 “Then make that offering to the guests.

Hooks of light rays shine forth,

And immediately they arrive.

Perform the ritual of equal enjoyment.”

2.16 *This was the second chapter of “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld,” “The Oblation.”*

Chapter 3

Vaiśravaṇa

3.

3.1 Then, for the benefit of those who wish to attain worldly accomplishment, the Blessed One entered the absorption called *the origination of all worldly wheels* [F.161.a] and emanated rays of light from the pores of his body. Vaiśravaṇa and his retinue were thus inspired and gathered around him. He prostrated to the Blessed One, scattered dust made from precious gems, and made this request:

3.2 “Blessed One, I am the Dharma-upholding king named Vaiśravaṇa. If I myself were to proclaim a secret in order to protect the Dharma of the pious and ensure that the Dharma abides for a long time, would the Blessed One grant me an opportunity?”

3.3 The Blessed One said, “Great King, excellent! Explain your secret well! I rejoice and give my blessings. May all vajra holders also bless you. Speak well!”

Then Vaiśravaṇa got up from his seat, prostrated to the Blessed One, and spoke his own incantation: “*Oṃ vaiśravaṇāya hūṃ hūṃ paca paca chinda chinda svāhā.*”

3.4 Once he had spoken these words, he requested the Blessed One, “O Blessed One, the accomplishment of this, my mantra, is excellent. Whoever wants to accomplish my state of being should arrange great offerings in the three times. To make the offering to me and my retinue, the practitioner should remain with one-pointed concentration in an isolated place. A practitioner of the blessed Vajrapāṇi must recite my mantra ten thousand times, and then accomplish the activities. One who thus accomplishes my state of being and my activity should offer an oblation and make vast offerings to me and to my retinue. The mantra to recite for making vast offerings and offering the oblation to me and my retinue is this:

3.5 “*Oṃ vaiśravaṇāya svāhā*
Oṃ jambhalāya svāhā
Oṃ pūrṇabhadrāya svāhā
Oṃ maṇibhadrāya svāhā”

Oṃ kuberāya svāhā

Oṃ samprajñānāya svāhā

Oṃ guhyasthānāya svāhā

Oṃ pāñcikāya svāhā [F.161.b]

Oṃ bījakuṇḍaline svāhā

3.6 “Know that these are the mantras both for making offerings and giving an oblation to me and my retinue.

“Then, with respect to accomplishing my activity, I requested the Blessed One to bless me with his explanation. The explanation of the activity is this:

3.7 “Whoever wishes to gain accomplishment
Must know the stages
Of killing, the burnt offering, and the suppression ritual.

3.8 “Make an effigy out of beeswax
Of the target—those hostile toward the teachings.
Draw him, make him enter, and then take control.

3.9 “The eighteen-syllable mantra
Forcefully strikes down in the three times,
And suddenly his spirit is broken.
There is no doubt that the target will be slain.

3.10 “If one is practicing the burnt offerings
From among peaceful, increasing, magnetizing, and wrathful activities,
Here one should perform liberation wrathfully.
Thoroughly burn with a blazing fire.⁵

3.11 “With respect to the superior, average, and inferior hearth,
Construct the superior one in three measures, the average in two,
And the inferior in whatever measure is possible.

3.12 “With fuel of thorny wood,
Great wrath is accomplished.
Burn dough and mustard seeds in the fire;
Dissolve the body, speech, and mind of the aggressor
Into the substances, and make the burnt offering.

3.13 “Imagine the retinue of yakṣas in the fire
And present them with the burnt substances,
Or scatter the activity-fire yakṣas with the substances.⁶
However you do it, it will be accomplished.

- 3.14 “At that time, also, with these words of praise
Focus your mind one-pointedly and offer praise:
- “Hūṃ!*
All-conquering, terrifying yakṣa and the rest,
Terrorizing with your noxious brilliant heat,
Bellowing loudly with wrathful splendor.
Homage and praise to you and your retinue!
- 3.15 *“Om vaiśravaṇa puṣpe hūṃ svāhā*
Om vaiśravaṇa dhrupe hūṃ svāhā
Om vaiśravaṇa dīpaṃ hūṃ svāhā
Om vaiśravaṇa gandhe hūṃ svāhā
Om vaiśravaṇa naivedye hūṃ svāhā
- 3.16 “Worship the central deity and also his retinue;
Make offerings in sequence.
Recite, spreading secret mantras;
Perform the projection and reabsorption.
This is the ordinary form of propagation.
- “Om vaiśravaṇaya chegemo mārāya phaṭ svāhā [F.162.a]*
- 3.17 “For the retinue, just as for the main deity,
Worship them with their own incantations.
Fully supported by incantations,
Imagine that they crush them into dust.
- 3.18 “Enjoin them to perform activity and give an oblation.
As for the stages of sprinkling and offering the oblation,
Offer them in order.
The sequence for the peaceful activity is as follows:
- 3.19 “On a hearth of sufficient size,
Offer the burning substances and so forth.
Having conquered the evil deeds of body, speech, and mind,
Transform them into the essence of wisdom fire.
- 3.20 “Discard the vessel and the hearth.
Completely burn all grahas there,
And also make a ransom rite to pacify the great obstructors.
In order to increase and magnetize
For the activity and specific stages,
Know that the details of the shape of the hearth

Are in accordance with the previously explained activities.

- 3.21 “As for the substantial offering,
With the stages of red and yellow firewood and so forth:

*“Om vaiśravaṇāya dhanapuṣṭim kuru ye svāhā
Om vaiśravaṇa vaśaṃ kuru svāhā
Om vaiśravaṇāye śāntim kuru svāhā*”
- 3.22 “Just as for the main deity, for the retinue also
Make offerings with the incantatory substances.
Offer the burned substances of dough,
Mustard seeds, sweets, and so forth in sequence.
- 3.23 “The four activities are perfectly accomplished.
With superior diligence, they are fully accomplished.
With middling and lesser diligence, know that
They are accomplished in a middling and lesser way.”
- 3.24 Then Vaiśravaṇa and his retinue declared to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, whoever engages in the practices that we have explained here should continually worship the Blessed Vajrapāṇi and the yakṣas with the three white substances. He must completely avoid alcohol. He must acquire meats that are suitable and auspicious.⁷ If we fail to accomplish, properly and one-pointedly, the activities that are our accomplishments, then we will have insulted the Blessed One and we will have failed to protect the Dharma. This is our oath. *Om vaiśravaṇa arthakathama.*” [F.162.b]
- 3.25 “Great Vaiśravaṇa, that is excellent. So very excellent!” said the Blessed One. “So very excellent! The secret of which you have spoken will be of great benefit for the people of the future. In order that their benefit will certainly be accomplished, I also will pronounce this mantra. Listen!”
- 3.26 “Excellent!” said Vaiśravaṇa and the others to the Blessed One, and listened accordingly.
- 3.27 The Blessed One then said, “*Om vajrapāṇi nīlāambaradhara vajrasphoṭa hūṃ phaṭ svāhā.* This incantation is a mantra that brings control over activities. Great Vaiśravaṇa brings about possession of the secret just as he promised.”
“That is so,” said the yakṣas, and vanished.
- 3.28 *This was the third chapter of “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld,” the chapter on Vaiśravaṇa.*

Chapter 4

4.

The Wheel of Suppression

4.1 Then, once again, the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi requested the Blessed One, “Lord, for the sake of sentient beings of the future, please teach a wheel that strikes all wicked ones!”

The Blessed One mentally consented to this request, yet remained completely silent. Instead he projected an all-pervading light from his heart center that embraced all sentient beings with love.

4.2 Then he told Vajrapāṇi, “Vajrapāṇi, I shall now teach a wheel that strikes the obstructors within the ground below. So listen one-pointedly, and I will teach.”

Vajrapāṇi listened accordingly, and the Blessed One began to speak:

4.3 “Whoever wishes to construct such a diagram
Should go to pleasant and solitary places
And perform the practice of Vajrapāṇi.
Visualize the world and its contents as Vajracāṇḍa.

4.4 “From the element of wind up until the central mountain,
Imagine it to consist of enlightened bodies as numerous as there are particles.
Amid this, cultivate the practice of Vajrapāṇi.
His feet are placed on the holder of the hare.

4.5 “On this moon, the size of the trichiliocosm,
Visualize the great obstructor, utterly shaking.
Vajrapāṇi’s body shines with the splendor of a thousand suns.

4.6 “Visualize that this light, which is unbearable to watch,
Burns away all obstructors without exception.
The mantra chain recited from the tongue [F.163.a]
Is seen to fill the trichiliocosm.

4.7 “The eight adorning nāgas
Release a giant breath of steam

That terrifies all gods and nāgas.
Wrathful ones are projected from his heart center
And, like the winds at the end of an eon, cause them to disperse.

4.8 “With his hand, he strikes with the vajra;
Like a bolt shot from a crossbow, it strikes down.
Hūṃ hūṃ resounds like thunder;
They are thoroughly suppressed by his voice.

4.9 “Act like that, and all will be accomplished;
Karmic torment will come to an end.
If one does not know Vajrapāṇi,
Other accomplishments will be inferior.

4.10 “Whatever is accomplished hereby accomplishes all—
In particular, the supreme and the common.”

4.11 *This was the fourth chapter on the wheel of suppression from “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

Chapter 5

5.

The Ritual for Drawing the Diagram

- 5.1 Then, at another time, the Vajra Holder
Taught the ritual of the diagram:
- 5.2 “On a piece of birch bark or rind,
Draw a wheel
With twenty-one sections.
Commence this on the waxing phase of the moon,
- 5.3 “And write, with a one-pointed mind.
In the center, place the wrathful syllable.
In the second, the syllable of the wealth holder.
In the third, comes the vajra.
- 5.4 “In the fourth, place the first syllable of water.
In the fifth, place the *ṇi*.
At the four borders, write the essence mantra for killing the target.
These are the inner sections.
- 5.5 “On the twelve outer sections
Are the twelve syllables, omitting *om*.
On these the secret mantra is as follows:
- Nilāmbaradharavajrapāṇi hūṃ phaṭ.*
- 5.6 “This completed wheel
Should be rolled up and fixed to the heart center of the target;
It should be rolled up from the front edge.
Then the fire-offering ritual should be performed.
- 5.7 “If one wishes to subdue,
The diagram should be completed as before.

- At the end, perform the ritual of subjugation.
Place the diagram in a fresh clay cup
And draw a crossed vajra on the lid.
Closing it with clay,
Temples and the like can be suppressed.
- 5.8 “If you prefer not to have sections,
Make a wheel with twelve spokes.
In the center, place and affix
A *hūṃ* and the name of the target.
- 5.9 “The remaining twelve are placed on the spokes. [F.163.b]
When the drawing is complete, insert it in the heart center.
Summon, usher, and so forth, then burn.
- 5.10 “Perform the ritual for suppression of the unwanted;
From that time onward, there is auspiciousness.
Whenever the diagram is drawn,
There is no doubt that things will occur as desired.
- 5.11 “Just like dry grass being burnt up by flames,
The person will be unable to remain.”
- 5.12 *This was the fifth chapter on the ritual for drawing the diagram from “The Glorious
Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

Chapter 6

6.

The Stages of Fire Offering

6.1 Then, once again, Vajrapāṇi asked the Blessed One, “Lord, since everything is the domain of the profound, does one get liberated through such rituals as fire offerings, or not? Please clear away my doubts!”

The Blessed One replied:

6.2 “Vajrapāṇi! Great compassion,
Removal through the power of faith,⁸
The maṇḍala endowed with substantial riches,
And the activity of the fire offering—these you should know.

6.3 “If your stream of being keeps samaya vows as your pledge,
You will be liberated through attributes.
Without a maṇḍala, fire offering, substances, and so forth,
Spiritual accomplishments will not be achieved.

6.4 “Therefore be diligent in the activity of fire offering.
Among the fire offerings of the four enlightened activities,
The stages of the wrathful one is as follows:
In the center of a maṇḍala of four cubits,

6.5 “There is a triangle of one cubit;
It should be dug to a depth of half a cubit.
Outside there are three levels;
Draw the features of a vajra in the middle.

6.6 “At the three levels, draw the three points of a vajra
Encircled by a chain.
In the intermediate spaces, draw iron hooks.
A piece of thorny wood

6.7 “The size of a cubit is very auspicious.

- Substances such as poison, blood, and black mustard seeds
Should be gradually known.
Oneself, through the yoga of the deity,
- 6.8 “Invites the wrathful wisdom,
Visualized in the form that tames the three worlds.
Perform the stages of worship.
For that, the mantra of the fire offering to be uttered is this:
- 6.9 *“Om̐ nīlāmbāradhara om̐ vajrajvalānala hana sarvaduhkha sarvaviḥna samma kuru-
nīlāmbāradhara vajrapāṇi chegemo māraya hūṃ phaṭ.*
- “Say this while burning the substances.
- 6.10 “From poison, blood, black mustard, and salt,
Create the form, accomplish it, and burn it. [F.164.a]
- “Om̐ nīlāmbāradhara vajrapāṇi yakṣa khādaya khādaya bandhaya bandhaya mohaya
mohaya sha hum ānaya hūṃ phaṭ.*
- “This was the mantra for scattering the form.
- 6.11 *“Om̐ nīlāmbāradhara vajrapāṇi sha hum gṛham ākarṣaya hūṃ jaḥ jaḥ.*
- “This was the mantra for summoning beings.
- 6.12 “Having performed the fire offering in that manner,
Go to a dried-up river, fell a nāga tree,
And make a large fire with elephant dung.⁹
Should illness and disease occur,
- 6.13 “Perform the activity of supreme pacification.
Dig a suitable spherical fire pit in three levels;
It should be one cubit wide
And half a cubit deep.
- 6.14 “Then perform the ritual of peaceful activity.
If done in this manner, there is no doubt that one obtains
Spiritual accomplishments with the marks of success.
Vajrapāṇi, Vajra Holder!
- 6.15 “With devotion, keep the meaning of the tantra,
And be diligent for the sake of living beings!
- 6.16 “O! This most secret great tantra
Grants great blessings from the start.

It was spoken by the teacher Vajradhara.
Be diligent in its practice.”

6.17 *This was the sixth chapter on the stages of fire offering from “The Glorious Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

7.

Chapter 7

The Wheel of Expulsion

7.1 Then the teacher, the Vajra Holder,
The Great Glorious One, stood up on his seat.
He gazed at Vajrapāṇi and said:

7.2 “One should know the ritual of activity.
With substances such as poison,
Produce the form that you wish for,
Then insert the diagram at the heart center.

7.3 “Visualize yourself as the deity of activity,
And place it in a box.
Tie it with five strings of various colors,
Then summon your target with the hook at the heart center.

7.4 “Next recite the thirteen letters of the diagram.
When the signs of shivering and trembling occur,
Throw it in the middle of a river.
If the signs should not occur,

7.5 “Mix the fluid of datura,
With blood and poison, and apply it.
Then burn it in the fire of a thorny tree.

“Om̐ nīlāmbāradhara vajrapāṇi stambhaya mohaya bandhaya dāhanaya hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ.

7.6 “Fumigate it at the three times,
And utter many negative words.
Then throw it in the water, using this mantra:

“Om̐ caṇḍamahāroṣaṇa hūṃ phaṭ.

7.7 “Roll it around in pigment and throw it away; [F.164.b]

Imagine that you throw it into a salty ocean.

Then, for the sake of irreversibility,

Recite this mantra continuously:

“Om̐ nīlāambaradhara vajrapāṇi hūṃ hūṃ stambhaya nan phaṭ.

7.8 “Recite this continuously.

Then the activity will certainly be accomplished.”

7.9 *This was the seventh chapter on the wheel of expulsion from “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

8.

Chapter 8

Mantra

8.1 Then the Blessed One, the Vajra Holder, taught this chapter on mantra for the sake of living beings:

“Om nīlāmbaradhara vajrapāṇi hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ.”

8.2 “The root mantra of the Blessed One accomplishes all activities;
This is the secret of the awakened mind of all buddhas.
It accomplishes all activity, even without practice;
With the vajra fists, you accomplish the binding of all mudrās.

8.3 “With vajra confidence, you accomplish all samaya vows!
With the vajra smile, you are affectionate toward all sentient beings.
By uttering the vajra *hūṃ*, you make everyone mute.
Through the vajra lotus, you gain the spiritual accomplishment of traversing the sky.

8.4 “With the tail of the peacock, you tame all nāgas.
With the diagram, you kill all enemies.
If you wish to accomplish wealth, perform the water offering to Jambhala.
If you wish to repel obstacle makers, do so through absorption.
With the vajra iron hook, you summon all.

8.5 “Protect against epidemics with the kuśa grass pock.
If you wish to accomplish nāgas, use the shoots of hardwood trees and nectar.
If you wish to destroy an opposing army, do so with frankincense.
For all actions, recite a hundred thousand mantras.”

8.6 *This was the eighth chapter on mantra from “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

9.

Chapter 9

Certainty and Purity

- 9.1 “Then, moreover, the certainty of recitation
Will be taught now.
Whoever wishes to gain spiritual accomplishments
Should fully possess commitments and pledges,
- 9.2 “And visualize oneself as the deity of activity.
Then invite the wrathful wisdom.
Summon and the rest with *jaḥ hūṃ vaṃ hoḥ*.
In your heart, on a moon, is the mantra chain.
- 9.3 “Visualize it like a silver viper,
Swift, free, and clear—without vagueness. [F.165.a]
Mentally perform a concentrated recitation,
Then make the fivefold offering.
- 9.4 “Through this fully concentrated recitation,
All desired spiritual accomplishments will surely be accomplished.
- 9.5 “*Oṃ āḥ hūṃ*.
“That is the mantra for the blessings of enlightened body, speech, and mind.
- 9.6 “*Oṃ vajrapāṇi abhiṣiṅca mām*.
“Such is the mantra for bestowing empowerment.
- 9.7 “*Oṃ vajrapāṇi tiṣṭha hūṃ*.
“That is the mantra for stabilizing enlightened mind.
- 9.8 “Through all the secrets of enlightened body and mind,
And enlightened speech in their entirety,

- One will quickly meet with awakening.
Whenever someone is practicing diligently,
- 9.9 “The result will swiftly be attained within a single life.
The nondual nature is the vajra possessor;
It fully pervades the vajra sky.
It is inexpressible, nonconceptual, the meaning of thatness.
- 9.10 “Let go in this spontaneously accomplished state.
On the form of *hūṃ* and *āḥ*,
Like a moon reflected in water,
Meditate continually, with an undistracted mind.
- 9.11 “Amazing! The Protector, the Blessed One,
Is the utterly supreme victor.
Amazing! This emanated body
Has no focus on sound.
- 9.12 “It is the domain of all joyful ones.
This natural luminosity is purity;
It abides as supreme awakening.”
- 9.13 *This was the ninth chapter on certainty and purity from “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

10.

Chapter 10

Protection

10.1

Then the teacher Vajradhara
Gazed at the protector of beings
And taught the ritual of protection:

10.2

“Vajrapāṇi, listen well!

“Those beings who are seized by wicked ones
Should skillfully craft an image
Of an animal in pure copper
And fill its interior with silver and the like.

10.3

“Once filled, it should be well concealed
In a desirable place or on one’s own body.
This is the best protection.

10.4

“A reliquary of the bliss-gone ones together with its relics
Should be skillfully fashioned and consecrated.
If it is concealed wherever harm might occur,
There will be peace by pronouncing the power of truth.

10.5

“The buddhas, as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges,
Taught these incantation mantras
To many creatures, such as birds—
All pleasant and beautiful animals.

10.6

“With these mantras, one should consecrate
One hundred and eight blue cords and strings of silk.
Invoke the truth and perform a dedication; [F.165.b]
When the oblation is given, there will be pacification.

10.7

“In a clean vessel, such as a cup,

- Place such things as medicine and silk.
Make an offering of flowers, incense, and so forth.
If it is hidden in the ground,
All harmful influences will become pacified.
- 10.8 “Braid together three white cords
And make twenty-one knots.
Accomplish it and make the offering of accomplishment,
Then tie it around the neck of a victor.
It is certain to reverse all obstacles.
- 10.9 “If one smears the body, in equal measure,
With mustard seed, clarified butter, and brimstone,
One will be freed from the grasp of vicious beings.
- 10.10 “If one practices during the month of Kārttika,
On the *bagunada* flower,
And the *dahunada* fruit,
All vicious ones will have nowhere to remain.
- 10.11 “With the hairs of tiger, bear, and jackal,
One will be free from vicious ones.
- 10.12 “If, in a waterfall, a lake, and so forth,
The acts of protecting the body are perfectly performed,
It will be the supreme protection.
- 10.13 “You should accept the Vajra Holder!
Then, just as the full moon
Is freed from the grasp of the clouds,
So shall you be free.”
- 10.14 *This was the tenth chapter on protection from “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

Chapter 11

11.

The Arrangement of Mantras

11.1 Vajrapāṇi then said these well-spoken words:

“The ritual of arranging mantras,
How might that be?”

11.2 “Vajra Holder, please listen well.
Vajra Holder, listen well,
And I will teach you the arrangement of mantras.

11.3 “In a pleasing, triangular maṇḍala,
Draw a lotus with eight petals.
This accomplishes all desired aims.

11.4 “Within that, arrange the secret mantras.
In the center, place the lord of syllables.
In the fifth of the fourth,
Place the syllable *i*.

11.5 “In the third of the final,
Place the last of the fifth.
Then place the fourth of the fifth.
Next place the second in the last.

11.6 “Then place the fourth of the fourth,
And the second in the last.
Then in the third of the fifth,

11.7 “And the third of the second,
One should place a *ra*.
Then, in the first of the fifth,
The syllable *ah* should be placed.

- 11.8 “Then, in the last of the third, [F.166.a]
Place the syllable *i*.
In the fourth of the seventh,
Place the syllable *ū*.
- 11.9 “By suppressing with emptiness, it becomes two.
In the second of the fifth,
Apply the first of the third.
The thirteen syllables are the incantation.
- 11.10 “If they are recited diligently with love,
All desired spiritual accomplishments are certain.”
- 11.11 Amazing, thus spoke the vajra possessor.
This is the king of mantras, the unsurpassable path,
That manifests the spiritual accomplishments of Vajrapāṇi.
- 11.12 *This was the eleventh chapter on the arrangement of mantras from “The Glorious Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

12.

Chapter 12

Bestowing Empowerment on Students

- 12.1 The teacher, Vajradhara,
Emanated light from his eyes.
Then, in order to ripen students,
He taught the ritual of conferring empowerment:
- 12.2 “The vajra master, the great ascetic,¹⁰
Has obtained empowerment, replete with secrets.
He is disciplined, upright, and a great spiritual friend.
In the excellent state of little movement, he obtained the awakened mind.¹¹
Learned in the maṇḍala ritual,
He should bestow empowerment on the foremost student.
- 12.3 “For that, in a place such as a beautiful temple,
First train well in disciplined conduct,
Then perform the ritual of the ground.
Examine, purify, and prepare,
Then make offerings and requests.
Examine by means of signs in dreams.
- 12.4 “The fire offering should be performed
A total of 108 times with the peaceful ritual.
Make offerings to the bhūtas and instruct them;
They abide in the center of the maṇḍala.
- 12.5 “From *hūṃ*, visualize a great vajra.
From *bhrūṃ*, visualize the great celestial palace.
The light from the two eyes, the sun and the moon,
Annihilates all obstructing forces without exception.
- 12.6 “With the dance movement of the great vajra,

- Circumambulate the ground three times
And smear it with the five substances of a cow,
Then arrange the deities in a single group.
- 12.7 “Make offerings, praises, and requests.
Place the vase especially well,
Then ripen the student in the ritual.
- 12.8 “The ritual of threads and colors
Should be done just as the activity ritual.
- 12.9 “Then, with the blue blindfold,
Let the students enter.
On the vow holders, bestow the fivefold empowerment:
The empowerments of the vase, the vajra,
The bell, the crown, and the name. [F.166.b]
- 12.10 “The activity ritual is the same.
On the fourteenth and the thirteenth day,
Introduce the students to the activity.
The blessings should be transferred gradually,
While confidence should be produced immediately.
- 12.11 “This stainless tantra, the precious essence,
Is the root of all tantras.
It contains the sacred bestowal of empowerment.
- 12.12 “Virtuous vow-holders who have been consecrated
Through the empowerment based upon the activities of ripening,
Which is taught in the supreme tantras,
Should please the sacred one with gifts.
This is the rite for perfecting liberation, for consecration,
And for the maturing of students.”
- 12.13 *This was the twelfth chapter on bestowing empowerment on the students from “The Tantra of the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

Chapter 13

13.

Establishing the Secret

13.1 Then the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi requested the Blessed One, “Lord, for the sake of all sentient beings, please explain the secret of enlightened mind.”

13.2 The Blessed One answered this request by saying:

“Vajrapāṇi, terrifying one,
It is excellent that you consider the welfare of others so diligently.
In the degenerated age, whoever wishes
To tame those sentient beings that are difficult to tame,

13.3 “Should first give rise to the mind of awakening,
And completely perfect the two accumulations.
On a lotus base within a jeweled vessel,
Array the Lord of Secrets in the center,

13.4 “Surrounded by the eight great nāgas on eight petals,
Each with the head of a snake.
When washed and pure,
Perform the practice of the deity of activity.

13.5 “First invite and make offerings,
Then recite while projecting and absorbing oneself and the deity.
Think that the eight nāgas are pacified.
Thus, from *hūṃ* and the rope of *hūṃ*,
The one to be accomplished is turned into a mass of light,
And, in an instant, caught within the *hūṃ*.

13.6 “*Oṃ vajrakrodha ahicaṇḍa phaṭ*.

“With ten thousand repetitions, one will certainly be freed from the grahas.

13.7 “Vajrapāṇi,

- Your radiation and absorption of enlightened mind is secret.
Cover the body of the one to be accomplished in color,
And cut it with the radiation and absorption of the garland of the great *hūṃ*.
- 13.8 “When examining the great substances,
One will surely be freed from grahas.
However, if this should not accomplish it,
Reverse the mantra chain and do the recitation.
- 13.9 “Having cut with the vajra chain, [F.167.a]
It will be accomplished without any doubt.
The supreme ritual for repelling the obstructors below
Appears like a wish-fulfilling jewel.
- 13.10 “This great tantra is the ultimate secret,
Which, without doubt, is victorious among the three vehicles
And supreme among all protective intentions.”
- 13.11 As soon as the Blessed One had spoken, the retinues of the family, including
Vajrapāṇi, along with all the hosts of deities, rejoiced and praised what the
Blessed Vajradhara had said.
- 13.12 *This was the thirteenth chapter on establishing the secret from “The Glorious Tantra of
the Vajra in the Underworld.”*

c.

COLOPHON

- c.1 The translation was completed by the Kashmiri scholar Celu and the Tibetan
translator Phakpa Sherab.

NOTES

n.

1 See Davidson (2002) p 204.

2 See Mayer (2007).

3 Despite being the shortest of the three tantras, Toh 501 is somewhat broader in scope as it also includes rituals to tame beings above the ground.

4 We are unsure of these two lines: *kun rten rab tu spyad dge can / rten can sbyor ba rab tu dben.*

5 Translation based on the spelling in the Yongle, Peking, Narthang, and Lhasa Kangyurs: *mer sbar*. The Degé Kangyur has: *ner sba*.

6 We are unsure about this line: *las me gnod sbyin rdzas kyis brab.*

7 Tibetan: *drang bar bya.*

8 Tibetan: *rab snyams.*

9 We are unsure of this line: *glang chen g.yang ltung me chen 'bar.*

10 Tibetan: *dka' thub che.*

11 We are unsure of this line: *g.yo chung ngang bzang byang sems thob.*

b.

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GLOSSARY

g.

g.1 Absorption

ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་ངེ་འཛིན།

samādhi

A state of meditative concentration or absorption.

g.2 Alakāvati

lcamg lo can

ལུང་ལོ་ཚན།

Alakāvati

g.3 Anantaka

mtha' yas

མཐའ་ཡས།

Anantaka · Ananta

Another name of Śesa, the serpent upon whom Viṣṇu rests during the interlude between the destruction and recreation of the world.

g.4 Bhūta

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta

A generic term for spirits or ghosts.

g.5 Bījakuṇḍalī

bi tsi kuN+Da li

བི་ཙི་ཀུན་ལི།

Bījakuṇḍalī

A yakṣa.

g.6 Burnt offering

sbyin sreg

སྤྱིན་སྲེག།

homa

Fire ritual.

- g.7 **Caryātantra**
spyod pa'i rgyud
 སྲོད་པའི་རྒྱུད།
caryātantra
 “Conduct tantras,” the second, middle category of the three outer tantras according to the new translation (*gsar ma*) traditions; in old translation (*rnying ma*) classifications the term Upa- or Ubhaya-tantra is more often used.
- g.8 **Celestial chariot**
khang brtsegs
 ཁང་བརྟེན་གསལ།
vimāna
 The Sanskrit term *vimāna* can refer to a multi-storied mansion or palace, or even an estate, but is more often used in the sense of a celestial chariot of the gods, sometimes taking the form of a multi-storied palace; hence the Tibetan translation, *khang brtsegs*, literally “storied house.”
- g.9 **Celu**
tse lu
 ཙེ་ལུ།
Celu
- g.10 **Commitment**
dam tshig
 དམ་ཚིག་།
samaya
 A tantric vow or commitment.
- g.11 **Constant Vajra Holder**
rdo rje kun tu 'dzin pa
 རོ་རྩེ་ཀུན་ཏུ་འཛིན་པ།
 A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya’s retinue in this tantra.
- g.12 **Dhāraṇī**
gzungs
 ཀུངས།
dhāraṇī
 Used in several senses, elsewhere in this text translated as “incantation mantra,” but here referring to entire canonical texts used mainly for ritual purposes, structured around an incantation mantra in Sanskrit but also detailing its uses and the story of its origin.
- g.13 **Diagram**
'khrul 'khor
 འཇུལ་འཁོར།
yantra
 A diagram drawn in tantric rituals.
- g.14 **Disciplined conduct**
bstul zhugs

བསྐྱལ་ལྷགས།
vrata · saṃvara

g.15 Five substances of a cow

ba yi rnam lnga

བལྱི་རྣམ་ལྔ།

pañcagaṅgā

Milk, yogurt, clarified butter, cow urine, and cow dung.

g.16 Graha

gdon

གདོན།

graha

A type of evil spirit known to exert a harmful influence on the human body and mind. Grahas are closely associated with the planets and other astronomical bodies.

g.17 Guhyasthāna

'brog gnas

འབྲོག་གནས།

Guhyasthāna

A yakṣa.

g.18 Holder of the hare

ri bong 'dzin pa

རི་བོང་འཇིན་པ།

śaśadhara

An epithet of the moon.

g.19 Incantation

rig pa

རིག་པ།

vidyā

A type of incantation or spell used to accomplish a ritual goal. This can be associated with either ordinary attainments or those whose goal is awakening.

g.20 Incantation mantra

gzungs sngags

གཟུངས་སྒྲགས།

dhāraṇī

g.21 Jambhala

rmugs 'dzin

རླུགས་འཇིན།

Jambhala

An alternate name for the yakṣa Kubera.

g.22 Kubera

ku be ra

- ཀུབེ་ར།
Kubera
 An alternate name for the yakṣa Jambhala.
- g.23 Mañibhadra
nor bzangs
 རྫོང་བཟངས།
Mañibhadra
 A yakṣa.
- g.24 Nāga tree
klu shing
 ལྷ་ཤིང།
nāgakesara
 A species of euphorbia used in burnt offerings to get rid of nāga influences.
- g.25 Oblation
gtor ma
 གཏོར་མ།
bali
 A ritual offering of food and drink.
- g.26 Obstructors
bgegs
 བགེགས།
vighna
- g.27 One to be accomplished
bsgrub bya
 བསྐྱེད་བྱ།
sādhya
 This is the object of ritual accomplishment, whatever is the focus and/or the goal of ritual activity. Also translated “target.”
- g.28 Pāñcika
lngas rtsen
 ལྷས་རྩེན།
Pāñcika
 A yakṣa.
- g.29 Phakpa Sherab
'phags pa shes rab
 འཕགས་པ་ཤེས་རབ།
- g.30 Practice manual
sgrub thabs
 ལྷན་བྱས།
sādhana

- g.31 Pūrṇabhadra
gang ba bzang po
 གང་བ་བཟང་པོ།
Pūrṇabhadra
 A yakṣa.
- g.32 Samprajñāna
yang dag
 ཡང་དག།
Samprajñāna
 A yakṣa in this tantra. Although *yang dag* is normally translated as “Viśuddha,” we have rendered it here as “Samprajñāna” since this is the Sanskrit rendering of this particular yakṣa’s name in the list of name mantras at 2.14.
- g.33 Spiritual accomplishment
dnngos grub
 དངོས་གྲུབ།
siddhi
- g.34 Target
bsgrub bya
 བསྐྱབ་བྱ།
sādhya
 This is the object of ritual accomplishment, whatever is the focus and/or the goal of ritual activity. Also translated “one to be accomplished.”
- g.35 Terrible Vajra Conqueror
rdo rje mi bzad ‘joms
 རོ་རྗེ་མི་བཟད་འཛོམས།
 A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya’s retinue in this tantra.
- g.36 Vaiśravaṇa
rnam thos bu
 རྣམ་ཐོས་བྱ།
Vaiśravaṇa
 A yakṣa.
- g.37 Vajra Joyfully Abiding Protector
rdo rje dgyes gnas skyob
 རོ་རྗེ་དགྱེས་གནས་སྐྱོབ།
 A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya’s retinue in this tantra.
- g.38 Vajra Regiment
rdor rje sde
 རོར་རྗེ་སྡེ།
 A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya’s retinue in this tantra.
- g.39 Vajra Tamer

rdo rje rab tu 'dul byed

རོ་རྗེ་རབ་ཏུ་འདུལ་བྱེད།

A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya's retinue in this tantra.

g.40 Vajra Tamer of All Evil

rdo rje gdug pa kun 'dul

རོ་རྗེ་གདུག་པ་ཀུན་འདུལ།

A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya's retinue in this tantra.

g.41 Vajra Victor of Basic Space

rdo rje dbyings las rgyal ba

རོ་རྗེ་དབྱིངས་ལས་རྒྱལ་བ།

A bodhisattva in the Buddha Akṣobhya's retinue in this tantra.

g.42 Vajracanḍa

rdo rje gtum po

རོ་རྗེ་གཏུམ་པོ།

Vajracanḍa

Lit. "Fierce Vajra."

g.43 Yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa