A Bolt Of Lightning From The Blue

The vast commentary on Vajrakila that clearly defines the essential points
A Bolt Of Lightning From The Blue
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A Bolt Of Lightning
From The Blue

The vast commentary on Vajrakīla
that clearly defines the essential points

annotated translations
by Martin J. Boord

including
Phur 'grel 'bum nag
as transmitted to
Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal

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(3) If one does not know the six hidden connections, the concealed secrets cannot be understood

(4) If one does not know the scissors which are the life force of the oral instructions, the life force of the enemies and obstructors will not be severed

(5) If one does not know the rite of the great billowing wings, the soul of the enemies and obstructors will not be drawn forth

(6) If one does not know the ritual of the secret kila which is a lion’s roar of argumentation, the yogin has no method of liberation from internal dispute

(7) If one does not know the method of determining the central point, engaging in activities will only rebound

(8) If one does not know the method of turning the wheel, one’s activities will not be accomplished

(9) If one does not know the method of equipping the effigy, the focal point of the visualizations will be worthless

(10) If one does not know the true nature of the fundamental ground, the implantation will be meaningless

(11) If one does not know the deeper intention of the precepts of longevity and the ablution water, there will be mere malign mantra

(12) If one does not know the rites of elevating to a higher plane, one will be merely a butcher

The four kila

(1) The sky-like practitioner nails the kila of wisdom awareness into the ground of the dharmadhātu

(2) The mountain-like practitioner nails the kila of the rope of embracing compassion into the ground of all sentient beings in the triple world

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The main text presented in this volume is the Phur ’grel ’bum nag, The Black One Hundred Thousand [words] Commentary on the Kıla. The title ‘Black One Hundred Thousand’ indicates a complete cycle of teachings (’bum), vast in its scope, that is clearly defined and precise (nag po) in its methodological application. This ‘unambiguous and clear set of teachings from which nothing has been omitted’ has at its heart the deliberations of three acarya, Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and the Nepali Śilamañju, who extensively revised and commented upon all that they had heard of kıla lore whilst cloistered away together in a religious retreat at Yang-le-shod (present-day Pharping, Nepal).

This work is of seminal importance for it clearly witnesses the very origin of the cult of Vajrakıla. It was precisely during this retreat that the many strands of kıla lore were finally woven together into a coherent masterpiece of tantric Buddhism and thus it helps to illuminate the process by which tantric methods were being related to soteriology at this time. Beautifully codified in terms of both theory and practice, this divine scheme of meditation and magic was subsequently transmitted to Tibet and became established there as one of the major modes of religious engagement. So much so, in fact, that many previous writers on Tibet have actually assumed the kıla cult to be of Tibetan origin.

According to traditional accounts, the doctrines of Vajrakıla were first taught among the gods and nāga before being transmitted to the human realm. They were subsequently propagated in India by Indrabhutī, Dhanasamśkrta, Śrīsiṃha, Prabhabasti and an unnamed kāpālika brahmin. Kıla chronicles, such as the Concise History written by gTsang mkhan-chen and the gNam lcags spu gri lo rgyus chos ’byung by bDud-’joms rinpoche, say that these Vajrakıla doctrines were taught by Indrabhutī to Dhanasamśkrta who then passed them on to Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and Śilamañju. These three companions addition-

1 The Phur pa’i chos ’byung bsdus pa is to be found in gTsang mkhan-chen, rDo rje phur pa’i chos ’byung pp.161-196. Published by Taklung Tsetrul, Darjeeling, 1979.