

## An Instruction to Lhajé Tsultrim Ö

Composed by Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen  
Translated by Cyrus Stearns

I pay homage and take refuge in glorious Kālacakra who is indivisible from the glorious master.

This is sent from the great site of glorious Jonang to the master Lhajé Tsultrim Ö.

You are in good health and diligent in meditation. Here in this direction also, from a state in which imminent and sudden unfavorable circumstances have not yet occurred to the aggregates of the illusory body that is like the dew on a blade of grass or a lamp flame in the wind, by applying dream-like virtue and echo-like Dharma, I am diligently liberating illusion-like sentient beings from the mirage-like sea of existence from which there seems to be no liberation.

In regard to the present topic, as we discussed recently, all of this cycle of the threefold universe has a nature of suffering and is a product of suffering. It is a cycle of source causes and resultant sufferings, turning like the wheel of a chariot. Caught in the web of the twelve links of dependent origination, such as ignorance, we suffer within it like one who has mistaken the direction and lost the way, or an elephant sunk in the mud, or a criminal put into a dungeon, or a ship destroyed in the sea.

The profound methods of the excellent Dharma are required for escape from this, but to practice them a human body with the freedoms and endowments is required. Even if—just if—it is possible to obtain [a human body] just once, it is rare for a religious attitude to arise. Even then it is rare to meet an excellent spiritual friend. And it is rare to encounter a profound oral instruction. Even if one is encountered, it is unknown when death and impermanence will manifest, so it is not reasonable to depend on ephemeral life. Great fear at the moment of death and great fear of the intermediate state will be experienced, like leaping into an abyss or going into the midst of a gathered hostile army, but that does not end the suffering. You have to take birth again and again. Thinking about this, you should

strive to awaken diligence right now, like putting out a fire that has started on your head or clothing.

Everything included within the environment and its inhabitants in the world of apparent existence is originally unestablished and empty of self-nature, like a sky-flower, or the horn of a rabbit, or clarified butter from sand. For a person whose consciousness is contaminated by the habitual propensities of conceptualization, these incessantly arising appearances are like, for example, the arising of the various appearances of a dream to a person [whose mind] is contaminated by sleep, or like one who has become ill with jaundice and sees even a conch shell to be yellow. Confusing appearances are certainly nothing more than simply fictitious appearances, but those who do not understand them to be so take them to be actual entities and take them to be true, thus accumulating various karma and afflictions. This is like the muddled perception by wild animals that a mirage is water.

Even though confusing appearances are realized to be just confusing appearances, as long as this circulation of the vital winds and mind has not ceased this appearance of confusion will not cease. Likewise, as long as the jaundice is not cured, the appearance of the conch shell as yellow will not cease. For the cessation of the circulation of the vital winds and mind, the sublime Dharma of Śambhala to the north, the heart advice of the Kalkīs on the tenth spiritual level, the uncommon oral instructions of the buddhanature [according to] Kālacakra is required; it cannot be stopped by other minor [instructions].

When this circulation of the vital winds and mind is stopped, there is not an insentient [state] or nothing at all. The abandoning of all pervasive conceptualization itself [yields] a spontaneous, nonconceptual, primordial awareness transcending the phenomena of consciousness, becoming a state of great nondual primordial awareness. It is like the curing of jaundice and seeing the white conch shell just as it exists, or the breaking of a vase and seeing the lamp flame that exists within it, or the clearing of clouds in the sky and seeing the planets and stars. Nevertheless, if the realization that this is so is rare even among Dharma practitioners, and rare even among dedicated meditators, what need is there to even mention that this is the case among other people?

The mahāmudrā of clear light, the inconceivable basic space of the four bodies of enlightenment and five types of primordial awareness, is stated in authentic sūtras and tantras to permanently exist in the hearts of all sentient beings. This is the truth, but people

who have not penetrated the meaning of those [scriptures] exaggerate by saying that all apparent existence is mahāmudrā, the four bodies of enlightenment, and the five types of primordial awareness.

Those who desire liberation strive to comprehend the great madhyamaka of perfect truth, which is free from extremes of exaggeration and denigration. How is it comprehended? The buddhahood that exists as the ground is like a wish-fulfilling jewel covered by the mud of the stains. Cleansing it with the stream of the view, meditation, and conduct causes the result of the dharmakāya reality body endowed with twofold purity, which is like the jewel without stains, to actualize, and everything meaningful for oneself and others is spontaneously present.

While the ground buddhahood of the dharmakāya reality body and the resultant buddhahood of the dharmakāya reality body have not the slightest difference in essence, they are distinguished as ground and result by means of the presence or absence of incidental stains. This is like referring to the space of the sky in situations when it is free or not free of clouds and so forth.

Buddhahood is taught to be the enlightened body of primordial awareness, and the incidental impurities are taught to be the groups of consciousness. In that way, primordial awareness and consciousness are stated to be extremely different, like light and dark or nectar and poison. Nevertheless, the differentiation of those two is very rare. These days most people maintain that precisely this mind-nature is the dharmakāya reality body, self-arisen primordial awareness, and mahāmudrā, and many maintain that thoughts are the dharmakāya reality body, the afflictions are primordial awareness, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are indivisible, these appearances and sounds are the three bodies of enlightenment or the four bodies of enlightenment, and so forth.

Concerning mind-nature, there is both natural clear light and incidental stains.

Natural clear light is nonconceptual. Incidental impurities are conceptual.

Natural clear light is primordial awareness. Incidental stains are consciousness.

Natural clear light is nirvāṇa. Incidental stains are saṃsāra.

Natural clear light is absolute. Incidental stains are relative.

Natural clear light is coemergent primordial awareness. Incidental stains are ignorance.

Natural clear light is transcendent. Incidental stains are mundane.

Natural clear light is incorporeal. Incidental stains are corporeal.

Natural clear light is buddha. Incidental stains are māra.  
Natural clear light is noncomposite. Incidental stains are composite.  
Natural clear light transcends the three times. Incidental stains are included in the three times.  
Natural clear light is apart from the aggregates. Incidental stains are together with the aggregates.  
Natural clear light transcends dependent origination. Incidental stains are together with dependent origination.  
Natural clear light is apart from all creation and cessation. Incidental stains are momentarily created and momentarily cease.  
Natural clear light is changeless. Incidental stains are changeable by nature.  
Natural clear light is the true nature. Incidental stains are phenomena.  
Natural clear light is madhyamaka. Incidental stains are falling into extremes.  
Natural clear light is not to be rejected and not to be parted from. Incidental stains are to be rejected and parted from.  
Natural clear light is indestructible and imperishable. Incidental stains are destructible and perishable.  
Natural clear light is uninterrupted taintless great bliss. Incidental stains do not transcend the three and the eight sufferings.  
Natural clear light is the Truth of Cessation. Incidental stains are the Truths of Suffering and Origination.  
Natural clear light is the heart. Incidental stains are the husk.  
Natural clear light is unfabricated. Incidental stains are fabricated.  
Natural clear light is not a superimposition. Incidental stains are superimpositions.  
Natural clear light is pure. Incidental stains are pervasive afflictions.  
Natural clear light is without marks. Incidental stains are with marks.  
Natural clear light is without conceptual elaboration. Incidental stains are with conceptual elaboration.  
Natural clear light is apart from respiration. Incidental stains are together with respiration.  
Natural clear light is apart from the apprehension of a self. Incidental stains are together with the apprehension of a self.  
Natural clear light is wishless. Incidental stains are wishful.  
Natural clear light is apart from actual conditioning factors. Incidental stains are together with actual conditioning factors.  
Natural clear light is mahāmudrā, like a lamp flame within a vase. Incidental stains are its veil, like the vase that covers the lamp flame.  
Natural clear light is Kālacakra, like the sun and moon in the sky. Incidental stains are his veil, like clouds and haze.  
Natural clear light is the primal buddha, like a great treasure beneath a pauper's home. Incidental stains are his veil, like the earth and stones that cover the treasure.  
Natural clear light is Vajrasattva, like a wish-fulfilling jewel. Incidental stains are his veil, like the stains that cover the jewel.  
Natural clear light is great Vajradhara, like a gold nugget. Incidental stains are his veil, like the mud that covers it.

Natural clear light is Hevajra, like the heart of a grain. Incidental stains are his veil, like the husk of the grain.

Natural clear light is Cakrasaṃvara, like a honeycomb. Incidental stains are his veil, like the bees that gather around it.

Natural clear light is Mahāmāyā, like a Buddha image. Incidental stains are his veil, like a stained cloth that covers it.

Natural clear light is Vajracatuḥpīṭha, like a mirror of white silver. Incidental stains are his veil, like the dust that covers the mirror.

Natural clear light is Vajraḍākinī, like the magical sword. Incidental stains are like the sheath that covers the sword.

Natural clear light is Vajravarāhī, like the noncomposite sky. Incidental stains are her veil, like clouds, dust storms, and so forth.

Natural clear light is the lords of the three spiritual families, like the magical vajra. Incidental stains are their veils, like the case that covers it.

Seek out the uncommon esoteric instructions such as these, which separate natural clear light and incidental stains, like separating clear water and sediment. Without them, this incidental mind and distorted mental events will be taken to be the bodies of enlightenment, primordial awareness, and so forth, like taking poison to be medicine, or taking brass to be gold. And so it will be maintained that if this distorted impure mind is recognized, it is buddha, but if not recognized it is saṃsāra; if recognized it is primordial awareness, but if not recognized it is ignorance; and so forth, which are not in agreement with the words of the Buddha, and also contradict reason. For example, that is like maintaining that if this fire is recognized it is cool, but if not recognized it is hot; or maintaining that if this deadly poison is recognized it is nectar, but if not recognized it is poison; or maintaining that if this great abyss is recognized it is a pleasant plain, but if not recognized it is a great abyss; or maintaining that if this razor is recognized it cannot cut the body, but if not recognized it can cut; and so forth.

In that way, the many aspects of the deities, mantras, and maṇḍalas of Kālacakra, Cakrasaṃvara, Hevajra, and so forth that were mentioned above, are true. Realizing them to be so is extremely important. If that is not realized, the great essential point of Dharma will be mistaken. But just the realization is not sufficient. You must escape from the cocoon of the incidental stains. If you do not escape, it will be the same as realizing that, while the conch shell appears to be yellow, that is a symptom of jaundice. But the yellow appearance will not cease for as long as the jaundice has not been cured. So it is very important to remove the incidental stains.

Please contemplate these temporary and ultimate truths that are accomplished on the basis of making pure prayers after purifying the stains and accumulating the assembly of merit. Merely as gifts to accompany this letter, here is a talisman and a full silk scarf.

This Dharma language in such an uncommon oral instruction as this, a sublime Dharma of Śambhala to the north, the heartfelt advice of the conqueror lords of the three spiritual families, has been little known before in the snowy land of Tibet. Since it will generate nothing but various perplexities for people who have fallen under the power of critics who follow those of low intelligence and little learning, it is important not to mention it to others. Since it is extremely important, this has the seal of secrecy.

Mangalam bhavantu śubham

May the blazing splendor of good fortune be an ornament for the world!