

GLOSSARY M-Y

From *The Circle of Bliss: Buddhist Meditational Art*

By John C. Huntington & Dina Bangdel

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M

Machig, Ma gCig (Tbt.). “One Mother” (Ekamati), the name of a female disciple of Dampa Sange and an important female *siddha* in the Tibetan tradition. Known for her development of the Chod tradition.

maha agni, *mahāgni*. Great purifying fire of knowledge that surrounds the wrathful deities of the Highest Yoga Tantra. See also maha jnanagni.

maha janapada, *mahājanapada*. The sixteen Vijjian republican states that flourished during the time of the Buddha, including the Shakyas of Kapilavastu, Licchavis of Vaishali, and Mallas of Pawa.

Maha mandala, Mahā maṇḍala. “Great Mandala,” in reference to the mandala of Vajravarahi.

Maha-Vairochana, Mahā-Vairocana. “Greatly Intensely Luminescent One,” the universal form of Vairochana. Found in a body of literature surrounding the *Maha-Vairocana Sutra*.

mahabala chitta, *mahābala citta*. “Heart-mind of great strength.” The enlightened heart-mind of a Buddha.

Mahabrahmanu, Mahābrahmanu. Realm of the “Great Brahma Being” in the Mount Meru world system; in the first meditation of the Rupadhatu.

mahajnana agni, *mahājñānāgnī*. “Great flame of transcendent insight,” that surrounds the wrathful deities of the Highest Yoga Tantras.

Mahakala, Mahākāla. “Great Black” or “Great Time,” is one of the most important benefactors and protectors in Buddhism; he is also an exoteric manifestation of Chakrasamvara.

Mahakali, Mahākālī. Mahakala's *prajna* in Newar Buddhism.

mahakaruna, *mahākaruṇā*. Great altruistic compassion, embodied by Avalokiteshvara.

Mahakaruna Garbhadhatu, Mahākaruṇā Garbhadhātu. “Fundamental source [womb] stratum of Great Compassion.” Paired with the Vajradhatu mandala, the two major mandalas of the Vairochana-cycle in Tantric Buddhism.

Mahalakshmi, Mahalakṣmī. “Great Lakshmi.” In Newar Buddhism, one of eight Mother Goddesses; also an epithet of Vasundhara, associated with auspiciousness and wealth.

Mahamanstranuserini, Mahāmantrānusārīnī. One of the Pancha Raksha (Five Protective) goddesses. Blue in color, she is the wrathful female emanation of Akshobhya.

Mahamaya, Mahāmayā. “Great Illusion.” Related to the Chakrasamvara cycle meditations of the Mother class Tantras in the Highest Yoga class.

Mahamayuri, Mahāmāyūrī. One of the Pancha Raksha (Five Protective) goddesses. Green in color, she is the female emanation of Amoghasiddhi.

Mahamayuri vidyarakjni, Mahāmāyūrī vidyārājñī. A *dharani* dedicated to Mahamayuri, one of the five protective Pancha Raksha goddesses.

Mahamudra, Mahāmudrā. “Great seal.” The realization of enlightenment within this lifetime through the great seal, embodied by the female/wisdom aspect. In the Kagyu tradition, *mahamudra* is the experiential attainment of the Buddha's enlightened mind.

mahamudra siddhi, mahāmudrā siddhi. “Attainment of the Great Seal.” The supreme enlightenment of the Buddha, attained through the great seal of the Yoginis. Practitioners who achieve this are known as Mahasiddhas.

Mahapratisara, Mahāpratisarā. One of the Pancha Raksha (Five Protective) goddesses. Yellow in color, she is the female emanation of Ratnasambhava.

Mahasahasrapramardini, Mahāsahasrapramardinī. One of the Pancha Raksha (Five Protective) goddesses. White in color, she is the female emanation of Vairochana.

Mahasarasvati, Mahāsarasvatī. Epithet of Vasundhara, associated with knowledge, auspiciousness and wealth.

Mahasiddha, Mahāsiddha. “Great Adept,” who becomes a teacher of the adamant path of Tantric Buddhism. Also known as a Vidyadhara or bearer of esoteric knowledge. Archetype of the Tantric practitioner.

Mahasitavati, Mahāśītavatī. One of the Pancha Raksha (Five Protective) goddesses. Red in color, she is the female emanation of Amitabha.

mahasukha, mahāsukha. “Great Bliss,” specifically in the Chakrasamvara methodology. Great Bliss refers to the experiences of the four joys (*ananda*), which arises from purifying the inner channels of the subtle body through Vajravahni's purifying fire.

Mahasukha chakra, Mahāsukha cakra. Circle of Great Bliss of the Chakrasamvara Mandala. This is the eight-petaled lotus in the inner circle of the mandala.

Mahavairochana Sutra, *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*. One of the early Tantric texts, focusing on Vairochana as the universal Buddha.

Mahaviryya [Yogini], *Mahāvīryyā [Yoginī]*. “Great Effort female.” A form of Vajravarahi.

Mahayana, *Mahāyāna*. “Great Vehicle.” One of the three major vehicles of Buddhism. Believes that it is possible for all living beings in every realm to become a Buddha. This path requires many lifetimes of effort and progress. Also called Bodhisattvayana.

Mahayoga Tantra, *Mahāyoga Tantra*. Tantra of Great Linking. Part of the nine-fold classifications of Tantras in the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism.

mahisha asana, *mahiṣa āsana*. Water buffalo throne.

Mahottama Heruka, *Mahottama Heruka*. “Great Excellent Heruka,” the most complex and advanced Heruka class deity of the Nyingma pantheon. Refuge is taken in this deity to tame the elements of the human mind, such as attachment or envy, which do not allow the practitioner to advance to the next level. A major figure of the Bardo teachings.

Maitreya (Buddha), *Maitreya*. “Loving Kindness.” The future Buddha who will descend to the earthly city of Ketumati (present-day Varanasi) where he will become fully enlightened and have a life similar to that of Shakymuni.

Maitreya (Bodhisattva), *Maitreya*. “Loving Kindness.” One of the eight Great Bodhisattvas. Usually yellow in color. Shown as a Brahmin youth that carries a mouth-washing flask and sometimes has a stupa in his headdress. The future Buddha, who perfects himself in Tushita Paradise before descending on Ketumati.

maitri, *maitṛ*. Loving-kindness, as aspect of compassion.

Maitri Dakini, *Maitṛ Dākinī*. Also known as [Sarva] Akasha “[Totality of the] Sky” Yogini (or Yogini of Infinite Space). Specific to the teaching lineage of the teacher Maitripada. One of the four emanations of Vajravarahi in Chakrasamvara/Vajravarahi tradition, shown with legs bent, flying through the air.

makara, *makara*. Mythical aquatic figure that is half-animal (type varies) and half-fish. Signifies the water element and serve as an auspicious symbol of life-giving source. Usually depicted on throne backs with large tails.

Makaravaktra, *Makaravaktra*. Reptile-headed attendant of Makzor Gyalmo.

Makzor Gyalmo. *dMag zor rgyal mo (Tbt.)*. “Queen Armed for Combat” or “Warrior Queen.” Palden Lhamo's more prevalent epithet in Tibet. This protective figure is most intimately associated with Tibetan statehood and the fortunes of the Tibetan people as a whole.

mala, mālā. Mantra counting garland of beads, both an attribute of Tantric Buddhist deities as well as ritual implement of Tantric practitioners.

Maladhara, Mālādhara. Realm of Bearers of Flower Garlands, second of the lower terraces of Mount Meru. At 1/4 the height of Mount Meru.

Maladhara, Mālādhārā. Goddesses, who carry garlands to decorate sacred space.

Mamaki, Māmakī. Akshobhya's *prajna*. Also an epithet of Vajravarahi.

mandala, maṇḍala. Circle. Buddhist cosmological diagram of Mount Meru, to be used as a visualization tool during Deity Yoga, to realize the practitioner's identity with the fully enlightened Buddha.

Mangala, Maṅgala. Deity of Mars.

mani kula, maṇī kula. Wealth family.

Manjushri, Mañjuśrī. Bodhisattva of wisdom. Golden or orange in color. Usually carries a book in one hand (the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*) and a sword in the other. Often translated as Beautiful Glory. Wisdom aspect of enlightenment. As a fully enlightened Buddha, the patron deity of Newar Buddhism.

Manjushri Namasangiti, Mañjuśrī Nāmasaṅgīti. Fully enlightened Buddha Manjushri, who serves as the source of the Chakrasamvara cycle in Newar Buddhism.

Manjuvajra, Mañjuvajra. Adi Guru of Newar Buddhism and esoteric form of Manjushri in his aspect as Vajrasattva, the primordial teacher.

mantra, mantra. Purified sonic energy generated through the utterance of powerful seed-syllables during ritual and meditation; also used to invoke deities and create an aural awareness of the nature of the deities.

mantra karota, mantra karoṭa. “Mantra skullcup.” Reference to the four skullcups placed in the inner circle of the Chakrasamvara mandala. The skullcups and their contents purify the practitioner to attain the state of enlightenment.

mantra patra puja, mantra pātra pūjā. Mantra Skull-cup Worship, a purification visualization dedicated to the goddess Varuni, who is an emanation of Vajravarahi.

Manushi Buddhas, Mānuśī Buddhas. Former historical Buddhas. There are seven human Buddhas including Shakyamuni.

manushi gati / manushya gati, manuśī/mānuṣya gatī. “Going to the realm of human.” Human level of rebirth in the world of samsara.

mar thang, dmar thang (Tbt.). “Red field,” the Tibetan term for a painting on a red background.

Mara, Māra. “Death.” In Buddhism, a karmically impure death is the root cause of rebirth. This process is infinite and cannot be halted, except by freeing oneself of all karmic impurities. Through hundreds of lifetimes of effort the persona that was to become Prince Siddhartha honed his perfections until he had attained the highest human rebirths that of a royal prince who was recognizable as a “Universal Monarch” (Chakravartin). Mara, the Buddhist personification of death and rebirth caused by desire, is understood to have a vast army of one’s own egoistic cravings. To be able to “defeat” Mara means that Siddhartha has literally silenced all of his egoistic cravings. Thus, there will be no more death for the attained, only the final “complete cessation” (*parinirvana*). Mara, therefore, is now the agent of final cessation and a “converted” benefactor.

Maravijaya, Māravijaya. “Victory over Death,” signifying Shakyamuni’s moment of attaining the right to enlightenment. He is represented with the earth-touching gesture, symbolizing calling the earth goddess, Prithvi, as witness his right to Mara.

Marpa. Mar pa (Tbt.). (b. 1012-d. 1096/7). One of the great Tibetan teachers of Tibetan Buddhism. Received teachings from Newar *siddha* Paindapa as well as Naropa. Lived in India for 20 years and then returned to Tibet. He initiated the Chakrasamvara Tantra, which became the principle transformative deity of the Kagyu school. Marpa and his disciple, Milarepa, are the Tibetan patriarchs of the Kagyu lineage.

matog, *ma tog/ za ma tog*. “Basket,” in general but in Buddhist practice, for ritual utensils.

matrika, *māṭṛkā*. “Little mother.” Reference to the Mother Goddesses, specifically the eight Matrikas significant in the Chakrasamvara practice of Newar Buddhism.

maya, *māyā*. Illusion.

maya deha, *māyā deha*. “Illusory body.” The principal attainment of the Father class of Highest Yoga Tantras, principally embodied by *Guhyasamaja Tantra*.

Mayadevi, Māyādevī. Queen of the Shakya family in the country of Kapilavastu. Mother of Prince Siddhartha Gautama (who would become the Buddha Shakyamuni) and wife of King Shudhodhana. She died 7 days after Siddhartha’s birth.

mekhala, *mekhalā*. Bone girdle worn by the wrathful deities of the Highest Yoga Tantras.

meru jata, *meru jaṭā*. Mount Meru topknotted hair arrangement, [Mount] Meru matted locks.

meru mukuta, *meru mukuṭa*. Meru crown, worn by the fully enlightened Buddhas.

Middle Way. The path to Enlightenment found by Shakyamuni. It is a path of meditation and moderation. Foundation based on Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, and the Twelfefold Chain of Causation.

Milarepa (b1052-d1135), *Mi la ras pa* (Tbt.). Disciple of Marpa and one of the patriarchs of the Kagyu lineage to Tibet.

modaka, *modaka*. Bowl of sweets, known as *laddu*, a favorite of Ganesha.

Mohavajri, *Mohavajrī*. “Adamantine Delusion.” Female aspect in the *Chandamaharoshana Tantra* to the southeast. One of the four Sense Goddesses.

moksha, *mokṣa*. Realization that the individual and the universal are identical, causing the practitioner's release from the endless cycles of life in the samsaric world. A notion presented in the pre-Buddhist Upanishadic writings.

Monlam Chenmo, *sMon lam Chen mo* (Tbt.). Tibetan new year, Great Prayer Festival.

Mount Meru, *Meru Parvat*. The Buddhist world-system in which one resides on the southern continent of Jambhu in which each practitioner is but one of billions of people yet the true Mount Meru is located in the practitioner's own heart-mind. Replicated in numerous worlds and represents a structuring principle applicable in every living being and all phenomena at all levels of existence. There are an infinite number of Mount Meru systems. Also known as Sumeru (see essay, Mount Meru).

mritaka vahana, *mṛtaka vāhana*. Corpse vehicle.

mriyu mara, *mṛtyu māra*. One of the four Maras: Obstacle of death.

mudgara, *mudgara*. “Hammer.” An attribute held by several of the wrathful deities, its symbology varies depending on context, but implies the overcoming of negativities.

mudra, *mudrā*. “Seal” 1) Symbolic gestures made with one or both hands. Mudras are displayed by images demonstrating specific characteristics, and made by practitioners as part of rituals in which they realize themselves as a particular deity. A ritual may have hundreds of mudras that must be memorized for the performance. 2) In Tantric Buddhism, *mudra* also refers to the female aspect, who in the nondual state, is the “seal” or mark of having made certain attainments and serve as a conduit through which the practitioner attains the final realization.

Mudradevi, *Mudrādevī*. Jina Prajnas in their symbolic persona as the Sense Goddesses. Rupavajri, Sparshavajri, Gandhavajri, Shabdavajri, and Rasavajri are the Mudradevis.

mula, *mūla*. “Original,” implying source, root, or underlying principal.

mula kalasha, *mūla kalaśa*. The “source vase” into which the principal deity is invoked. In the Chakrasamvara rituals, chief consecration vase in which Vajrayogini/Vajravarahi is invoked for ritual empowerment. Also called the Mamaki *kalasha*.

mulaka, *mūlaka*. A radish, literally means “little-root.” Often an offering to Ganesha or Ganapatti.

mulatantra, *mūlatantra*. “Root,’ *tantra*.

munda mala, *muṇḍa mālā*. Garland of freshly-severed heads, generally worn by the male deities of the Highest Yoga Tantras.

munda vali, *muṇḍavali*. Ring composed of skulls, surrounding the exterior circles of a mandala.

musala, *musala*. A “pestle” which, in the Chakrasamvara context, signifies the concentration of cognition.

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N

nadi, *nāḍī*. “Channel.” One of the fundamental elements in the imagined subtle body system, the *nadis* are the channels through which energy flows. There are three central *nadis*, and centered on the chakras or energy centers, there are radiating *nadis* that give energy to the lateral parts of the body. The left and right *nadis* are entwined around the central channel (*nadi*). Vital energy (*prana*) enters the left and right *nadis* through breathing in and out. It then enters the basal chakra and, from there, through “igniting” the latent energy travels up the central *nadi* awakening the chakras and loosening the knots. Eventually, the energy emerges from either the crown chakra or the forehead chakra. (See see Yogic Chakra).

naga, *nāga*. “Snake” or “serpent” (specifically the king cobra). In Buddhism, the *nagas* are the keepers of the treasures (of the Dharma) and are also water supplier through the whole of South and Southeast Asia. They have counterparts among the Tibetan where the snakes (*kLu*) control the waters and in China where the long (dragons) are the water spirits.

naga asana, *nāga āsana*. “Serpent throne.”

naga kesara, *nāgakesara*. (Guttiferae *Mesua ferra*) Flower with four white petals and yellow-orange center. Also known as *naga pushpa*, held by Maitreya.

naga pushpa, *nāga puśpa*. See *naga kesara*.

nagaraja, *nāgarājā*. “Serpent king.” In Buddhism, the kings of the serpents guard the underwater treasures and offer them to the Buddhas and other deities

Nagaraja Varuna, *Nāgarājā Varuṇa*. The king of snakes associated with the life-giving rains. Also, the guardian of the northern direction.

Nagarjuna, *Nāgārjuna* (Lived some time between 100 B.C.E and 100 C.E.). “Having Propitiated the Nagas.” Name of one of the most influential of all Buddhist philosophers, Nagarjuna wrote extensively on Early Mahayana Madhyamika theory and the notion of *shunyata*. Also appears as one of the eight Mahasiddhas of the charnel fields associated with Chakrasamvara practices. Modern scholarship distinguishes different personalities as Nagarjuna, who lived at different times. Traditional scholars do not make this distinction.

Nagavasahrida, *Nāgavāsahṛda*. “Lake of the Naga’s Residence,” Name of the vast lake inhabited by supernatural serpents (*nagas*) in the cosmogonic myth of the Newar Buddhists. It was this lake that ultimately drained to become the Kathmandu Valley.

nagthang, *nag thang* (Tbt.). “Black field,” the Tibetan term for a painting on a black background. Generally representing the wrathful protective deities.

Nairatma, Nairātmā. “No Self.” Hevajra's *prajna* in the *Hevajra Tantra*. Analogous to Vajravahni, Nairatma's Chandali fire purifies the practitioner's subtle bodies and awakens the energy centers.

Nairitti, Nairitti. One of the eight Dikpalas. The god of Dread. Dark blue in color and seated on a corpse. The southwest directional guardian (*dikpala*) of the charnel field in the Chakrasamvara mandala.

Naivasamjnanasamjnayatana, Narivasamjñānasamjñāyatana. Realm of Deities of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception. One of the formless realms of Arupadhatu in the Mount Meru world system.

nakshatra, *nakṣatra*. The twenty-eight constellations of the Indic zodiac, who may be represented as female deities. Sometimes conceived of as the wives of Chandra.

nakula, *nakula*. White mongoose, often shown vomiting gems, when held by Vaishravana.

naljor, rNal 'byor pa/ma (Tbt.). Yogin or Yogini.

Namasangiti Manjushri, Nāmasaṅgīti Mañjuśrī. 12-armed form of Manjushri as fully enlightened Buddha. Personification of the *Namasangiti* text from which the Dharmadhatu Mandala is derived. The *mudras* of his twelve arms indicate his identity with all five Jina Buddhas and Vajrasattva. Personification of the *Arya Manjushri Namasangiti Tantra* and the totality of the knowledge of the Buddhas. One of the most important forms of Manjushri in Newar Buddhism.

Namasangiti Tantra, *Nāmasaṅgīti Tantra*. “Singing the names of Manjushri.” Tantra recited daily during the morning and evening rituals at Newar Buddhist monasteries.

Namgung Mangyalmo. gNam dgung sMan rgyal mo (Tbt.). “Medicine Queen of Midnight.” An epithet of Shri (Palden Lhamo).

Nandimukha, Nandimukha. “Bull faced,” Attendant of Vasundhara, as narrated in the *Ashvaghosha Avadana* story.

nara gati, *nara gati*. “Going to the realm of men.” Human level of rebirth in the world of samsara.

narakarupin gati, *narakarūpin gati*. “Going to the realm of hell-forms.” The lowest of the six realms of existence.

Naro Dakini, Nāro Ḍakini. Form of Vajrayogini following the tradition of the Mahasiddha Naropa. See also Vajrayogini.

Naropa[da], Nāropāda, (b.1016-d.1100). Disciple of Tilopa. Formulated teachings into transmission known as Six Yogas of Naropa, which became central to the completion stage practices of the Kagyu school and later became popular amongst the Gelug sect.

Navagraha, Navagraha. “Nine Planets,” the planetary deities who invoked in Buddhist rituals as protective deities.

Ngawang Losang Gyatso (1617-1682). Ngag dbang blo bzang rGya mtsho (Tbt.). Fifth Dalai Lama appointed by Gushri Khan as temporal and spiritual leader of Tibet.

nidhana, *nidhāna*. Twelffold chain of causation. Foundation of the Middle Way relating to the interdependency of all things.

nidhi darshana varada mudra, *nidhi darśana varada mudra*. Gesture of bountiful giving, associated with Vasundhara.

nila padma, *nila padma*. “Blue lotus,” generally borne by Arya Tara.

Niladanda, Niladaṇḍa. “Blue Club,” a fierce protector deity, one of the Ten Great Wrathful deities.

niraya gati, *niraya gati*. “Going to the realm of no-happiness.” Rebirth in one of the many hell worlds

nirmana kaya, *nirmāṇa kāya*. “Transformation Body” or Form Body of a Buddha. See *trikaya*.

Nirmanarati, Nirmanarati. Realm of Deities who “Delight in Transformation,” at 640,000 *yojanas* above the ground of the Mount Meru world system. One of the Realms of those who Taste Pleasure. ‘*phrul-dga* in Tibetan (joy of magical creation).

nirvana, *nirvāṇa*. Literally defined as “extinguish.” Release from the cycle of rebirth (samsara), which is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Final cessation and last rebirth of a completely enlightened Buddha.

Nityahevajra, Nityahevajra. Form of Hevajra manifested as a Jina Buddha of the Vairochana family. He is in union with Buddhachana and is white.

niyuta, *niyuta*. Unspecified vast number, implying universality.

Noble Eightfold Path. Foundation of the Middle Way that adheres to the eight paths of right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

nyasa, *nyāsa*. “Placement” in Tantric meditational rituals, when a deity is placed physically in parts of a yogin’s external and internal body, as blessing and protection for the successful outcome of the practice.

Nyingma, rNying ma (Tbt.). Old [school]. Teachings of Padmasambhava and his successors.

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P

pada, *pāda*. Foot, implying the notion of basis or foundation.

padma, *padmā*, “Lotus,” see pundarika.

padma asana, *padmāsana*. “Lotus seat” or “lotus posture. The lotus supporting a figure is a specific statement that the persona has attained transcendence. In Tantric Buddhism, the place of the transcendence state is in Akanishta paradise, the highest heaven of Mount Meru. Although commonly use in English language descriptions of the yogic posture assumed by a Buddha, the lotus posture is only attested to in the Hindu context. “Adamanine sitting seat/posture” (*vajraparyanka asana*) is the formal Buddhist term.

Padmadakini, Padmaḍākini. Dakini of the west in the Vajravarahi mandala.

Padmanritteshvara, Padmanṛtteśvara. “Lotus Dance Lord.” In one context, he is one of the Armor Deities of the Chakrasamvara methodology and manifests the wrathful form of Amitabha's *kula*. In another, he is a form of Chakrasamvara as Lord of Dance of the Lotus [Family] and is often invoked as Padmaritteshvara Lokeshvara, an esoteric form of Avalokiteshvara.

Padmantaka, Padmantaka. Manifests the Dharma family of Amitabha. One of the Ten Great Wrathful deities.

Padmasambhava, Padmasambhava (ca. late 8th – ca. mid 9th century). “Lotus born,” Known in Tibet as Guru Rinpoche “Great Precious Teacher.” In 817 he was invited to Tibet by Trisong Detsen. Indian teacher who was completely successful in establishing essentially a Buddhist state in central Tibet.

Palden Lhamo, dPalden Lhamo (Tbt.). “Glorious Goddess.” A Dharma Protector (Dharmapala). Regarded as the leader of all the female protective deities of Tibet. See: Shri.

Pancajina Buddha, Pañcajina Buddha. The Five Victor Buddhas: Vairochana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, and Amoghasiddhi, as descriptors of the state of enlightenment.

pancha jina mukuta, *pañca jina mukuṭa*. Crown depicting the five Jina Buddhas. Worn by Tantric priests reifying their identity with fully enlightened Buddhas.

pancha mudra, *pañca mudrā*. Five bone ornaments worn by wrathful female deities of the Highest Yoga Tantra. Includes all of the six ornaments, except for either the cremation ash or the sash.

Pancha Raksha, Pañca Rakṣā. Goddesses who have important roles as protective deities in the Newar tradition. Sometimes understood as female counterparts of the Pancajina

Buddhas. They are: blue Mahamantranusarini, yellow Mahapratisara, red Mahasitavati, green Mahamayuri, and white Mahasahasraparmardini.

Pandara, Pāṇḍarā. “White Robed,” Prajna of Amitabha and of Hayagriva Hevajra, a manifestation of Amitabha.

pandita, paṇḍita. A great religious teacher.

Panduravasini, Pāṇḍurāvāsini. “White Robed,” Amitabha's *prajna*. Also known as Padmini in Nepal.

Panjaranatha Mahakala, Pañjāranatha Mahākāla. “Great Black One Lord of the Net/Tent.” Six-armed Mahakala, an important benefactor of the Tibetan pantheon, as protector of the monastery. Holds a wooden gong across his arms.

paramananda, paramānanda. “Supreme Joy.” One of the four joys experienced during the completion stage practices of the Chakrasamvara/Vajravaharhi meditational practices.

paramita, pāramitā. “Perfection,” or transcendent qualities. The Bodhisattva path devolves upon the development of six perfections: 1) perfection of generosity (*dana paramita*), 2) perfection of moral discipline (*shila paramita*), 3) perfection of patience (*kshanti paramita*), 4) perfection of diligent effort (*virya paramita*), 5) perfection of meditation (*dhyana paramita*), and 6) perfection of wisdom (*prajna paramita*).

Paramita Devi, Pāramitā Devi. Perfection Goddesses, personifying the twelve perfections.

Paranirmitavashavartin, Paranirmitavaśavartin. Realm of Deities Holding Power over Others' Creations of the Mount Meru world system. The highest of the Realms of Those who Taste Pleasure. *gzhan-'phrul dbang-byed* in Tibetan.

parashu, paraśu. “Battle axe.” Removes errors and negative thoughts from the mind.

Parijataka, Pārijātaka. “A place of love;” an auspicious magnolia tree in Trayastrimsha Heaven on Mount Meru.

parinirvana, parinirvāṇa. “Complete cessation,” the Buddha's final cessation. Result of his understanding of suffering and the way out of this suffering. This was his last rebirth in the samsaric realm.

Parittabha, Parittābha. Realm of Deities of Limited Radiance on Mount Meru world system; in second meditation of the Rupadhatu.

Parittashubha, Parittaśubha. Realm of Deities of Limited Virtue on Mount Meru in the Mount Meru world system; in third meditation of the Rupadhatu. *dge-chung* in Tibetan.

pasha, *pāśa*. Noose that symbolically binds the meditator to the highest wisdom.

patrastha amrita kshepana mudra, *pātrasthāmṛta kṣepaṇa mudrā*. "Gesture of sprinkling the nectar of immortality (*amrita*) from the begging bowl." In doing this, a practitioner is offering immortality to whomever or wherever the nectar falls. Gesture associated with Namasangiti Manjushri.

paustika kula, *pauṣṭika kula*. "Prosperity family." A mundane (*laukika*) family of the Kriya Tantra class, in which the deities are associated with prosperity rites that promises to bring issues of sons and increase of wealth.

phala, *phala*. Fruit. In Buddhism, the term is used to denote the attainment of a meditational goal.

Phalgunā, Phālguna. Lunar month from March to April.

phurpa, *phur pa*. (Tbt.). Ritual dagger (*kila*). Alternate term of *phurbu*.

phurbu, *phur bu* (Tbt.). Ritual dagger (*kila*). The *phurbu* has its origins in the Rig Veda where it is identified as the central spike of Indra's *vajra*. An important protective ritual implement for all Tibetan sectarian movements.

Phying-dkar-ba, Phying-dkar-ba (Tbt.). "White felt," indicting a lay follower, but a protective deity of many Tibetan monasteries. Recognizable in art by his distinctive felt hat.

Pishunavajri, Piśunavajrī. "Adamantine Slander." Female aspect of the southwest in the *Chandamaharoshana Tantra*,

pitha, *pīṭha*. "Sacred seat." A reference to both the sacred seat of a teacher as well as a category of *paribhogika* relic. In Nepal, *pithas* as self-arisen sacred places are associated with the eight Mother Goddesses and are equally important for both the Buddhist and the Hindu Tantric traditions. In Newar Buddhism, the *matrika pithas* are located in the periphery of the cities, thus serve to define the sacred landscape as the Chakrasamvara mandala.

plaksha tree, *plakṣa vrkṣa*. In the Lalitavishtara this tree is the one under which Mayadevi gave birth to the Buddha. Scientific name: *Bacopa monnieri*. Its wood is prized for making sacred utensils

prabha, *prabhā*. "Radiant light," specifically refers to the glow of an enlightened being.

prabha mandala, *prabhā maṇḍala*. Aura of radiant light, signifying the transcendent state of fully enlightened beings.

prabha vali, prabhā vali. “Circle of radiant light” that serves as the external boundaries of a mandala. These are usually the colors of the five Jina Buddhas.

prabhasvara, prabhāsvara. “Radiant light of bliss,” generated in the completion stage practices of the Mother Tantras, through the union of wisdom and compassion. The experiential realization of the radiant light of bliss is foundational to the Chakrasamvara and Hevajra methodologies.

prajna, prajñā. “Wisdom.” Refers to both wisdom as a state of knowledge that is one of the six perfections and to the female aspect of a Buddha, who symbolizes the wisdom component of enlightenment.

Prajnadrika, Prajnadṛka. Also known as Prajnantaka, he is one of the Ten Great Wrathful Ones as the fierce protector of the south.

Prajnantaka, Prajñāntaka. One of the Ten Great Wrathful deities, representing the *vajra* family and the transcendent wisdom.

Prajnaparamita, Prajñāpāramitā. “Perfection of Wisdom,” which is the name of the fundamental text of all Manayana Buddhism. A goddess of the same name, who is the primordial female Buddha in both Mahayana and Tantric Buddhism, personifies the text. As the mother of all Buddhas, she is the prototype of the female aspect, or *prajna*, of the Buddhas. Generic term for all fully enlightened female Buddhas in Tantric Buddhism.

prana, prāṇa. “Breath,” however, implying the vital energy that activates the subtle body.

pranayama, prāṇayāma. Breath control, as a core method of yogic meditations that purifies the subtle body system.

pranidhana paramita, praṇidhāna pāramitā. “Perfection of contemplation.” One of the six paramitas

prasada, prasāda. Blessing gift of food, flowers, or other materials returned to the practitioner after being offered to the deity. Often placed in amulets and worn by persons who sponsored the *puja* or who attended the *puja*.

Pratibhanakuta, Pratibhānakūṭa. “House of Great Brilliance/ Eloquence.” One of the sixteen Bodhisattvas.

pratishtha, pratiṣṭhā. Consecration or vivification of an image or shrine.

pratyaliḍha asana, pratyāliḍha āsana. Lunging posture of battle, with left leg bent and right leg extended. See also: *alidha asana*.

pratyaveksha jnana, *pratyāvekṣa jñāna*. Transcendental insight of discriminating wisdom of Amitabha. The antidote to selfish lust and greed. Born out of meditative awareness, reveals the ultimate source of happiness and, removing the need to seek happiness at the cost of suffering to others, engenders the compassionate desire to awaken others to the same state of happiness and bliss.

Pratyekayana, Pratyekayāna. “Way of the Solitary Attainers.” Part of a lineage of Nyingma school of teachings.

pratyudyana mudra, *pratyudyāna mudrā*. “Gesture of rising up to welcome to the paradisaal world.” Many variants appeared but the earliest and a still common version is the combined gesture with the right hand displaying no-fear (*abhaya*) and the left hand displaying bestowal (*varada*) mudras.

Pratyusha, Pratyūṣā. “Pre-dawn,” consort of Surya, the sun god.

preta, *preta*. “Hungry ghosts.” Beings whose greed in former human rebirths led them to be born with great, distended bellies and tiny, needle-thin necks. Exist on diet of human and animal excrement, which only turns to fire in their mouths, leaving them perpetually hungry. These beings reside in the *preta* world of samsara.

preta gati, *preta gati*. “Going to the realm of hungry ghosts.” Hungry ghost level of rebirth in the world of samsara.

Pretaloka, Pretaloka. “World of the Hungry Ghosts,” a realm of rebirth. Presided over by Yama, Lord of the Death and the Underworld. See also *Preta gati*.

Prithvi, Pṛthvī. Earth goddess, who gave witness to the Buddha-to-Be's many lifetimes of perfecting himself and his ultimate right to enlightenment, thus overcoming Mara at the moment of enlightenment. Also known as *Bhu Devi*.

puja, *pūjā*. A commonly used term applied to ritualized offerings, gift exchanges and devotional behaviors. In Tantric Buddhism, there are pujas ranging from small personal offerings to great rituals lasting days.

pundarika, *puṇḍarīka*. The so-called Asiatic lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), which is the symbol of purity and transcendence throughout Indic religions. In Buddhism, the ultimate lotus is the thousand petaled lotus on which Vairochana is seated in Akanistha paradise.

Punyaprasava, Puṇyaprasava. Realm of Deities “Born of Merit” in the Mount Meru world system; in the fourth meditation of the Rupadhatu. *bsod-nams-skyes* in Tibetan.

Purana, Purāṇa. “Old.” Ancient tales or legends, sacred history of a site or narrative of divine origins of a deity.

Pure Land Buddhism. Subdivision of Mahayana Buddhism, where a practitioner aspires to be reborn in a particular Pureland or paradisaal realm of a Buddha, where it is possible to seek enlightenment without distractions. Most important are the purelands of Sukhavati, Amitabha's paradise and the Tushita paradise of Maitreya. While, strictly speaking, the term is an East Asian term (Ch. "Ching tu" or Jp. "Jodo") and does not occur in Sanskrit, Nepal Bhasa, or Tibetan, we find it very useful in describing "paradise cult" Buddhism in a general manner.

***purna ghata*, *pūrṇa ghaṭa*.** "Auspicious vases of plenty." One of the eight auspicious symbols (*ashta mangala*) of Buddhism.

***purna kalasha*, *pūrṇa kalaśa*.** Another term for the *puna ghata* (above)

***purohita*, *purohita*.** "Appointed." Priest or ritual specialist, associated with Tantric Buddhist ritual practice.

Purvavideha, Pūrvavideha. Continent to the East of the Mount Meru world system, shaped like a half moon and flanked by intermediate continents of Deha and Videha.

***pushpa*, *puṣpa*.** "Flower." The personification of flowers, as one of the sixteen Offering Goddesses.

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R

raga, *rāga*. Passions that must be overcome to attain the enlightened state.

Ragavajri, *Rāgavajrī*. “Adamantine Lust.” Female aspect in the *Chandamaharoshana Tantra* to the northwest. One of the Sense Goddesses.

Rahu, *Rāhu*. “Seizer.” Deity of the ascending node of the moon. Personification of the eclipse.

Rahula, *Rāhula*. 1) The Mahasiddha of low-caste birth whose legend teaches the efficacy of meditation on nonduality. 2) name of Siddhartha's only son, whose mother was Yashodara.

Rajanti, *Rājantī*. “Powerful Queen [Sky-goer].” Deity of the east in the Jnanadakini mandala.

rajkumari, *rāj Kumārī*. Royal princess.

Rajni, *Rajñī*. “Queen,” one of Surya's wives.

rakshasa, *rakṣasa*. Flesh eating spirits; powerful demon.

rasa, *rasa*. Moods of the deity, signifying the nine emotive qualities of a deity.

rasana, *rasanā*. “Tasting.” Of the three major veins, *rasana* is the right lateral channel (*nadi*) of the subtle body system. It symbolizes the compassion, male, white *bodhichitta*, and sun-like qualities. See *lalana* and *avadhuti*.

Rasavajri, *Rasavajrī*. “Adamantine Flavor.” Goddess of taste, as one of the Sense Goddesses.

ratna, *ratna*. Jewel, signifying the teachings of Buddhism.

ratna asana, *ratna āsana*. Jewel throne.

Ratna Ketu, *Ratnaketu*. “Banner of the Gem [of Dharma],” another name for Ratnasambhava.

ratna manjari, *ratna mañjarī*. Branch or sheath of jewels, held by Vasundhara.

Ratnadakini, *Ratnadākinī*. Dakini of the south in the Vajravahni mandala.

ratnanyasa puja, *ratnanyāsa pūjā*. “Ritual placement of gems.” Main consecration ritual during the vivification of a chaitya, which includes the offering of the thirteen jewels, signifying the thirteen levels of perfection.

Ratnaraja Hevajra, *Ratnarāja Hevajra*. “King of Gems,” Hevajra manifested as the Jina Buddha of the Ratnasambhava family. He is yellow in color and located in the south, in nondual union with his *prajna*.

Ratnasambhava, Ratnasambhava. “Jewel-Born Jina Buddha” of the south. Yellow in color and makes the bestowal gesture (*varada mudra*). The *kula* symbol is the jewel (*ratna*), symbolizing the Dharma. Horse is his family’s *vahana* and he embodies the *samata jnana*, transcendental insight signifying the equality of all phenomena.

raudra, *raudra*. “Anger,” in reference to the wrathful deities of Tantric Buddhism. Their wrath is aimed at overcoming hindrances and obstacles in the realization of the Buddhist goal.

riddhi, *riddhi*. Abundance.

Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055), Rin chen bZang po (Tbt.). Studied at monastic complex at Parihaspur in Kashmir. Taught a benefactory form of Buddhism, involving the practice of the *Sarva Durgati Parishodana Tantra*, the belief in rebirth in the paradises of Amitabha’s Sukhavati and Akshobhya’s Abirati, as well as the benefaction by Mahakala and Yama. Along with the Indian pandita Atisha, he instigated the Second Propagation to Tibet in the 11th century.

Rudra, Rudra. “Howler,” the wrathful form of Shiva, trampled by Kalachakra.

rupa, *rūpa*. Form. One of the five aggregates (*skanda*) of the phenomenal world. See *skanda*.

Rupadhatu, Rūpadhātu. Realm of Form of the three realms of Mount Meru. Comprised of seventeen states of physical, or subtly corporeal, existence without desire, grouped according to four meditative states. See Mount Meru.

Rupavajri, Rūpavajrī. “Adamantine Form.” Goddess of sight; one of the five Sense Goddesses.

Rupini, Rūpini. Yellow Dakini of the south in the Great Bliss circle of Chakrasamvara mandala. Symbolizes the mindfulness of thoughts.

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S

sadag, *sa bdag* (Tbt.). “Spirits of the place.” Forest and nature spirits, associated with the mundane world. Known as a *yaksha* in Sanskrit.

Sadamatta, *Sadāmatta*. Realm of Eternally-Ecstatic, third of the lower terraces of Mount Meru. Located at 3/8 the height of Meru.

sadhana, *sādhana*. “Leading to the goal.” Visualization instructions through which the practitioner realizes his or her identity with the envisioned deity. A fundamental practice of deity-yoga (*deva yoga*)

Sadhanamala, *Sāadhanamālā*. An important compendium of visualizations of Tantric Buddhist deities.

sahaja, *sahaja*. “Innate, born together.” Notion signifying that at one level, the nondual male and female deities of the Highest Yoga Tantras are innate within each other. At another level, implies that the nondual deities are innate within the practitioner. Vajrayana methodology is often called Sahayayana.

sahajananda, *sahajānanda*. “Joy of Union/Cessation” or “Innate Joy”. The highest of the four joys experienced during the completion stage practices of the Highest Yoga Tantras. The attainment of the blissful union of wisdom and compassion, thereby realizing the ultimate reality as the state of the void (*shunyata*).

samadhi, *samādhi*. Transformative yogic meditation and concentration, fundamental to Tantric practices.

samadhi mudra, *samādhi mudrā*. Gesture of meditation. Also called *dhyana mudra*.

Samantabhadra, *Samantabhadra*. “Universal Goodness” or “Universal Joy.” One of the eight Great Bodhisattva. In union with Samantabhadri, he is recognized as an Adi Buddha in the Newar Buddhists and Nyingma sect in Tibet. Considered as the manifestation of the Dharmakaya itself.

Samantabhadri, *Samantabhadri*. Female aspect of Samantabhadra, as the primordial goddess.

samata jnana, *samatā jñāna*. Transcendental insight that all things are equal, embodied by Ratnasambhava. The antidote to pride because it is the realization that all beings are equally deserving of abundance and well-being. One who recognizes this equality wants to give generously and infinitely to all beings.

samaya, *samaya*. Vows or pledge.

Samaya chakra, *Samaya chakra*. Pledge Circle. The outer circle in the Chakrasamvara Mandala, containing the four gate guardians and four protective deities.

samaya mandala, *samaya maṇḍala*. Pledge mandala. A mandala that represents the deities, by using the principal implement(s). The implements supplant the anthropomorphic visualizations or representations of the deity. Commonly associated with the creation of sand mandalas of Kalachakra during the empowerment/initiation ceremonies.

samaya sattva, *samaya sattva*. "Pledge or vow-bound being." This is the chosen deity that the practitioner identifies with during the transformative meditations of the generation and completion stage practices and thus acquires qualities and states as an enlightened Buddha.

sambhoga kaya, *sambhogakāya*. "Bliss Body." Hierarchic conception of the three Buddha bodies, in which a Bliss-body Buddha resides in a heaven world to enjoy their enlightenment. Also understood as the ecstatic transformational body. Often, the manifestation of the Dharmakaya, which is knowable and accessible to the practitioner.

samkranti, *saṁkrāntī*. "Consciousness transference." This yogic concentration is one of the six *yogas* of Naropa.

samputi, *samputī*. Talismanic amulet, used for protective and apotropaic purposes. Also known as *buti* in popular usage in Nepal.

samsara, *saṁsāra*. The cycle of death and rebirth for all living beings; transmigration.

Samvara, *saṁvara*. (See Samvara etymology sidebar in the Introduction) In Newar Buddhism, it is a loosely applied term to denote any wrathful deities of the vow bound or Heruka class of deities, for example, Chakrasamvara, Yamantaka Vajrabhairava, or Yogambara.

samyak sambodhi buddha, *samyak sambodhi buddha*. "Highest, completely enlightened Buddha." A term applied to the Manushi Buddhas, who first attain enlightenment and then continue with ministry of teaching the Dharma of attainment to others.

Sandhya, *Samdhyā*. "Dusk." One of the wives of the moon god, Chandra.

sangha, *saṁgha*. Buddhist community. One of the Three Jewels of Buddhism, which includes the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

sankalpa, *saṁkalpa*. "Statement of intent," which is recited by the offerer during the beginning of rituals, which sets the stage for the meritorious acts to be conducted. The statement defines the sacred actions, with specifics of time, place, and objectives of the ritual.

sapta ratna, *sapta ratna*. Seven treasures of the Universal Monarch (Chakravartin): minister, queen, general, white elephant, horse, wish granting gem and the wheel (*dharmacakra*).

Saraha, Saraha. “Having Shot the Arrow.” His name refers to the fact that his *prajna* was an arrowmakers daughter. He is one of the eight great Mahasiddhas of the charnel fields associated with Chakrasamvara practices.

Sarasvati, Sarasvatī. Hindu goddess of learning. In Nepal, Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of wisdom, is often conflated with Sarasvati.

Sarma. gSar ma (Tbt.). “New [school].” Known as the Second Propagation of Buddhism in Tibet, associated with the teachings of Atisha (982–1054) and Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) in the 11th century. Has 3 major traditions: 1)Kadam 2)Sakya and 3) Kagyu orders.

sarva akasha, *sarva ākāśa*. “All space.” The infinity of all space in a linear sense. The Buddhist notion of the absolutely unmeasurable linear space is very like the modern notion of a flat space that goes on infinitely. Attain this space implies the final cessation and attainment of the rainbow body, which then radiates into all space.

Sarva Buddha Matri, Sarva Buddha Mātr. “Mother of all Buddhas.” Self-referential term in the *Prajnaparamita* literature indication that it is the source of enlightenment. Also applied to the fully enlightened female Buddhas of the Highest Yoga class.

Sarva Durgati Parishodana Raja, Sarva Dūrgati Pariśodhana Rāja. “King of the Complete Removal of All Unfortunate Rebirths.” Name for Vairocana in the *Sarva Durgati Parishodana Tantra*.

sarva mantra vidya, *sarva mantra vidyā*. Knowledge of all secret invocations.

Sarva nivarana vishkambhin, Sarva nivarāṇa viṣkambhin. “Effacer of all Defilements.” One of the eight Great Bodhisattvas. Usually white or blue and carries a lotus on which a jewel rests.

sarva tathagata hridayam, *sarva tathāgata hṛdayam*. “Heart-essence of all Buddhas.” In many texts it is this essential core of the enlightened being that is the source for a *mantra* or *dharani* that is then uttered.

Sarva Tathagata Tattva Samgraha Tantra, *Sarva tathāgata tattva saṁgraha Tantra*. A key *tantra* of the Yoga Tantra class, which reached China in the early 8th century as the result of missionary activities by Nalanda-trained monks. Vairocana-centered text.

Sarvabuddha Dakini, Sarvabuddha Ḍākini. “Dakini of all Buddhas.” Epithet of Vajravarahi/Vajrayogini. Iconographically, associated with her form as Chinnamunda or Chinnamasta. Embodies Vajravarahi's *mula mantra*: OM SARVABUDDHA DAKINIYE OM VAJRAVARNIYE OM VAJRA VAIROCHANIYE HUM HUM HUM PHAT PHAT PHAT SVAHA.

sarvajna jnana, *sarvajña jñāna*. Transcendental insight into all knowledge.

Sarvavid Vairochana, Sarvavid Vairocana. “Universal Knowledge [of *dharanis* and *mantras*] Intensely Luminescent” Esoteric form of Vairochana, as the totality of Tantric Buddhist teachings.

Sattvavajri, Sattvavajrī. “Adamantine being.” Vajrasattva's *prajna*. Also known as Garbhavajri.

ser thang, gSer thang [ka] (Tbt.). “Gold field.” The Tibetan term for a painting on a black and gold ground.

Shabari, Śabari / Śavari. One of the eight Great Siddhas (Mahasiddha) of the charnel fields of Chakrasamvara practices

Shabdavajri, Śabdavajrī. “Adamantine Word.” As the goddess of sound, she is one of the five Sense Goddesses.

Shadaksari Lokeshvara, Ṣaḍakṣari Lokeśvara. Bodhisattva of compassion, as the personification of his six-syllable mantra: OM MANI PADME HUM. The Dalai Lama believed to be the human manifestation of this form of Avalokiteshvara.

Shadbhuja Mahakala, Ṣaḍbhujā Mahākala. A six-armed form of Mahakala, an emanation of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. Serves as a wealth deity in this form, Wish-Fulfilling Gem Gonkar, the White Protector of religion is an important protective figure in Mongolia.

shakti, śakti. Energy and power associated with the goddess. Activating and energizing entity through which the Tantrin acquires mundane and supramundane powers.

Shakyamuni, Śākyamuni. “Sage of the Shakya clan,” is one of the common epithets of Siddhartha Gotama, who was of the Shakya clan, after his enlightenment. He was born at Lumbini near the capital of Kapilavastu in 563 BCE. As a prince, he renounced the material world, sought and attained perfect enlightenment (*bodhi*) and became the Enlightened One (Buddha). He then assumed a roll as a religious teacher, he taught the Buddhist path, Dharma until his death in approximately 483 BCE. In Buddhist teachings, he is not considered unique in any way and is considered to be but one of many past mortal Buddhas.

Western scholarship considers him to have been the “founder” of the Buddhist religion and asserts that the previous Buddhas are “mythological.”

shan mudra, *ṣaṇi/ṣaṇ mudrā*. “Six seals.” Set of six bone ornaments worn by the wrathful deities of the Yogini class of the Highest Yoga Tantras. Associated with the six perfections (*paramita*) and the families of the six Buddhas.

Shani, Śani. Deity of Saturn, one of the planetary deities (*nava graha*).

shankha, *śankha*. Conch shell. One of the eight auspicious symbols (*ashta mangala*). Conch shells are used in two different ways in Buddhism: 1) as a trumpet signaling the teaching of the Dharma far and wide, and 2) as a container for liquids at offering rituals.

Shantikara-acharya, Śāntikarācārya. “Teacher who produces peace.” The first Newar Buddhist Vajracharya priest, who is said to have received the empowerments of Chakrasamvara and Vajravarahi directly from Manjushri. Archetype of the Vajracharya priesthood of the householder-priest in Newar Buddhism.

shara, *śara*. The arrow that symbolically transfixes erroneous imaginings of the three worlds (Kamadhatu, Rupadhatu, and Arupadhatu).

shardula, *śārdūla*. A composite mythical creature, displaying features of different animals. Often represented on the side of thrones.

Shat Chakravarti, Ṣaṭcakravarti. “Six Universal Monarchs.” Mandala of the six Buddha families related to the Chakrasamvara cycle.

shat kula, ṣaṭ kula. Six Buddha families: five Jina Buddhas and Vajrasattva. Associated with the methodologies of the *Chakrasamvara*, *Namasangiti*, and *Kalachakra Tantras*.

Shatha, Śāṭha. Intermediate continent near Godaniya in the West of the Mount Meru world system.

Shikhin, Śikhin. One of the seven Manushi, or human, Buddhas.

shila, *śila*. Moral and mental discipline. One of the six perfections (*paramita*).

Shiva, Śiva. Hindu god of destruction, who rides a bull. He resides in the charnel fields as Ishana, the directional guardian of the northeast in the Chakrasamvara mandala. His wrathful forms, Bhairava and Raudra, is trampled by Chakrasamvara and Kalachakra respectively.

Shobha, Śobhā. “Twilight.” One of the moon god, Chandra’s consorts.

Shravakayana, Śrāvakayāna. “Vehicle of the Hearers.” One of the three major Buddhist vehicles. Advances the belief that there will be only twenty-four Buddhas in this eon, Shakyamuni being the twenty-third. The highest attainment of an ordinary person is the state of being an Arhat. Also called Hinayana “Small vehicle.”

Shri, Śrī. Emaciated wrathful female deity who rides the *khyang* in an ocean of blood. The protector and counterpart of Mahakala. Known as Palden Lhamo in the Tibetan pantheon of protective benefactors.

Shrishtikanta Lokeshvara, Śrīṣṭikānta Lokeśvara. “Beautiful Creation Lord of the World.” Form of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of compassion. Emanates the entire Brahmanical pantheon for the benefit of all beings out of his universal altruistic compassion.

shrivatsa, śrivatsa. “Beloved of auspiciousness.” Endless knot. One of the eight auspicious symbols (*ashta mangala*). Symbolizes the interconnectedness created by love and compassion.

Shubhakristana, Śubhakṛstana. Realm of Deities of Vast (or Complete) Virtue on the Mount Meru world system. *dge-rgyas* in Tibetan.

Shuddhavasika, Śuddhavāsika. Realms of Dwellers in the Five Pure Abodes on the Mount Meru world system; in the fourth meditation in the Rupadhatu.

Shudhodhana, Śuddhohana. King of the Shakya family in the republic of Kapilavastu during the 5th century BCE and father of Prince Siddhartha Gautama, who would become the Buddha Shakyamuni.

Shukarasya, Śukrāsya. Yellow boar-faced gate guardian to the south, residing in the Pledge circle of the Chakrasamvara mandala.

Shukra. Deity of Venus; one of the nine planetary deities (*nava graha*).

Shukrasya, Śukrāsya. Yellow sow-headed goddess of the south gateway. Resides in the outer Pledge circle of the Chakrasamvara mandala palace. Symbolizes right mindfulness.

shula, śūla. Lance that symbolically pierces false theories. Also known as a *kunta*.

Shunyata, śūnyatā. “Emptiness” or “Voidness.” Final state achieved in Buddhist practices. Non-being. The state of voidness is attained when phenomenon and noumenon cancel each other into the null state. This conscious neutrality can only be realized through actual experience and an intellectual understanding of it is meaningless.

Shvanasya, Śvānāsya. Red dog-headed goddess of the west gateway of the Pledge circle in Chakrasamvara mandala palace. Symbolizes right effort.

Shvetaketu, Śvetaketu. “White Banner,” the name of the Bodhisattva form of the Buddha Shakyamuni while residing in Tushita Paradise, before descending to attain enlightenment.

Shyama Tara, Śyāma Tārā. “Dark [implying beauty] Guide” or “Star;” *prajna* to Amoghasiddhi. Saviouress from all suffering and symbol of enlightenment in a female form. See Ashta Mahabhaya Tara.

siddha, *siddha*. Tantric Buddhist adept. A Tantric practitioner who is successful in attaining the goal of his or her meditation.

siddhi, *siddhi*. Attainment; realization. Associated with both mundane and supermundane powers acquired by the Mahasiddhas.

simha asana, *simha āsana*. Lion throne, on which the Buddhas are seated, reifying the transcendent nature of the fully enlightened beings. Serves as a symbol of royalty.

Simhavaktra, Samhavaktrā. “She with a Lion-face.” Lion-headed attendant of Makzor Gyalmo.

Simhini, Simhini. “Lioness [Faced Sky-goer].” Deity at the southeast corner (or the northeast corner, according to the *Nishpannayogavali*), seated on a *gaja asana* in the Jnanadakini mandala.

sindura, *sindūra*. Vermilion, a red pigment. In Newar Buddhism, symbolizes Vajravarahi in the rituals to Chakrasamvara/Vajravarahi.

sindurarchana puja, *sindurārchana pūjā*. “Vermilion Offering.” Ritual of offering vermilion to a Tantric deity, specifically the female aspects. Important Tantric ritual to Vajravarahi in Newar Buddhism.

skanda, *skanda*. One of the five contaminated aggregates (*skanda*) of the phenomenal world, which include form (*rupa*), feeling (*vedana*), perception (*samjna*), aggregate of formation (*samskara*), and consciousness (*vijnana*). These are embodied in the symbolism of the five Jina Buddhas.

skandamara, *skandamāra*. Obstacle of the aggregated elements of existence (*skanda*) that must be overcome. One of the four *maras*.

skor gsum, *skor gsum* (Tbt.). “Three Cycles,” concerning a set of three texts all focused on a set of mandalas, originally numbering twenty-six. These cycles are significant especially in Tibetan Buddhist art and they are cited frequently in scholarship.

smṛita, *smṛta*. “That which is remembered.” In the Tantric context, visualizations central to the practice of Deity Yoga.

shmsana, *śmaśāna*. Charnel fields. Specifically in reference to the eight charnel fields that surround the Chakrasamvara and Hevajra mandalas.

Sonam Gyatso (1543-1588), bSod nams rGya mtsho (Tbt.). Grandson of the powerful Mongol chieftain Altan Khan and named the Third Dalai Lama.

Songtsen Gampo (ruled ca. 629-650 CE), Srong brTsang sGam po (Tbt.). 1st of the Dharma Kings. Brought Buddhism to Tibet when converted by his wives. Considered to be a manifestation of Avalokiteshvara and his wives to be manifestations of Tara and Bhrikuti.

Sparshavajri, Sparśavajrī. “Adamantine Touch.” Guhyasamaja's *prajna*. Goddess of the sensation of touch. One of the five Sense Goddesses.

sphota, *śphoṭa*. Chain. Often associated with the four "attraction" deities invoked during Tantric Buddhist rituals. In this context, the deity Vajrasphota is personified by the gesture signifying the chain. Also, an attribute of wrathful deities.

sraddha, *śraddhā*. Faith/believing.

sthana, *sthāna*. “Places.” Transcendent residences of a Buddha.

stupa, *stūpa*. Buddhist relic mound, representing Mount Meru. It has a stepped-base, circular dome, *harmika* and spire originating in tiered umbrellas (*chattras*).

shuchi, *śūci*. Resplendent.

Sudarshana, Sudarśana. Realm of Deities of Clear Vision in the Shuddhavashika on the Mount Meru world system; in the fourth meditation of the Rupadhatu. *shin-tu-mthong* in Tibetan.

Sudharma, Sudharma. “Good Behavior.” The most excellent Dharma.

Sudarshana. Beautiful golden city in the paradise of Trayastrimsha, Heaven of the Thirty-Three Gods.

Sudrisha, Sudrīśa. Realm of Beautiful (or Clearly Visible) Deities in the Shuddhavashika on the Mount Meru world system; in the fourth meditation of the Rupadhatu. *gya-nom-snang* (beautiful) in Tibetan.

Sukhavati, Sukhāvati. “Land of Bliss.” Paradise to the west, where Amitabha resides. Pure realm where the practitioner can be reborn, never to be reborn again in any realm of suffering, until they are ready to attain enlightenment.

***sukshma sharira*, *sukṣma śarira*.** Subtle-body-[structure], in reference to the yogic meditations of the Tantric methodology, which aims to purify the external and internal defilements.

***sukshma yoga*, *sukṣma yoga*.** “Subtle Union.” Transformative concentration of the subtle body, during which the yogin's adamant body, visualized as a mandala of Chakrasamvara, is purified through yogic meditation. The purification of the inner body and awakening of the chakras is achieved through the inner heat of Vajravarahi, thus energizing the subtle body.

Sumbharaja, Sumbharāja. The wrathful deity at the nadir on the outside of the Guhyasamaja mandala, typically depicted as having fierce devotion.

Sumeru, Sumeru. See: Mount Meru.

Sura devi, Surā devī. “Goddess of Alcohol.” Epithet of Varuni in the Chakrasamvara meditation. In the ritual context, she embodies the alcohol contained in the inner offering skullcup, which is symbolically transformed into the nectar of immortality. The nectar purifies the practitioner to undertake the intense yogic meditations in the completion stage practices.

Surya, Sūrya. Sun god, red in color and rides a horse-drawn chariot. One of the nine planetary deities (*nava graha*).

Sutra, *sūtra*. “Thread.” Sacred texts of Buddhism, usually depicting the actual teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha.

***suvarna matsya*, *suvarna matsya*.** Pair of golden fish. One of the eight auspicious symbols (*ashta mangala*) of Buddhism. Symbolizes that all beings will eventually be liberated from samsara.

***svabhavika kaya*, *svabhāvika kāya*.** “Self-originated body.” Implying the existence of all three Buddha bodies in a single entity that is self-originated from the empty space of *shunyata*.

***svagatam mudra*, *svāgataṃ mudrā*.** Gesture of welcoming.

***svarga vyuha*, *svarga vyuha*.** Paradisal array.

Svayambhu Buddha, Svayambhū Buddha. The self-originated primordial Buddha of Newar Buddhism. Epithet of Svayambhu Mahachaitya as the manifestation of the Adi Buddha.

Svayambhu Jyotirupa, Svayambhū Jyotirūpa. Primordial Buddha Self-Originated Light-Form, the original manifestation of Svayambhu Mahachaitya of Kathmandu Valley, symbolizing light rays of the five Jina Buddhas.

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T

Takkiraja, Ṭakkirāja. One of the Ten Great Wrathful deities, guarding an intermediate direction on the outside of the Guhyasamaja mandala.

Tantra, *tantra*. “Continuum,” also “warp [of a fabric].” Systems of practice and meditation derived from esoteric texts, emphasizing cognitive transformation through visualization, symbols, and ritual. A Tantric practitioner’s goal is to achieve enlightenment in this lifetime, with the aid of a qualified teacher and through dangerous, but highly efficacious methods. “Warp” is a reference to the interconnectedness of Tantric teachings, weaving together the teachings of the sutras (“threads”) that signifies the combining the multiple methodologies to attain the ultimate goal. See also Vajrayana.

Tantrayana, Tantrayāna. “Vehicle of Tantra,” See above and Vajrayana.

Tara, Tārā. “Guiding Star.” Goddess said to have been born from Avalokiteshvara’s tears of compassion. The many forms of Tara help practitioners overcome hindrances and difficulties on their path to enlightenment. See Ashta Mahabhaya Tara.

tarjani mudra, *tarjani mudrā*. Threatening gesture, made by wrathful Tantric Buddhist deities.

tarpana mudra, *tarpaṇa mudrā*. Gesture of sprinkling the nectar; associated with Namasangiti Manjushri.

Tashi Tsheringma, bKra shis Tshe ring ma (Tbt.). “Auspicious Long-Life Mother.” Chief of a prominent sisterhood of protector-divinities. Accompanies Palden Lhamo (Shri) in the Tibetan Buddhist pantheon.

Tathagata, Tathāgata. “Thus-Come-One/Thus-Gone-One.” An epithet for a Buddha, as a fully enlightened being.

tathagata garbha, *tathāgata garbha*. “Womb of the Buddha.” The seed of Buddhahood residing in every being’s heart-mind (*chitta*), which must be cleansed and purified of all defilements to realize the state of enlightenment.

tathagata vandana, *tathāgata vandanā*. Gesture of paying homage to the Buddhas, as displayed by Vasundhara.

tattva, *tattva*. Fundamental reality.

tayo, *tāyo*. (New.). Bridal necklace; a characteristic attribute of the Goddess Kumari and is worn by her human manifestations, the child-goddesses in Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur.

Tenzing Gyatso (b. 1935), bsTan 'dzin rGya mtsho (Tbt.). The present and 14th Dalai Lama.

terma, *gTer ma* (Tbt.). Hidden treasures; hidden text.

thangka, *thang ka* (Tbt.). "Flat field," the common Tibetan term for a painting or a hanging banner.

thukdam, *thugs dam* (Tbt.). See *yidam*.

thyasaphu, *thyāsaphū*. (New.). Book made of folios of handmade paper stitched or glued together lengthwise along the edges and folded to open and close like the bellows of an accordion.

tirtha, *tīrtha*. Pilgrimage places.

tiryagyonī gati / tiryag gati, *tiryagyonī gati/tiryag gati*. "Going to the vagina of an animal." Rebirth in the animal realm in the world of samsara. Includes all land, water, and air creatures except humans.

Tisong Detsen (755-797), Khri srong lde gtsan (Tbt.). 38th king of the Yarlung dynasty. Brought Padmasambhava to Tibet and thus initiated the First Propagation of Buddhism into Tibet.

Tivra Tara, Tivra Tārā. "Brilliant star."

torana, *torāṇa*. Tympanum; semi-circular panel placed above the shrine doorways, generally depicting the deities enshrined inside. Decorative motifs commonly found on Nepalese *toranas* are the *makaras* and *kirttimukhas*.

torma, *gTor ma* (Tbt.). Sacrificial food offerings modeled from barley flour and butter dough to which coloring has been added. Called *bali* in Sanskrit.

Trayastrimsha, Trayaśtrimśa. Realm of the Thirty-Three [Vedic] Deities. A vast plain on the very pinnacle of Mount Meru, 80,000 *yojanas* above the ground of the mundane world. One of the Realms of Those who Taste Pleasure. Also known in Tibetan as *sum-cu-rtsa gsum-pa*.

Tri Samadhi puja, Tri Samādhi pūjā. Three-Fold meditations of Chakrasamvara/Vajravarahi, specific to practices in Newar Buddhism. The three meditations are 1) Adi Yoga (preliminary yoga), 2) Mandala Adhithana ("stabilizing the mandala," the visualization of the Chakrasamvara mandala of the generation stage), and 3) Sukshma Yoga (subtle-body yoga of the completion stage).

tribhanga, *tribhanga*. Thrice-bent dancing posture, right leg of a figure crossed while left bears the weight.

trikaya, *trikāya*. Three Buddha Bodies: Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Dharmakaya, understood as hierarchic manifestations of Buddhas.

triloka, *triloka*. “Three worlds;” 1) Three realms or worlds of Mount Meru: Kamadhatu, Rupadhatu and the Arupadhatu or 2) Past, present, and future

triratna, *triratna*. Triple gems of Buddhism: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The Buddhist practitioner takes refuge in the three jewels, as a commitment to the Buddhist path.

trishula, *triśula*. Trident. In Buddhism, a symbol of the concept that the mind, speech, and body aspects are of one essence.

tsakli, *tsa ka' li* (Tbt.). Cards that are small paintings displayed in initiatory contexts to illustrate the deities and ritual implements to be envisioned by the practitioner who may make a vow in relation to the deities and attributes so portrayed.

Tshering Chenga, Tshe ring mChed lnga (Tbt.). “Five Long-Life Sisters.” Group of protective mountain-goddesses in attendance with Tashi Tsheringma. Revered in Tibet for their gifts of long-life, plentiful herds, healthy offspring, abundant crops, prosperity, and healing.

Tshog Shing, Tshog Zhing (Tbt.). “Tree of Assembly or Tree for Accumulation (of Merit).” Preliminary visualization of the Guru yoga practice in Tibetan Buddhism. In visual representations, the lineage masters are assembled in a tree-like fashion as they are supported on a lotus with a huge, trunk-like stalk.

Tshog Zhing, Tshog Shing (Tbt.). Field of Accumulation. Merit is accumulated through the envisioning of the field of assembled lineage teachers. Preliminary practice of Guru Yoga in the Tibetan tradition.

tshog khor, *tshog khor* (Tbt.). The feast of exorcising negative karma from oneself. Also known as *Ku sa li tshog*.

Tsongkhapa, (1357-1419 CE). Tsong khapa (Tbt.). The great reformer of the Gelug school. Changed the Kadam school into the Kadam Sarma “New Kadam” school, which is best known as the Gelug sect.

tummo, *gtum mo*. (Tbt.). Tibetan term for inner heat. Chandali in Sanskrit. In the Mother class of the Highest Yoga Tantra, the female deities, such as Vajravarahi or Nairatma

represent the purifying inner fire of *tummo*. Activated during the completion stage practices to awaken the energy centers.

Tushita, Tuśita. Realm of Happy Ones on Mount Meru Paradisal realm that is 320,000 *yojanas* above the ground in the Mount Meru world system. One of the Realms of Those who Taste Pleasure. *dga'-ldan* in Tibetan.

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U

ubhaya tantra, *ubhaya tantra*. Dual nature *tantras* that place emphasis on the external acts of purifying the physical body, while progressing internally through meditation to a direct relationship and identification with the deity.

uchan. *dbus chan* (Tbt.). "Having heads." Term used when describing a type of Tibetan script.

uddeshaka, *uddeśaka*. A commemorative object that provides an occasion for contemplating, or recollecting, the nature of the Buddha and his Dharma teachings. The lowest of the three classes of relics, including *sariraka* (bodily relics) and *paribhogaka* (aspects related to the individual, like the sites, pilgrimages, and/or moments during the Buddha's lifetime).

udichya veshā, *udīcya veśā*. "Northerner's dress." Description of Surya's iconography, wearing long, heavy tunic and boots.

Uighur. (English). A Turkic people located primarily in northwestern China.

Ulukasya, *Ulukāsyā*. Green owl-headed goddess at north gateway of the Chakrasamvara mandala palace. Symbolizes right livelihood.

Uluki, *Ulukī*. Owl [Faced Sky-goer] Female deity in the southwest corner (or southeast corner, according to the *Nishpannayogavali*) in the Jnanadakini mandala.

Upakeshini, *Upakeśinī*. "Younger (One) Having Fine Long Hair," one of Manjushri's *prajnas*. Paired with Keshini, as the two female aspects of Manjushri.

Upanishad, *Upaniṣad*. Highly philosophical texts dated to 500 BCE, which incorporate the fundamental notions of Tantric methodologies, in particularly the significance of a teacher, yogic meditation as a means to understanding the universal truth, and realization of the purified body through the practice of yoga.

upashaka, *upāśaka*. Male lay devotee or practitioner.

upashika, *upāśikā*. Female lay devotee or practitioner.

Upaya, *upāya*. "Skillful means" in the liberation of others. The two fundamental components of enlightenment, skillful means as compassion is paired with wisdom; the realization of their nonduality is the state of enlightenment.

uposhada vrata, *upośada vrata*. Ritual offerings to Amoghapasha Lokeshvara, in which special *puja* is made to the Three Jewels of Buddhism. One of the most popular observances performed by laity in Newar Buddhism.

urdhva pada, *urdhva pāda*. “Legs as if flying through the air.” Posture of Maitri Dakini, also known as Akasha Yogini.

urna, *urṇa*. “Wool.” In Buddhism, the tuft of hair in the middle of the forehead, one of the thirty-two auspicious marks of a fully enlightened Buddha.

Usha, Uśā. “Dawn,” one of the consorts of Surya, the sun god. Represented with a drawn bow, dispelling darkness.

ushnisha, *uṣṇīṣa*. Cranial protrusion or crown, a distinguishing mark of the Buddha. Signifies the state of omniscience; topknot of enlightened wisdom.

Ushnisha Chakravarti, Uṣṇīṣa Cakravarti. One of the wrathful deities, guarding an intermediate direction on the outside of the Guhyasamaja mandala.

ushnisha chudamani, *uṣṇīṣa cudāmaṇī*. Crest jewel, atop the thirteen *bhumis* on a stupa.

Ushnishavijaya, Uṣṇīṣavijaya. “Victory-by-Means-of-the-Crown/Topknot.” Deity of long-life and auspiciousness. She is envisioned as the personification of the victorious knot of transcendent wisdom (*ushnisha*) on the yogin's head.

utpala, *utpala*. “Heavenly blue lotus.” Scientific name: *Nymphaea caerulea*. Principal attributes of deities associated with wisdom; also primarily with Arya Tara and Manjughosha.

utpatti krama, *utpatti krama*. Action of creation; generation stage. This refers to the first of the two stages of generation and completion in the yogic meditations of the Highest Yoga Tantras. In this stage, the yogin visualizes him or herself as the imagined deity and acquires the nature of the enlightened being.

uttara abhisheka, *uttara abhiśeka*. Supreme empowerment.

Uttarakuru, Uttarakuru. Continent to the North in the Mount Meru world system, shaped like a square and flanked by intermediate continents Kurus and Kauravas.

Uttaramantrin, Uttaramantrin. Intermediate continent flanking Godaniya in the West of the Mount Meru world system.

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V

Vagishvara, Vāgiśvara. “Lord of Speech.” Epithet of Manjushri as Lord of Speech. See Dharmadhatu Vaghisvara Manjughosha.

vahana, *vāhana*. Symbolic animal, or vehicle, on which a deity rides.

Vairochana, Vairocana. “Intensely Luminescent One.” Symbolizes the totality of all Buddhas, he is at the center of the Jina Buddha mandala. White, symbolizing pure consciousness, he is usually seen displaying the teaching gesture and his transcendental insight is *dharmadhatu jnana*. Central deity of the *Maha-Vairochana Sutra*, *Sarva Tathagata Tattva Samgraha*, and *Durgati Parishodhana Tantras*.

Vaishravana, Vaiśravāṇa. The guardian king on the north. Also known as Kubera, Jambhala, and the king of *yakshas*. As the bearer of wealth, identified by his gem-dropping mongoose. Known in Nepal as Kubera or Khadgaraja.

vaitaraga, *vaitarāga* / *vitarāga*. Eight pilgrimage sites in the Kathmandu Valley related to the eight Great Bodhisattvas.

vajra, *vajra*. Adamantine scepter; lightning bolt. Signifies the invincible and indestructible quality of the Tantric path. Paired with the bell, it symbolizes the nonduality of enlightenment: *vajra* is compassion/male/skillful means while the bell is wisdom/female/Shunyata.

vajra abhisheka, *vajra abhiṣeka*. “Adamantine empowerment,” in which the practitioner receives a *vajra* as the quintessential symbol of the Tantric path.

Vajra Ankusha, Vajra Aṅkuśa. “Adamantine Goad,” Both an attribute and the name of one of the four attraction deities.

Vajra Anuchara, Vajrānucara. “Adamantine Attendant,” who serves as a personification of Vajrapani's principal attribute, the *vajra*. As the enforcer, he acts on Vajrapani's commands and represents Vajrapani's authority and is the activating persona, who converts the non-believers in the Buddhist path.

vajra bhumi, *vajra bhūmi*. Newar Buddhist term which is also known as Vajradhatu. The ultimate stage of the Adamantine realm.

Vajra Dakini, Vajra Ḍākinī. “Adamantine Sky-goer,” of the Vairochana *kula*. As a female Buddha, she is a manifestation of Vairochana's female aspect and an emanation of Jnanadakini.

Vajra Danda, Vajra Ḍaṇḍa. “Adamantine club.” In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). Blue in color, bears a noose and rod, and rides a tortoise, in the northwest.

vajra danda, vajra ḍaṇḍa. “Adamantine club.” Attribute of Rakta Yamari.

Vajra Garbha, Vajra Garbha. “Adamantine Womb.” An outer Bodhisattva from the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajra Hasa, Vajra Hāsa. “Adamantine Laughter [caused by the joy of Attainment].” White Vajra Bodhisattva from the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajra Heruka, Vajra Heruka. “Adamantine Heruka.” Epithet of the adamantine protective dagger Vajrakila, who was emanated as the son of all Buddhas from the heart of Vajrasattva in this form.

vajra humkara mudra, vajra humkāra mudrā. “Gesture of the adamantine sound of HUM.” The gesture is made by the two hands crossed at the chest, while holding a *vajra* in the right hand and a bell in the left. Symbolizes the nondual union with the female aspect.

vajra kaya, vajra kāyā. “Adamantine body of the yogin,” which is transformed and purified of all internal and external negativities through the yogic concentration.

Vajra Ketu, Vajra Ketu. “Adamantine Banner of [Victory].” Blue Vajra Bodhisattva from the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

vajra kula, vajra kula. Adamantine family, presided over by Akshobhya.

vajra paryanka asana, vajra paryāṅka āsana. “Adamantine posture of meditative stability.” Cross-legged meditation posture, with the left foot on the right thigh and the right foot over the left thigh. Generally depicted in associated with pacific deities in meditation.

Vajra[pushpa]mala, Vajra puśpa mālā. “Adamantine [Flower] Garland offering goddess,” usually in the Vajradhatu mandala.

Vajra Rakshasa, Vajra Rākṣasa. “Adamantine Demon.” Another name for Vajrakila, the great ritual protector. Also, epithet of the dog-faced attendant of Vajrabhairava.

Vajra Ratna, Vajra Ratna. “Adamantine Gem [of the Dharma].” One of the Vajra Bodhisattvas from the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajra Tejas, Vajra Tejas. “Adamantine Vitality/Brilliant [Light]/Sun.” One of the Vajra Bodhisattvas from the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajra Vetali, Vajra Vetāli. “Adamantine Zombie.” Prajna of Vajrabhairava from the *Vajrabhairava Tantra*.

Vajra Vira Mahakala, Vajravīra Mahākāla. “Adamantine Hero Great Black One.” In Newar Buddhism, he is understood to be the exoteric manifestation of Chakrasamvara and a great protective benefactor. Attributes include flaying knife, skullcup, and *khatvanga*.

Vajra Avesha, Vajra Āveśa. “Adamantine Immersion [in the Buddhist practice].” One of the four attraction deities. See also, Vajravesha.

Vajrabhairava, Vajrabhairava. “Adamantine Terror.” Epithet of Yamantaka. A chosen deity of the Highest Yoga Tantras, particularly important in the Gelug and Sakya traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Nine-faced and thirty arms, he is depicted with a buffalo-head. Also known as Mahisha Samvara in Newar Buddhist iconography.

vajrachakra mudra, *vajracakra mudrā*. “Adamantine Circle gesture.” This gesture is associated with Namasangiti Manjushri and is made by the sixth pair of hands, placed above his head. It is symbolic of Mount Meru and in Newar Buddhism, is also sometimes referred to as the Sumeru mudra.

Vajracharchika, *Vajracarcikā*. “Adamantine [mantric] Repetition.” A female deity in the Vajrabhairava mandala.

Vajracharya, Vajrācārya. “Teacher of the Adamantine State.” General title for teaching masters of Tantric Buddhism. Specifically, the ritual specialists in the Newar Buddhist tradition, as also a caste group. Epithet of Mahasiddhas.

Vajradhara, Vajradhara. “Bearer of the Vajra.” As Adi Buddha, the teacher of all Tantras. Considered to be the *sambhogakaya* (Bliss body) manifesting the Dharma Body. Embodies the totality of the Buddhist teachings. Iconographically, blue, one faced, two-armed, holding a *vajra* and bell, with arms crossed at the chest in the adamantine HUM-sound gesture, signifying his nondual state.

Vajradharma, Vajradharma. “Adamantine Teaching.” A red form of the Adi Buddha Vajradhara that is unique to the Vajrayogini meditation and the first entity invoked during Guru Yoga. Primordial teacher of the Vajrayogini tradition. Also, epithet of one of the Bodhisattvas of the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajradhatu, Vajradhātu. “Fundamental Stratum of the Adamantine.” The mandala taught in the first chapter of the *Sarva Tathagata Tattva Samgraha Tantra*, centering on Sarvavid Vairochana.

Vajradhatvishvari, Vajradhātviśvari. “Female Lord of the Adamantine Realm.” *Prajna* of Vairochana, Guhyasamaja, Vajrasattva, and Manjuvajra. As the source of all Buddhas, she is also identified with Vajravarahi/Vajrayogini and Prajnaparamita.

Vajragarbha, Vajragarbha. “Adamantine Womb.” One of the Mahasattva Bodhisattvas from the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajragita, Vajragita. “Adamantine Song.” One of the sixteen Offering Goddesses.

Vajraguru, Vajraguru. In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). Yellow in color, rides on a frog or skull cup, in the southwest.

Vajrakarman, Vajrakarman. Paired Bodhisattvas flanking Amoghasiddhi. Also known as Vishvapani or Vishvavajrapani, one of the eight Great Bodhisattvas.

Vajraketu, Vajraketu. In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). Blue in color, holds a sword and noose, his tail resembles a snake and located in the northeast.

Vajrakila, Vajrakilā. “Adamantine Stake,” also known as Vajrakumara “Adamantine Youth.” One of the major protective deities of Tantric Buddhism, as the personification of the ritual dagger.

Vajrakumari, Vajrakumārī. “Adamantine Virgin.” Epithet of the Kumari, the Newar Buddhist living goddess, who is considered a hypostasis of Vajravarahi. She signifies the aspects of creation and generation. Also called Vajradevi “Adamantine Goddess.”

Vajrakundali, Vajrakuṇḍali. Identified with one of the nine planets. Red in color and rides a horse in the East. Also, a Bodhisattva of the Durgati Parishodana mandala.

Vajralasya, Vajralāsyā. “Adamantine Performance.” One of the sixteen Offering Goddesses.

vajramushti mudra, vajramuṣṭi mudrā. “Gesture of adamantine fist,” as the esoteric Tantric gesture of teaching. Associated with Sarvavid Vairochana.

Vajranritya, Vajranṛtyā. “Adamantine Dance.” One of the sixteen Offering Goddesses.

Vajrapani, Vajrapāṇi. “Vajra-handed.” Principle Bodhisattva of wisdom in the Tantric Buddhist pantheon. One of the eight Great Bodhisattvas, he described as a powerful *yaksha* in the Kriya Tantras. Called secret master of the Yakshas (*yaksha guhyadhipati*). Embodies the great power of the Buddha's enlightened heart-mind (*mahabalachitta*) to convert others of different persuasions. Iconographically, he may be depicted with his acolyte, Vajra Anuchara.

Vajrapasha, Vaprapāśa. "Adamantine noose." One of the four attraction deities.

vajrapasha, vajrapāśa, "Adamantine noose." One of the attributes of attraction, held by the wrathful deities of the Tantras.

Vajrapingala, Vajrapīṅgala. In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). Red in color and sits on a goat in the southeast.

Vajrarahu, Vahrarāhu. "Adamantine Seizer." In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). Reddish-blue in color, holds the sun and moon in his hands, his torso emerging from flames, in the north.

Vajraraksha, Vajrarakṣā. One of the Vajra Bodhisattvas, holding a suit of armor in the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

vajrasana, vajrāsana. "Adamantine Seat," the spot where all Buddhas attained enlightenment at Bodhgaya in India. Also, a commonly used as a description of the adamantine posture of seated meditation.

Vajrasandhi, Vajrasandhi. "Bodhisattva who hears the prayers of the faithful." Identified by a *vajra*, which is supported by a lotus above his right shoulder. Present in the Vairochana cycle mandala of the *Durgati Parishodhana Tantra*.

Vajrasarasvati, Vajrasarasvatī. "Adamantine Goddess of Learning." A female deity in that appears in the Vajrabhairava mandala. Also an epithet of Vasundhara.

Vajrasattva, Vajrasattva. "Adamantine Being." In the Tantric context, the sixth Jina Buddha. Vajrasattva represents a state of being that the practitioner has yet to fully achieve, as a perfected and purified being. His hundred-syllable mantra is recited as a powerful means of purification. Usually represented holding a *vajra* in his right hand, and bell silenced against his thigh. Often identified with Vajradhara, as Adi Buddha.

Vajrasaumya, Vajrasaumya. In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). Yellow in color and sits on a lotus in the south.

Vajrashukra, Vajraśukra. In the Buddhist context, a name for one of the nine planets in the mandala of the Moon (Chandra). White and in the west.

Vajrasphota, Vajrasphoṭa. "Adamantine Chain." One of the four attraction deities.

Vajravairochani, Vajravairocanī. "Female Adamantine Intense Luminescence." Epithet of Vajravarahi, as a personification of her *mula* mantra. Epithet of Vajravarahi in her three personifications (Trikaya Vajravarahi) as Sarvabuddha Dakini, Vajravarnani, and Vajravairochani.

vajravali, *vajrāvali*. “Vajra Garland.” Sequence, or ring, of vajras, as protective boundaries of a mandala. Also the name of the text, *Vajravali* by Abhayakara Gupta, a compendium of thirty-two mandalas. In that context the term “*vajra*” is a generic name for the deities of the mandalas.

Vajravarahi, *Vajravārāhī*. “Adamantine Sow.” Female aspect of Chakrasamvara. Represents the purifying inner fire of the Chakrasamvara/Vajravarahi yogic transformations, which cleanses the subtle body of all hindrances and defilements. Supreme manifestation of the Dakini of All Buddhas. Also symbolizes the noumenon aspect when paired with Chakrasamvara as well as the state of union of emptiness and bliss.

Vajravesha, *Vajrāveśa*. “Adamantine Attraction,” one of the four attraction deities; also a Bodhisattva in the Durgati Parishodhana mandala.

Vajrayaksha, *Vajrayakṣa*. Wrathful blue fierce figure. The Bodhisattva attendant of Amoghasiddhi in the Vajradhatu mandala. Holds two *vajras* at waist level.

Vajrayana, *Vajrayāna*. “Vehicle of the Adamantine State of Being.” The path of esoteric practice of Buddhism. Also known as Tantrayana or Tantric Buddhism. Shares many elements of the Mahayana path but introduces the methodology that enlightenment can be obtained in a single lifetime through the directions of the guru and intense arduous practice. The most visually intense form of Buddhist practice, which involves yogic transformative meditation and visualizations to realize the enlightened state.

Vajrayogini, *Vajrayoginī*. “Adamantine Yogini.” Epithet of Vajravarahi, also known as Naro Dakini. The central deity of the Chakrasamvara and Vajravarahi practices.

vak, *vāk*. “Speech.” One of the three components of Tantra Buddhist practice, which includes the purification of the body, speech, and mind.

Vamana, *Vāmana*. “Dwarf.” Vishnu's descent (*avatara*) as the dwarf.

varada mudra, *varada mudrā*. “bestowal gesture.”

varaha mukha, *varāhā mukha*. “Boar-faced.” Epithet of Vajravarahi.

varaprada, *varapradā*. Gesture of giving, associated with Vasundhara.

Varuna, *Varuṇa*. “All Encompassing Sky.” One of the eight Dikpalas. As the *naga* king and controller of the waters, he is white and rides a reptile-headed *makara*; Directional guardian of the west.

Varuni, Vāruṇī. Also called Goddess of Wine (Suradevi). Emanation of Vajravarahi. Alcohol and skullcups are her primary symbolic elements; the goddess of purified elixir of insight contained in the skullcup. Specific to Chakrasamvara practices in Newar Buddhism.

Vasundhara, Vasundharā. Bearer of Treasure. Newar Buddhist epithet of Vasudhara, “Steam of Treasure,” the bountiful goddess and giver of wealth. An exoteric hypostasis of Vajravarahi in Nepal.

Vasundhara puja vrata, *Vasundharā pūjā vrata*. Annual ritual for Vasundhara in the lunar month of Bhadra (October-November), celebrating the harvest season. Called Gatila by the Newar Buddhists. Dust mandalas of Vasudhara is made during the ritual.

Vayu, Vāyu. Hindu god of wind. One of the eight Dikpalas; dark-green in color and riding on a deer. Guardian of the northwest direction.

vetala siddhi, *vetāla siddhī*. Attainment of the raising corpses and the zombie state; supramundane powers associated with the Mahasiddhas.

Vetali, Vetālī. “Female Zombie/Corpse Raiser” of the Amitabha *kula*, as an attendant of Jnanadakini. A manifestation of Amitabha's *prajna* and an emanation of Jnanadakini. Yellow goddess of the west in the Hevajra mandala.

Videhas, Videhas. Intermediate continent, which flanks Purvavideha in the East of the Mount Meru world system.

vidhi, *vidhī*. “Process.” In Tantric Buddhism, ritual processes and instructions of meditation and visualization or *puja*.

Vidyadhara, Vidyādhara. “Bearer of Esoteric Knowledge Holder.” A Tantric guru. See also Mahasiddha.

Vidyadhari, Vidyādhari. “Female Holder of Knowledge.” Also, epithet of the four Yoginis of Chakrasamvara mandala, specifically of Vajravarahi's form as Maitri Dakini. In Newar Buddhism, epithet of Akasha Yogini/Maitri Dakini.

Vighnantaka, Vighnāntaka. “Slayer of Obstacles.” One of the Ten Great Wrathful Ones (Dasha Mahakrodha); also known as Amritakundalin; an epithet of Ganesha.

vihara, *vihāra*. Monastic structure, as residence for monks and nuns.

vijaya dhvaja, *vijaya dhvaja*. “Victory banner.” One of the eight auspicious symbols (*ashta mangala*).

vijaya kalasha, *vijaya kalaśa*. “Victorious flask,” as a symbol of auspiciousness.

Vijnananantyayatana, *Vijñānanantyāyatana*. Realm of Deities of Infinite Consciousness. One of the formless realms of Arupadhatu in the Mount Meru world system.

Vikasita Kusuma, *Vikasita Kusuma*. “Flower of Shining/Brilliance/Eloquence [in teaching the Dharma].” Name for Amoghasiddhi in the *Sarva Durgati Parisodana Tantra*.

Vimalakirti, *Vimalākirti*. “Renowned-One without Defilement,” who is the householder Buddha in the *Vimalakirti nirdesha Sutra*. His attainment is such that only the Bodhisattva of wisdom is capable of discussing the Buddha’s Dharma with him. He may well be the archetype of the householder priest (*grihapati*) who maintains his secular status but is still an extremely learned member of the religious community. This may have led to the status of Vajracharyas in Nepal and elsewhere.

Vimalakirti nirdesha Sutra, *Vimalākirti nirdeśa Sutra*. “The instructions of Vimalakirti,” a very important early Mahayana text associated with greater eastern India, presumably northern Bihar. In the text, Vimalakirti is said of have been of the Licchavis, presumably the same clan that later ruled Nepal.

vimshati kona, *viṃṣati koṇa*. Specific *chaitya* form in Newar Buddhism, with twenty sides.

vina, *viṇā*. A lute, held by Dhritarashtra.

Vinaraja, *Viṇārāja*. “Lute King.” Epithet of Dhritarashtra, the guardian king of the east in Newar Buddhist iconography. This name derives from his attribute, the lute.

vinaya hasta, *vinaya hasta*. Cross-armed, associated with Vajra Anuchara. He serves as enforcer of Vajrapani’s commands.

Vipashvin, *Vipaśvin*. The first Manushi, or human, Buddha.

Vira, *Vīra*. Heroes; 24 male deities of the Body, Speech, and Mind of the Chakrasamvara Mandala. These deities are visualized in nondual union with the Heroines.

vira ananda, *virānanda*. “Extraordinary joy.” One of the four joys experience during the completion stage practices of the Chakrasamvara/Vajravaraḥi methodology.

viraga, *virāga*. Worldly attachments.

Virudhaka, *Viruḍhāka*. Guardian of the south, lord of unruly spirits. Known in Nepal as Khadgaraja, “Sword King.”

Virupa, *Virūpā*. “Ugly One.” One of the eight Great Mahasiddhas of the Chakrasamvara Mandala. Virupa is also the key lineage masters of Lamdre tradition of the Tibetan Buddhist Sakya order. His miraculous attainments include parting the waters of the Ganges river twice and halting the sun in the sky for three days.

Virupaksha, Virūpākṣa. Guardian of the west, king of the *nagas*. Known in Nepal as Chaityaraja, “Chaitya King.”

vīrya, *vīrya*. Connotes a heroic, courageous attitude, the perfect antidote to laziness and procrastination. Effort to realize the Buddhist path.

Vishva Pani, Viśva pāṇi [Viśva Vajra Pāṇi]. “Universal [Vajra] Handed.” Principal Bodhisattva of Amoghasiddhi. Alternates with Khadgapani “Sword Holder” in some Tantras.

vishva rupa, *viśva rūpa*. “Universal form,” iconographically depicted as multi-headed and multi-armed forms.

vishva vajra, *viśva vajra*. “Double crossed *vajra*.” *Kula* or family symbol of Amoghasiddhi, the Jina Buddha of the northern direction.

Vishvabhu, Viṣvabhū. One of the seven Manushi, or human, Buddhas.

Vishvamata, Viṣvamātā. Mother of the Universe. Female aspect of Kalachakra, shown in nondual union at the center of the Kalachakra mandala.

Vishvapani, Viṣvapāṇi. Bodhisattva identifiable by a crossed-vajra at his left shoulder atop a lotus stalk. Also known as Vajrakarman “Adamantine Action” and Vishva Vajrapani “Bearer of the Crossed Vajra.” One of the eight Great Bodhisattvas, associated with Amoghasiddhi.

vitarka mudra, *vitarka mudrā*. Gesture of discussion or argumentation,” usually made by touching the forefinger and thumb that is held in front of the chest.

vriksha devata, *vṛkṣa devatā*. “Tree goddess,” symbolic of generation and fecundity. Mayadevi’s posture in the birth of Siddhartha representation is archtypal of the tree goddesses.

Vyaghri, Vyāghr/Vyāghrṇī. “Tigress [Faced Sky-goer].” Deity at the northeast corner (or northwest corner, according to the *Nishpānnyogavali*) in the Jnanadakini mandala.

vyakarana mudra, *vyakaraṇa mudrā*. Gesture of exposition, made by Buddhas.

vyoma, *vyoma*. “Space,” as related to the five elements.

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yakkha, *yakkha*. (Pali) For *yaksha*; protective nature spirits in Buddhism.

yaksha, *yakṣa*. Male nature and protective spirits of Buddhism.

Yaksha, Yakṣa. Epithet of Vaishravana/Kubera, who sometimes referred to as the king of *yakshas*.

yaksha-sena-dhipati, *yakṣa senādhipati*. "Chief of the *yaksha* army." Epithet of Vaishravana. Role as the leader of deities associated with abundance and fecundity.

yakshini, *yakṣinī*. Female nature spirit, symbolizing auspiciousness and fecundity.

Yama, Yama. "Lord of the Underworld." Lord of death, blue in color and rides a buffalo in the south, when one of the eight dikpalas. One of the Dikpalas the directional guardian of the south in the charnel fields of the Chakrasamvara mandala.

Yama Devaloka, Yama Devaloka. Realm of the Deities of Death in the Mount Meru system, 80,000 *yojanas* into the space above Mount Meru. One of the Realms of Those who Taste Pleasure.

Yamadahi, Yamadāhī. "Burning Yama." Bi-colored protective goddess in the Pledge circle of the Chakrasamvara mandala. Located the southeast corner, she is blue and yellow in color. Symbolizes virtuous qualities not yet arisen.

Yamadamshtri, Yamadaṃṣṭrī. "Biting Yama." Bi-colored protective goddess of the Chakrasamvara mandala, in the northwest corner of the Pledge Circle. Red and green in color. Symbolizes elimination of non-virtuous qualities that have arisen.

Yamaduti, Yamadūti. "Messenger of Yama." Bi-colored protective goddess of the Chakrasamvara mandala in the southwest corner of the Pledge Circle. Yellow and red in color. Symbolizes generation of the virtuous qualities that have arisen.

Yamamathani, Yamamathanī. "Destroying Yama." Bi-colored protective goddess of the Chakrasamvara mandala, in the northeast direction of the Pledge Circle. Green and blue in color. who symbolizes the avoidance of the non-virtuous qualities that have not yet arisen.

Yamantaka, Yamāntaka. "Overcomer of the God of Death." Epithet of Vajrabhairava. Also one of the Ten Great Wrathful deities, as the manifestation of the Buddha family (the family of the east) and thereby manifests full enlightenment.

Yamuna, Yamunā. River goddess. As auspicious deities, she is often paired with Ganga, and represented flanking the doorways.

yana, yāna. Vehicle or methodology of Buddhist practice. The three major vehicles are Shravakayana “Vehicle of the Elders,” Mahayana, “Great Vehicle” and Vajrayana, “Adamantine Vehicle.” There are several variants for each.

yantra, yantra. Geometric meditational diagram as a meditational tool, such as the double triangle (*dharmodaya*), which serves as the source of all phenomena in Tantric Buddhism. Specifically, the *dharmodaya yantra* is associated with Vajravahni/Vajrayogini in the Chakrasamvara methodologies.

Yashodhara, Yashodharā. Prince Siddhartha's first wife and mother to Rahula, his only son.

yashti, yaśti. A wooden pillar. In stupa architecture, the central wooden pillar that symbolizes the world axis.

vidam, yi dam (Tbt.). Vow-bound or chosen deity of the Tantric practitioner, who enables the yogin to acquire the qualities of the fully enlightened Buddha through the practice of Deity Yoga. See *ishtadevata*.

yoga, yoga. Meditative concentration and the purified withdrawal of the mind from sensory phenomena. Core methodology of Tantric Buddhism, emphasizing the purification of the subtle body through awakening of the internal chakras.

Yoga Tantra, Yoga Tantra. “Tantra of Linking.” Third class of Tantras, according to Budon Rinpoche's four-fold division of Tantras.

Yogachara, Yogācāra. Philosophical branch of Mahayana tradition, which places great emphasis on the practice of yoga as the methodology for the attainment of the enlightened state.

Yogambara, Yogāmbara. “Having a Yoga Garment.” Male aspect of Jnanadakini. Important chosen deity of the Highest Yoga Tantras, related to the Chakrasamvara cycle. Based on the *Chatur Pitha Tantra*.

yogapatta, yogapaṭṭa. Band used to secure the legs in certain yoga postures.

yogin, yogin. Male practitioner of transformative yogic meditations

yogini, yoginī. Female practitioner of Tantric transformative meditations.

yojana, yojana. Distance measured as a day's journey. Associated with the Mount Meru system, as measurement of the various heavenworlds.

yoni, yoni. Female generative organ; female principle. When with the *linga*, it symbolizes unity and the state of the universe.

yuganaddha, *yuganaddha*. “Bonded union.” Nondual union of the Highest Yoga Tantra deities, symbolizing the union of wisdom/female and compassion/male as the state of enlightenment.

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