



Martin J. Boord

A Bolt Of Lightning From The Blue

The vast commentary on Vajrakīla
that clearly defines the essential points



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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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Contents

Translator's preface

Dramatis personae	xiii
Indian origins	xvii
Arrangement of the Hundred Thousand Words	xxii
Subsequent spread of the doctrines	xxvii
Doctrinal themes in the 'Bum nag	xxix
India and Tibet	xxxvii
Sources & Acknowledgements	xxxxi

EPISODE I

Sanskrit sources for the study of *kīlanavidhi*

<i>Kauṭilya, Arthaśāstra</i>	3
<i>Sudhanakumārāvadāna</i>	3
<i>Kuladatta, Kriyāsaṁgrahapañjikā</i>	5
<i>Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa</i>	18
<i>Ḍāmara-tantra</i>	19
<i>Siddhaikavira-mahātantra</i>	20
<i>Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇa-tantra</i>	21
<i>Mahāsukhavajrapāda, Padmini</i>	24
<i>Herukābhidāna-tantra</i>	25
<i>Samvarodaya-tantra</i>	25
<i>Sarvatathāgatataṭṭvasaṁgraha</i>	26
<i>Guhyasamāja-tantra</i>	26
<i>Candrakīrti, Pradīpoddyotana</i>	28
<i>Nāgārjuna, Pañcakrama</i>	46
<i>Muniśrībhadra, Yogimanoharā</i>	49
<i>Vajrapāṇi (commenting on Herukābhidāna-tantra)</i>	54
<i>Śubhākaragupta, Abhisamayamañjari</i>	55
<i>Kumārakalahaṁsa, Samvararahasyasādhana</i>	57
<i>Paramarahasya-tantra</i>	58
<i>Ānandagarbha, Sarvavajrodaya</i>	59
<i>Laghukālacakra-tantra</i>	61
<i>Śrī Puṇḍarīka, Vimalaprabhā</i>	62
<i>Dharmākaraśānti, Kālacakrabhagavatsādhanaavidhi</i>	63
<i>(Laghukālacakra-tantra)</i>	67
<i>(Śrī Puṇḍarīka, Vimalaprabhā)</i>	67
<i>Padmaśrimitra, Maṇḍalopāyikā</i>	70
<i>Durjayacandra, Mitapadā</i>	70
<i>Abhayākaragupta, Vajrāvali</i>	71

EPISODE II

rDo rje phur pa rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi dum bu, Fragment of the Root Tantra 79

EPISODE III

dPal rdo rje phur pa spu gri nag po'i rgyud, The Black Razor Tantra 93

EPISODE IV

Translated text of the *Phur 'grel 'bum nag*

vi

INTRODUCTION

General overview of the Vajrakīla doctrines

contents

(1) The way of summarizing <i>tantra</i> into two	110
(a) root <i>tantra</i>	110
(b) explanatory <i>tantra</i>	110
(2) The three methods of tantric exegesis	110
(a) explanation of the Kīla doctrines in accordance with <i>mahāyoga tantra</i>	110
(b) explanation of the Kīla doctrines in accordance with <i>anuyoga āgama</i>	110
(c) explanation of the Kīla doctrines in accordance with <i>atiyoga upadeśa</i>	111
(3) The six hidden precepts (six bindings) of <i>tantra</i>	111
(4) The ten steps of tantric engagement	111
(5) The twelvefold list of the essential points of <i>tantra</i>	111
(6) The twenty-one <i>tantra</i> possessing the key to the life force	112
(7) The fifty-one fundamental Kīla deities	112
(8) The two thousand six hundred and one auxiliary gods	112

Special presentation of the practice lineage

(1) The <i>nidāna</i> that introduces the <i>guru</i>	113
(a) his lineage of birth	113
(i) womb birth and miraculous emanation	113
(ii) worldly and supramundane families	113
(iii) four kinds of greatness	113
(iv) four degrees of <i>vidyādhara</i>	113
(v) eight secret code names	113

(b) his deeds and activities	118
(i) attainment of worldly power and <i>siddhi</i>	119
(ii) subjugation of dangerous beings of the eight classes	120
(iii) consecration of bSam-yas <i>vihāra</i>	123
(c) the transmission of his tradition	124
(i) <i>siddha</i> lineage	124
(ii) lineage of ordinary folk	128
(2) The <i>nidāna</i> that introduces the teacher	129
(a) the special object to be tamed	129
(b) the special being who tamed him	131
(c) the special method of taming	132
(3) The <i>nidāna</i> that introduces the <i>tantra</i>	135
(a) the time when the <i>vajra</i> vehicle of secret <i>mantra</i> arose	135
(i) the circumstances in which the <i>tantra</i> were taught	135
(ii) the period during which they appeared in the human realm	135
(b) classification of the Dharma within nine <i>yāna</i>	138
(i) the explanation that accords with the <i>trikāya</i>	138
(ii) explaining the series of nine <i>yāna</i>	138
(c) classification of the <i>tantra</i> of Vajrakīla	141
(i) from the standpoint of relative truth	141
(ii) from the standpoint of absolute truth	141

vii

contents

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE VAJRAKĪLA DOCTRINES

The six bindings (*chings*) or hidden precepts (*khog don*) of *tantra*

PART ONE the higher rites:

Attainment of unsurpassed awakening

(1) To hold to the foundation of actions, attaining success by means of the five excellences	143
(a) the excellent person	143
(b) the excellent place	144
(c) the excellent retinue	146
(d) the excellent time	146
(e) the excellent engagement	148
(i) provisions of food for sustenance	148
(ii) provisions of antidotes to avert misfortune	148
(iii) provisions for the divine attainments	149
(iv) provisions for the fulfilment of vows	151
(v) provisions for the destruction of enemies and obstructors	151

(2) Establishing the essential layout of the triple <i>maṇḍala</i> , together with the preparatory methods of its prior approach	154
(a) seven stages of the approach (<i>sngon 'gro</i> , preliminary practices)	154
(i) establishing the boundaries (<i>simābandha</i>)	154
(ii) opening the symbolic door	156
(iii) paying homage to the symbols	156
(iv) adopting the sect-marks (<i>rtags gdab pa</i>)	156
(v) confession of sins	157
(vi) the descent of blessings	158
(vii) sanctifying the three articles	158
(b) three stages of generating the reality of the triple <i>maṇḍala</i>	163
(i) generating the triple <i>samādhi</i> of the basis	163
the <i>samādhi</i> of thusness	164
the all-illuminating <i>samādhi</i>	167
the <i>samādhi</i> of cause	169
(ii) generating the <i>maṇḍala</i> palace of residence	171
(iii) generating the deities who reside there	177
the fundamental <i>dharmakāya maṇḍala</i> of the primordial state	177
the <i>sambhogakāya maṇḍala</i> of wrathful kings	185
the <i>nirmāṇakāya maṇḍala</i> of material <i>kīla</i>	194
(3) With regard to the empowerment of long life by the triple world, one empowers the life force of the wisdom gods by means of the life force	203
(4) Invoking the wisdom deities of the <i>maṇḍala</i> , one takes the essence of <i>siddhi</i> through offerings and ritual service	205
(a) invitation of the wisdom deities	205
(i) prayers of supplication	205
(ii) the actual invitation	205
(b) presenting them with eight kinds of offerings	206
(i) offerings made with the hands to the <i>maṇḍala</i> in the sky	206
(ii) the absorption [of the wisdom beings] and offerings of embrace made by four goddesses	206
(iii) offering the <i>bali</i> cake (<i>gtor ma</i>)	209
(iv) offering the nectar medicine (<i>bdud rtsi sman</i>)	211
(v) offering the blood of the three terminations (<i>tshar gsum</i>)	212
(vi) offering union and slaughter (<i>sbyor sgrol</i>)	214
(vii) praying for what we want	216
(viii) offerings to the assembly and hymns of praise	218
(c) performing the ritual service (<i>sevā</i>)	220
(d) taking <i>siddhi</i> at the time of the offerings	221

PART TWO the lower rites:
Annihilation of enemies and obstructors

(5) Endowed with the transmitted precepts (<i>āgama</i>) of cleansing ablution, the transmitted precepts of longevity and the six techniques of hidden <i>mantra</i> , one performs the rite of implantation	223
(a) the six techniques of hidden <i>mantra</i>	223
(b) the transmitted precepts of cleansing ablution and of longevity	228
(c) the genuine rite of implantation	231
(6) The final three activities of pressing down, burning and hurling	234
(a) pressing down	234
(b) burning	240
pacification <i>homa</i>	240
enriching <i>homa</i>	240
overpowering <i>homa</i>	240
fierce <i>homa</i>	240
(c) hurling	244

ix

PART THREE
Further analysis

The ten steps of tantric engagement

(1) The general points are covered by three kinds of <i>nidāna</i> or introduction	251
(2) The meaning is made clear by the threefold definition (<i>lakṣaṇatā</i>)	251
(a) defining the <i>maṇḍala</i>	251
(b) defining the <i>mantra</i>	254
(c) defining the materials required in the rite	257
(3) <i>Kīla</i> of four materials that penetrate the four extremes	259
(a) the <i>kīla</i> of wisdom awareness	259
(b) the <i>kīla</i> of emanated compassion	260
(c) the <i>kīla</i> of secret <i>bodhicitta</i>	261
(d) the material <i>kīla</i> with signs	263
(4) Straightening out the rules of the activities by three great traditions of practice	266
(5) The wisdom deities are caused to enter the vital point by means of the all-encompassing <i>mantra</i>	267
(6) The <i>ḍākinī</i> are really incited by means of malign spells of 18 assembled syllables in three groups of six	268
(7) The vital essence of the three visualizations is expressed in accordance with the three meanings of 'life force'	269
(8) Black deeds are performed by means of 18 great traditions of liberation	270
(9) Ritual activity is supplemented by eight masteries	271
(10) All rites are discharged by the three extreme subjugations	272

contents

x
contentsx
contentsx
contentsx
contents

Three groups of malign *mantra*

The outer system of the DHADDHI <i>mantra</i>	294
The inner system of the assembly (' <i>dus pa</i>)	295
The secret system of combination (<i>bsdu yig</i>)	297
Implantation of the <i>kila</i> in accordance with the traditions of slaughter	299

Tantra, āgama and upadeśa

Root texts, transmitted precepts and oral instructions

The arousal of <i>bodhicitta</i>	301
An explanation of the empowerments	
(a) the instructions	303
(b) the practice	
the vase empowerment	305
the secret empowerment	307
the wisdom knowledge empowerment	308
the fourth empowerment	309
The method of deity generation and its seals (outer <i>utpattikrama</i>)	310
<i>samādhi</i> of creative meditation	
the <i>yoga</i> of the generation stage, which is skilful method	311
the <i>yoga</i> of the completion stage, which is wisdom	311
the <i>yoga</i> of both together, which is non-dual	312
Accepting the accomplishments (<i>siddhi</i>)	
generating accomplishments by means of <i>sādhana</i>	313
absorbing the accomplishments	315
developing the accomplishments	
(inner <i>utpattikrama</i>)	318
(secret <i>utpattikrama</i>)	320
The view of infallible perception	321
The code of conduct that reaches the ultimate goal	322
Sacred oaths that are not to be transgressed	324
The rite of implantation	326
The seven-day observance for the dead	328
The rite of cremation ('inner <i>homa</i> rite')	332
Preparation of votary or reliquary <i>sāccha</i>	336
Installation of the deity	336
Regulations of the ritual service	
ordinary recitation	339
special recitation	342
three deeds of refreshing sustenance	343

EPISODE V

Verses of aspiration for success in the practice of Vajrakīla	347
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APPENDIX

Bibliography	353
Index	359





PREFACE

Dramatis personae

The main text presented in this volume is the *Phur 'grel 'bum nag*, *The Black One Hundred Thousand [words] Commentary on the Kila*. 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 *ācārya*, Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and the Nepali Śilamañju, who extensively revised and commented upon all that they had heard of *kila* 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 Vajrakila. It was precisely during this retreat that the many strands of *kila* 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 *kila* cult to be of Tibetan origin.

According to traditional accounts, the doctrines of Vajrakila were first taught among the gods and *nāga* before being transmitted to the human realm. They were subsequently propagated in India by Indrabhūti, Dhanasaṃskṛta, Śrisimha, Prabhasthi and an unnamed *kāpālīka* brahmin. *Kila* chronicles, such as the *Concise History*¹ written by gTsang mkhan-chen and the *gNam lcags spu gri lo rgyus chos 'byung* by bDud-'joms rinpoche, say that these Vajrakila doctrines were taught by Indrabhūti to Dhanasaṃskṛta 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.