

Yael Bentor

ON THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MIRROR IN INDO-TIBETAN CONSECRATION RITUALS

THE CONSECRATION RITUAL AND MIRROR SYMBOLISM

The symbolism of the mirror in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism has been made the subject of special investigations by Wayman,¹ who classified the uses of the mirror under three categories: Firstly, the mirror as a metaphor of the mind found primarily in the literature of the Yogācāra School.² Secondly, the mirror as a simile for the emptiness of all phenomena whose true nature is likened to reflections in a mirror, a notion prevailing in the Mādhyamika School. And thirdly, the use of the mirror in divination.³ The mirror plays an important role in the concept of the five Knowledges (*pañca-jñāna, ye-shes lnga*), one of them being the mirror-like knowledge (*ādarśa-jñāna, me-long ye-shes*).⁴ There are also cases in which actual mirrors are used for the sake of demonstrating their metaphorical values. One is the use of actual mirrors in contemplative exercises.⁵ The other, our main subject here, is the use of actual mirrors in ritual,⁶ more specifically the Indo-Tibetan consecration ritual. In this case the symbolism of the mirror is related to the mirror as a simile for the nature of all *dharma*s.

The Indo-Tibetan consecration ritual is called *pratiṣṭhā* in Sanskrit, or in Tibetan, *rab-gnas*, which means 'establishing' or 'stably residing',⁷ referring to the chosen Buddha (*iṣṭadevatā, yi-dam*) or the *jñānasattva* (*ye-shes-sems-dpa'*) whose presence is established in an image or *sūpa* by means of the consecration ritual. Mahāyāna Buddhism has developed a complex cosmology encompassing a virtually infinite number of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who, acting out of compassion for sentient beings in various forms, are yet conceived as variegated emanations of one single principle. The Buddhist *tantra* renders these Buddhas and Bodhisattvas — as well as numerous other Mahāyāna notions and processes — more concretely. One of the modes for rendering these Buddhas and Bodhisattvas available for interaction with human beings is the consecration ritual. Through this tantric

method, Buddhas or Bodhisattvas are established in concrete receptacles. They often receive still more concrete identities as, for instances, the Jo-bo image of the Jo-khang in Lhasa, said to be an emanation from the 'Glorious Body' (*sambhogakāya*) of Buddha Śākyamuni; Tārā in Pharping, in Nepal, a naturally emerging (*rang-byung*) image of Tārā; and the Bal-yul Mchod-rten Rin-po-che, the main *stūpa* in Bodhanāth, Nepal, whose name, Bya-rung-kha-shor, does not relate it to any specific Buddha or Bodhisattva, but has an identity all its own.⁸

While non-tantric Buddhist consecrations may be understood to be processes of ascent, the tantric consecration consists, to the contrary, of a descent. A well-known example for a non-tantric consecration is the ritual of opening the eye,⁹ whereby an image is elevated to the status of a being endowed with the 'divine eye' which is able to see things as they in actuality are. In other words, the image is transformed into an enlightened being similar to a Buddha. Quite distinct from this idea of 'raising' or 'elevating' the status of what would otherwise be an ordinary statue, the tantric consecration 'brings down' the sacred or divine entity into the humanly formed receptacle. The sacred is conceived as 'descending' into the *stūpa* or image (or in short: the receptacle).¹⁰ Two specific ritual terms are used for the means of bringing about this descent. The first, *ākaraṣa* ('gugs), means 'drawing', while the second, *āvāhana* (*spyān-'dren*), means 'invitation'. That which is drawn or invited is the *jñānasattva* (*ye-shes-sems-dpa'*), the chosen Buddha (*iṣṭadevatā*, *yi-dam*), often called simply 'deity' (*deva*, *lha*).¹¹ This descent makes the deity accessible to the worldly plane for a variety of religious needs including worship, *darśan*,¹² accumulation of merit, prayer and meditation.

While this process of localization serves a manifold of religious purposes, it is problematic from certain points of view. According to Mahāyāna theories about the multiple Bodies of the Buddha¹³ the only Body existing in ultimate truth is the Dharma Body (*dharmakāya*, *chos-sku*). Out of this Dharma Body the Form Bodies of the Buddha (called *rūpakāya*, *gzugs-sku*)¹⁴ emanate on the level of conventional truth for the sake of sentient beings striving on the Buddhist path. Only the Form Bodies of the Buddha can be localized. The Dharma Body cannot be subjected to this or any other process. Tantric rituals, such as consecrations, only rarely make use of these doctrinal terms.

Most often the ‘entity’ invited to descend into a receptacle is known as *jñānasattva*. Yet, the *jñānasattva* is usually conceived to be endowed, with both aspects of Dharma Body and Form Bodies, like a Buddha and therefore cannot be localized.¹⁵ The non-localization of the *jñānasattva* called into images, paintings and *stūpas* is expressed in works on consecration as follows:¹⁶

The *jñāna* (*ye-shes*) of the Buddha pervades everything, down to each of the countless particles, with holy nature. Therefore, there is nothing to invite from the outside.¹⁷

The *jñānasattva* (*ye-shes-sems-dpa'*) which is not conditioned by another, abides pervading itself, as does the sesame oil in the sesame [seed]. This is known as naturally arrived-at establishing/consecration (*rab-gnas*).¹⁸

When examined from the point of view of ultimate truth, who blesses what [and] how? From the beginning [it was there], unproduced. So how could it be established/consecrated?¹⁹

The *jñānasattva*, like the Dharma Body, is identified with the true nature of things, their Suchness (*tathatā*) or Emptiness (*śūnyatā*), and therefore exists everywhere. It is therefore present in receptacles (i.e. *stūpas* and images) as well, but no more so than in any ordinary location or thing. There is simply no basis for drawing or inviting the *jñānasattva* from elsewhere. Bu-ston clarifies this further,

If one asks: “since all *dharma*s are unestablished (*rab-tu mi gnas-pa*), isn’t this ‘establishing/consecration’ (*rab-gnas*) a contradiction?” [The answer is:] since the ultimate truth is free from mental elaborations of establishing (*gnas-byed*) and established (*rab-tu gnas-bya*), the establishing/consecration is unnecessary. Yet, the establishing/consecration was taught for the sake of increasing the merit of those who have just set foot on the Path.²⁰

The main purpose of the tantric consecration ritual is to establish the sacred, the Buddha, one’s own chosen deity, the *jñānasattva*, in a certain locality so that it might be made available for interaction with the human domain. Yet, this localization process violates the very nature of that sacred, Buddha, *yi-dam* or *jñānasattva*, which is omnipresence. Non-localizability is the true nature of all things (*dharma*), as well as the ultimate character of Buddha. In order to remind the participants in the consecration ritual of this theoretical position which is antithetical to the very process of the consecration, a ritual mirror is employed. We shall look at this more closely.

A. *The Main Ritual Action of the Consecration*²¹

The ritual action is considered to be the main part of the consecration (*rab-gnas-kyi gtso-bo*)²² is the act of requesting those invited into the receptacle²³ to firmly abide there (*brtan-bzhugs*).²⁴ This ritual is, in part, an extension of the request for a Buddha or Bodhisattva not to pass into *nirvāṇa*, a well-known Mahāyāna ‘prayer’.

The request to firmly remain, recited during the consecration ceremony, is as follows:

May all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who reside in the ten directions consider me. As long as the realms of sentient beings vast as the sky are not placed at the level of being unestablished in *nirvāṇa*,²⁵ may you firmly remain without passing into *nirvāṇa*; and particularly, as long as these receptacles of Body, Speech and Mind are not destroyed by the harm of earth, water, fire and wind, acting immeasurably for the sake of sentient beings, may you firmly remain.²⁶

The petition to a Buddha not to pass into *nirvāṇa* was incorporated into some of the relatively early ritual sequences such as the *tri-skandhaka* (*phung-po gsum*) and the ‘seven-limbed ritual’ (*saptāṅga-pūjā, yan-lag bdun*). The *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra* describes the third member of the *triskandhaka* as follows:

Ils [the Bodhisattvas] supplient les Buddha actuels des dix régions de faire tourner la roue de la loi et invitent les Buddha à rester longtemps dans le monde, durant d’innombrables Kalpa, pour sauver tous les êtres.²⁷

As part of the seven-limbed ritual this request appears in the *Bhadra-carī-praṇidhāna* (verse 11):

Also joining my hands I request those who wish to manifest *nirvāṇa* for the benefit and happiness of all sentient beings, to remain for as many *kalpas* as there are particles in the [Buddha] field.²⁸

Similarly, Śāntideva composed the following for his seven-limbed practice in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (3.5):

Also joining my hands I request the Victorious Ones who seek *nirvāṇa*, to remain for endless *kalpas* [so that] this world would not be dark.²⁹

The first part of the request pronounced in the consecration to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to firmly remain expresses an idea similar

to that of the popular verses just cited, as well as other similar ones.³⁰ As is usually the case in extending a general notion and applying it to a particular situation in a ritual recitation,³¹ the second part begins with the word 'particularly' (*bye-brag-tu* or *khyad-par-du*). Here the general request not to pass into *nirvāṇa* is extended to provide a specific abode for those Buddhas and Bodhisattvas requested to remain. In this case, as in many other tantric rituals, a concrete sense is supplied to a general Mahāyāna notion. Through the consecration ritual, the abstract Buddhas and Bodhisattvas present in the saṃsāric world become available in certain locations. The sentient beings for whose sake the Buddhas remain are enabled to communicate with them through the consecrated receptacle.

B. *The Ritual of Showing in the Mirror* ('me-long bstan-pa') *during the Consecration*

The ritual of showing in the mirror is shared by ritual bathings (*khrus-gsol*), coronations, initiations, and consecrations. It usually follows the sprinkling of water (*abhiṣeka*) which, in variant versions, is also found in those four rituals. The ritual bathing is modelled after the more luxurious types of Indian bathing customs, in which various perfumed oils, pastes and powders are applied to the body and then rinsed off with different mixtures of scented water. This ritual is concluded with the offering of new clothes, perfumes and ornaments. Finally, a mirror is shown to the honored guest, king or image (as the case may be) to whom the ritual bath was offered.³² The showing of the mirror is preserved in coronation as well. In Hindu coronation rituals, after the unction (*abhiṣeka*), the king should look into a mirror.³³ The initiation ritual (*dbang*) also includes the showing in the mirror among the various appendages to the water initiation.³⁴ Consecrations incorporate the water initiation, although in this case the recipient is the receptacle. But out of the various appendages to the initiation, only the showing in the mirror is performed during consecrations. As we shall see, while in the bathing ritual the recipient is shown the results of the 'beauty treatment' it has received through the showing in the mirror, this mirror ritual is endowed with additional symbolism in initiations and consecrations.

The ritual of showing in the mirror performed during the initiation of Vajrabhairava is as follows:

[Recite:] ‘From the *Āḥ* a mirror arises.’³⁵

Hold the mirror together with the bell in the first of the left hands so that the mirror faces away [from the bell]. Hold the *vajra* by the thumb and ring finger so that its reflection arises in the mirror.

[Recite:] ‘*Āḥ dharmas* are like reflected images, clear, pure, uncontaminated, ungrasped and inexpressible, actually arisen from cause[s] and action[s].³⁶ As in a mirror, clear, pure, uncontaminated, myself Rdo-rje-sems-dpa’ (Vajrasattva), the essence of all Buddhas, oh son, dwell in your heart. Devoid of own nature, unestablished, knowing *dharmas* in that way, act without an equal for the sake of sentient beings. You are born as a son of the Protectors. Know that generally all *dharmas* are like reflected images, and particularly Rdo-rje-sems-dpa’, who dwells in your heart, is like a reflected image in a mirror.’³⁷

The purpose of the showing in the mirror during the initiation (also called mirror initiation) is to create a predisposition for the realization that all *dharmas* are like reflected images in a mirror. Even though they seem to possess inherent existence, they are in fact devoid of a nature to call their own.³⁸ After receiving the mirror initiation from the guru, a disciple should repeat this experience as part of his or her daily *sādhana* practice (the basic tantric ritual).³⁹ Gradually, the cognitive experience of seeing the reflection of the *vajra* in the mirror is said to lead to a transformation in the practitioner’s direct experience of the nature of things.

One of the characteristics of the true nature of things on which the practitioner should meditate is that they are ‘unestablished’ (*gnas-med-pa*). This quality was referred to by Bu-ston (above) in discussing the contradiction or seeming contradiction between the act of establishing/consecrating and the true nature of all things. The mirror initiation emphasizes also that one’s *yi-dam*⁴⁰ is but a particular instance of *dharmas* in general. Therefore, the practitioner of a *sādhana* should realize while meditating on his or her identity with the *yi-dam* that also that *yi-dam* is devoid of any existence to call its own, like a reflected image in a mirror, is unestablished.⁴¹ Likewise also the *yi-dam* invited into a certain image or *stūpa* ultimately cannot be established.

The mirror initiation conferred on a *stūpa* or image during the consecration seems to be meant to reiterate this position of the unestablishability of all *dharmas*, including the *yi-dam* being established

by means of that consecration ritual. Therefore, among the series of various appendages included in the initiation, the mirror initiation alone is conferred here. The rationale for the performance of the consecration is given in terms of the two truths. As Bu-ston explained in the above quote, although in ultimate truth the consecration is unnecessary, it is performed for the sake of the beginners who have not realized the ultimate nature of all things. For such a person the consecration serves as a basis for realization and for the accumulation of merit.

C. *The Ritual of the Mirror for Conveying the Deity ('lha') during the Consecration*⁴²

The mirror plays another important role during the consecration. It serves as a temporary abode for the entity invited into a receptacle for the duration of the consecration. The ritual actions of the consecration are often performed not to the actual receptacle itself, but to its reflection in a mirror situated at the center of a special consecration *maṅḍala*.⁴³ In fact, the consecrated object need not be physically present at the scene of the ritual, meaning in most cases the main assembly hall of the monastery. Only at the main part of the consecration — the request to firmly remain — does the ritual mirror need to be carried to the presence of the actual receptacle. In cases of reconsecration, which is commonly performed for major receptacles on an annual basis or upon the occasion of a visit by a high Lama, the *lha* already present in the receptacle is brought, by means of a ritual mirror, into the center of the consecration *maṅḍala* in order to renew the previous consecrations. In such reconsecrations, at the beginning of the ritual a reflection of the *lha* present in the reconsecrated receptacle is invited into the ritual mirror.⁴⁴ The *lha* is not requested to abandon the *stūpa* or image, but to produce a reflected image identical to the original.⁴⁵ Thus the *lha* is conceived to be present both in the original receptacle and in the ritual mirror for the duration of the consecration.

At the main ritual action of the consecration — the request to the invited *lha* to firmly remain — the ritual helper (*mchod-g-yog* or *las-rdo-rje*)⁴⁶ shows the mirror to all the images, *stūpas* and books

present at the scene of the ritual, both those that remain there as permanent fixtures and those that were brought there especially for the consecration. Afterward he goes to show the mirror to those receptacles that could not be brought to the scene of the ritual, including large sized *stūpas* or images and those located in other temples and private homes. Through this ritual action the *lha* invited into the ritual mirror during the previous ritual actions of the consecration is conceived of as transferring into each receptacle. In the cases of reconsecration, the *lha* is considered to join together with those *lha* already present within the receptacles, just as ‘double vision’ turns into single vision when one stops crossing one’s eyes. This action is the exact reverse, a ‘mirror image’ as it were, of the ritual of conveying the *lha* into the consecration *maṅḍala*. Thus in the main ritual action of the consecration, while holding the mirror which symbolizes the true nature of all things as reflected images arising in a mirror, unestablished, the performers of the consecration request the invited *lha* to firmly remain in the receptacle, to be established (*rab-gnas*). In this crucial ritual moment of the consecration, the participants are reminded, with the help of the mirror, of the provisional nature of the consecration which does not seem to accord with the ultimate nature of things. The use of the mirror during consecration seems to be an intentionally recurring motive used by authors of ritual manuals for reiterating the standpoints that otherwise seem to be compromised in the ritual itself.

D. *Rituals accompanying the Repair of Receptacles*

Through the consecration ritual, a receptacle is transformed into an embodiment of a *yi-dam*. A major repair of such a receptacle would ‘harm’ the *yi-dam* present within it. Therefore, a ritual of temporary deconsecration should be performed prior to the commencement of the repair work. The deconsecration is performed by requesting the *yi-dam* embodied in the receptacle to take residence in a ritual mirror for the duration of the repair work. In his manual for this ritual, the Sa-skya-pa early scholar, Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216) explains this as follows:

If one asks “why?” [the answer is:] if the [original] receptacle is real, then the one inside the mirror is also real. If the one in the mirror is not real, then also this receptacle is not real. This is because the Blessed One taught that the appearance of all things is without inherent nature, like an illusion, similar to reflected images in a mirror.⁴⁷

Similarly Bo-dong Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (1306—1386) says:

If both the former receptacle and its reflected image in the mirror are real, they are equally real. If they are not real, they are equally unreal. This is so since all the *sūtras* and *tantras* teach that all *dharmas* are like reflected images in the mirror.⁴⁸

Again, the use of the mirror in a ritual setting, having its own rationale within the ritual system, serves to reiterate, forces one to reflect on, the standpoint that is ‘beyond’ the ritual.

E. *The Role of Ritual Manuals*

When my knowledgeable informant in Dga’-ldan-chos-'phel-gling Monastery in Bodhanath, which represents H.H. the Dalai Lama in Nepal, explained to me the ritual of ‘showing in the mirror’ at the beginning of the reconsecration of Bodhanath Stūpa, he recited and interpreted the words of the mirror initiation. In other words, his explanation for the use of the mirror as a symbol for the emptiness and unestablishability of all phenomena was not based on philosophical works, but on ritual manuals. In our meetings, my informant, with a quite humble demeanor that characterizes many Tibetan monks, especially the older ones, always apologized for being ignorant of both the scholastic tradition of Tibetan Buddhism and of English. Like many other Tibetan monks who received their education only in small branch monasteries, his studies included mostly ritual texts. Throughout his life he was preoccupied with the performance and teaching of rituals. Therefore, it might be concluded that, even though explanations on the nature of all phenomena being like reflected images in a mirror occurs in many Indian and Tibetan scholastic works, my informant derived his knowledge about this and other ‘learned’ topics mainly from relevant passages in the ritual literature. In this he is certainly not alone. Unfortunately, Tibetological tradition has not paid

ritual the attention it deserves, considering its central role in the religious life of Tibetan Buddhists both monastic and lay. The present example serves to show that the ritual literature may also be important for understanding some of the sources for the theoretical standpoints of a significant number of Tibetan monks.

CONCLUSIONS

The Mahāyāna ideal is *apraṭiṣṭhā-nirvāṇa* — liberation with a basis in neither *samsāra* nor *nirvāṇa*, that is to say, neither in the conventional world nor in the true nature of all things (Nagao 1981). Through the consecration proceedings a *yi-dam*, Buddha, or Bodhisattva is established in *samsāra*. Through the employment of the mirror in the consecration ritual, that *yi-dam*, Buddha, or Bodhisattva participates in the actual nature of all things as they are — unestablished, devoid of own nature, like reflected images in a mirror. If the mirror does not resolve the paradox of consecrating the unconsecratable, it holds up a mirror to the impossible mystery of transcendent immanence.

NOTES

¹ 1971a, 1973, 1974.

² Cf. Demiéville 1948, translated into English in 1987; see also Ching 1983.

³ This classification is found in Wayman, 1974.

⁴ Wayman, 1971b; Kong-sprul Yon-tan-rgya-mtsho, 1985, vol. 3, p. 604.

⁵ In these exercises the meditator contemplates on reflections of objects in an actual mirror.

⁶ Cf. Wayman 1974: 256–257 & 262.

⁷ Cf. Gonda 1954/1975.

⁸ Legend connects the Bodhanāth Stūpa with Kaśyapa Buddha, a historical Buddha prior to Śākyamuni, whose remains are believed to be enclosed within it.

⁹ There is evidence to indicate that the ritual of opening the eyes has been practiced in almost every Buddhist country, including Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Japan, and China, as well as in Hindu India and Egypt, cf. Bentor 1991: 221.

¹⁰ Receptacle (Tib: *sten*) is a general term commonly used for images, paintings, *stūpas* and books. Images and paintings are considered as receptacles of the Buddha's Body, books of His Speech and *stūpas* of His Mind.

¹¹ It should be emphasized that the word deity is an inadequate translation of *lha* or *deva*.

¹² The Hindu term means 'seeing', and Tibetan Buddhist texts, too, often extol the

benefits of 'merely seeing' an image or *stūpa*. Cf. such frequent epithets for images and *stūpas* as *mthong-ba don-ldan*, 'beneficial vision.'

¹³ Cf. Nagao 1973; Williams 1989: 167–184; Reynolds 1977.

¹⁴ The 'Form Bodies' are the 'Manifestation Body' (*nirmāṇakāya*, *sprul-sku*) and the 'Glorious Body' (*sambhogakāya*, *longs-sku*).

¹⁵ See, for example, the work by Zhi-ba'i-snying-po (Toh. 2652, Derge vol. 68, pp. 603–612) on pp. 607–608.

¹⁶ These three citations appear in full in Bentor, forthcoming, where this topic is further discussed.

¹⁷ *Sangs-rgyas-kyi ye-shes grangs med-pa'i rdul-rer yang dam-pa'i rang-bzhin-gyis kun-la khyab-pa yin-pas phyi-rol nas spyan-'dren rgyu med*. Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, p. 156.

¹⁸ *Gzhan-gyis 'du ma byas-pa'i ye-shes sems-dpa' til dang til-mar-gyi tshul-du rang-la khyab-par gnas-pa de-la lhun-grub-kyi rab-gnas-zhes bya-ba dang*. Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, p. 157.

¹⁹ *Dam-pa'i don-du dbyad-pa na/ gang-zhig gang-gis gang-du brlab/ gzod-ma nas ni skyed med-pa/ ci-'dra ji-ltar rab-tu gnas*. *The Consecration Tantra* (Derge) pp. 292–293.

²⁰ *'O-na chos thams-cad rab-tu mi gnas-pa yin-pa'i phyir/ rab-tu gnas-pa 'gal-lo/ zhe-na/ don-dam-par rab-tu gnas-bya-byed-kyi spros-pa dang bral-bas rab-gnas mi dgos-kyang/ kun-rdzob-tu las-dang-po-pa'i bsod-nams spel-pa'i ngor rab-gnas-gsungs-te/* p. 485.

²¹ The main basis for the following observations on the consecration ritual is the manual of Khri-byang Blo-bzang-ye-shes-bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho. It should be noted, however, that there are no major differences among the various Tibetan sects and sub-sects with regard to the consecration ritual.

²² Khri-byang Blo-bzang-ye-shes-bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, p. 442.4; Paṅ-chen Bla-ma I, p. 866, etc. In brief consecrations, the 'main part' (*gtso-bo*) is preserved as constituting the bare minimum.

²³ According to the tantric consecration ritual, the entity invited into an image or *stūpa* is a *yi-dam*. This ritual, however, incorporates traditions in which the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions are invited as well (Bentor 1991: 208–210).

²⁴ While the *brtan-bzhugs zhabs-brtan* performed for the longevity of a high Lama is a relatively new ritual (see Cabezón, forthcoming), the ritual of requesting a deity to firmly remain in a *stūpa* or image appears already in translations of Indian works such as Atiśa's consecration work (Toh. 2496, p. 513.7).

²⁵ *Mi gnas-pa'i mya-ngan las 'das-pa, apratiṣṭhā-nirvāṇa*. The Mahāyāna developed the ideal of *nirvāṇa* without a basis, neither in *samsāra* nor in *nirvāṇa* (cf. Nagao 1981: 61–79).

²⁶ *Phyogs bcu-na bzhugs-pa'i sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' thams-cad bdag-la dgongs-su gsol/ ji-srid nam-mkha'i mtha dang mnyams-pa'i sems-can-gyi kham-smams mi gnas-pa'i mya-ngan-las-'das-pa'i sa-la ma bzhag-gi bar-du myang-ngan-las-mi 'da'-bar brtan-par bzhugs-su gsol/ bye-brag-tu yang sku gsung thugs-kyi rten 'di-rnams-la sa dang chu dang me dang rlung-gi gnod-pas ma zhi-gi bar de srid-du sems-can-gyi don dpag-tu med-pa mdzad-cing brtan-par bzhugs-su gsol/ Khri-byang*, pp. 441.6–442.4. Translated into English also in Manen 1933: 108.

²⁷ Lamotte 1966–1976: 422. See also *Śikṣasāmuccaya* (1897: 290–291); *Ārya-Triskandhaka* (Toh. 284); see also Python 1981 and Barnes 1991.

²⁸ Cf. Lamotte 1966—1976: 417; Hokei Idumi 1929—1931: 235; Tatz 1977: 159.

²⁹ Or 'this world would not be blind'. Cf. Lamotte *ibid.*; Batchelor 1979: 30; Eckel 1985: 70.

³⁰ Note that in the request recited during the consecration of concept of 'unestablished in *nirvāna*' appears in addition to simple *nirvāna*.

³¹ For such an instance, note the adaptation of the fire ritual (*homa*, *sbyin-bsreg*) into the consecration, where the usual aims of increasing life span, merit, wealth, brilliance, learning and practice are extended to include the aim of increasing the effect of the consecration ritual (Bentor 1991: 215—216). See also the mirror initiation below.

³² There are numerous examples for such a ritual. For a Hindu example, see Goudriaan 1970: 183. For a Buddhist example, see Bentor 1991: 171—184. The mirror plays another interesting role in the bathing ritual. In the Tibetan tradition the bathing is not conferred on the receptacle itself but on its reflection arising in the mirror (*ibid.*, Wayman 1974: 256—257).

³³ Witzel 1987: 421.

³⁴ See, for example, Tenzin Gyatso, the Dalai Lama, 1985.

³⁵ None of the persons, substances or implements taking part in Tibetan rituals are allowed to remain in their ordinary worldly state. All undergo a process of 'exaltation' in which, through visualizations, mantras and *mudrās*, they are brought into a 'Buddhaized' state appropriate to a participant in a ritual. Through the recitation above the ritual mirror is recreated on a 'exalted' level.

³⁶ For a Sanskrit version of this popular verse, see Gellner 1991: 245.

³⁷ *Āḥ las byung-ba'i me-long/ zhes g.yon dril-bu dang bcas-pa'i khu-tshur kha-phyir bstan-pa me-long-gi tshul dang/ g.yas mthe-bong dang ming-med-kyis rdo-rje'i gzugs me-long-gi nang shar-ba'i tshul-du bzung/ Āḥ chos-rnams gzugs-brnyan lta-bu ste/ gsal-zhing dag-la rnyog-pa med/ bzung-du med-cing brjod-du med/ rgyu dang las-las yang-dag 'byung/ rdo-rje-sems-dpa' me-long bzhin/ der ni gsal dag rnyog-pa med/ sangs-rgyas kun bdag-rang-nyid ni/ bu khyod-kyis ni snying-la zhugs/ rang-bzhin med-cing gnas-med-par/ chos-rnams de-ltar shes-nas khyod/ sems-can don ni mnyam med byos/ skyob-ba-rnams-kyi sras-su skye/ spyir chos-thams-cad gzugs-brnyan lta-bu dang/ khyad-par du rang-gi snying-la zhugs-pa'i rdo-rje sems-dpa'i ni me-long nang-gi gzugs-brnyan ltar shes-par gyis shig/ "Dpal Rdo-rje-jigs-byed lha-bcu-gsum-ma'i bdag-bskyed/ bum-pa/ dbang-chog smon-shis dang bcas-pa," pp. 232—233. This passage was also translated by Wayman 1973: 69 and 1974: 262; also by J. Hopkins in Tenzin Gyatso, the Dalai Lama, 1985: 341; see also Tajima 1936: 14. It seems to echo the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* 261—262; Bendall and Rouse 1922/1981: 240; cf. Wayman 1974: 259. This passage is also common in Newar Buddhist rituals (cf. Gellner 1991: 245).*

³⁸ Cf. Tenzin Gyatso, the Dalai Lama, 1985: 127.

³⁹ As an appendage to the vase initiation during the self-initiation (*bdag-'jug*).

⁴⁰ The name of the *yi-dam* appearing in the recitation of the mirror initiation may be adjusted to the specific practice for a particular *yi-dam* (as for example *Kālacakra*, etc.).

⁴¹ Cf. Tucci 1961: 64—67.

⁴² This section is based on Khri-byang, p. 367.6 & 411.2.

⁴³ There are two *maṇḍalas* used in the elaborate consecration ritual — the *maṇḍala* of the *lha* common to initiation and other rituals as well, and a *maṇḍala* special to consecrations called the 'bathing *maṇḍala*' (*khrus dkyil*) on which the substances used

during the consecration, including the eight bathing vases (*khruś bum*) are placed. This latter *maṇḍala* is described in Bentor 1991: 87–92.

⁴⁴ This invitation is performed in a manner similar to the invitation of a *lha* in a *sādhana* or in the corresponding ritual action of the consecration (see Bentor 1991: 184–186 & 208–210).

⁴⁵ Another common simile for such a process is a candle lighting another candle ('Dpal Rdo-rje-'jigs-byed lha-bcu-gsum-ma'i bdag-bskyed/ bum-pa/ dbang-chog smon-shis dang bcas-pa', 143.6, etc.).

⁴⁶ While the ritual master (*rdo-rje-slob-dpon*) remains in a meditative posture through most of the performance, the ritual helper performs all the actions that the ritual master cannot carry out from the seated posture. The ritual helper is conceived as being an 'active' aspect of the ritual master. The two are seen as one entity, one aspect sitting in a meditative posture while the other performs everything that requires mobility.

⁴⁷ *De ci'i phyir zhe-na/ rten-de bden-na me-long-gi nang-gi 'di 'ang bden/ me-long-gi mi bden-na rten 'di 'ang mi bden-te/ bcom-ldan-'das-kyis chos thams-cad snang-la rang-bzhin med-par sgyu-ma lta-bu 'am me-long-gi gzugs-brnyan lta-bur gsungs-pa'i phyir-ro/ p. 238.2.*

⁴⁸ *Sngar-gyi rten-de dang me-long nang-gi gzugs-[b]rnyan gnyis bden-na bde[n] mnyam/ mi bden-na mi bden mnyam-ste/ mdo rgyud kun-nas/ chos-rnams me-long nang-gi gzugs-[b]rnyan dang 'dra-bar gsungs-pa'i phir-ro/ p. 279.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atiśa, Dpal Mar-me-mdzad ye-shes (982–1054). 'Sku dang gsung dang thugs rab-tu gnas-pa zhes-bya-ba — Kāya-vāk-citta-su-pratiṣṭhā-nāma', Toh. 2496, P. 3322.
- Barnes, Nancy J. (1993). 'The *Triskandha*, Practice in Three Parts: Study of an Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Ritual', in *Studies on Buddhism in Honour of Professor A. K. Warder*. Eds., N. K. Wagle & F. Watanabe (Toronto: University of Toronto).
- Batchelor, Stephen (1979). *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives; reprinted: 1981.)
- Bentor, Yael (1991). *The Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Consecration Ritual for Stūpas, Images, Books and Temples*. Ph.D. dissertation. Bloomington: Indiana University.
- Bentor, Yael (forthcoming). 'Consecration [*rab-gnas*]', in a Festschrift for Geshe Sopa tentatively called *Essays on Tibetan Literature*. Eds., Roger Jackson and José I. Cabezón.
- Bo-dong Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (1306–1386) (1969). 'Rten-gsum bzheng-tshul bstan-bcos lugs bshad-pa', *Collected Works [Encyclopedia Tibetica]*. (Delhi: Tibet House) vol. 2, pp. 265–342.
- Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364) (1968). 'Rab-gnas bkra-shis rgyas-byed', *dkar-chag title: 'Rnal-'byor rgyud dang mthun-ba'i rab-gnas-kyi cho-ga bkra-shis rab-tu gnas-pa'*, *Collected Works*. (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture) vol. 12, pp. 479–541.
- Cabezón, Jose I. (forthcoming). 'Long-life prayers [*zhabs-brtan*]', in a Festschrift for Geshe Sopa tentatively called *Essays on Tibetan Literature*. Eds. Roger Jackson and José I. Cabezón.

- Ching, Julia (1983). 'The Mirror Symbol Revisited: Confucian and Taoist Mysticism', *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*. Ed., Steven T. Katz (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp. 226–246.
- The Consecration Tantra: *Rab-tu gnas-pa mdo bsdu-pa'i rgyud — Supraṭiṣṭhā [Supraṭiṣṭhā]-tantra-samgraha*. Toh. 486; P. 118; Tog Palace 444.
- Demiéville, Paul (1948). 'Le miroir spirituel', *Sinologica* 1: 112–137; translated into English by Neal Donner, 'The Mirror of the Mind', *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*. Ed., Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987, reprinted: Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991) pp. 13–40.
- 'Dpal Rdo-rje-'jigs-byed lha-bcu-gsum-ma'i bdag-bskyed/ bum-pa/ dbang-chog smonshis dang bcas-pa', *Dgon-gnas Stag-brag Bsam-gtan-gling-gi Phyag-bzhes Mdo-sngags Chos-spyod*. (New Delhi, 1975) vol. 3, pp. 79–269.
- Eckel, Malcolm David (1985). 'Gratitude to an Empty Saviour: A Study of the Concept of Gratitude in Mahāyāna Buddhist Philosophy', *History of Religions* 25: 57–75.
- Gellner, David N. (1991). 'A Newar Buddhist Liturgy: Śrāvakayānist Ritual in Kwā Bāhāh, Lalitpur, Nepal', *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 14: 236–252.
- Gonda, Jan (1954). 'Pratiṣṭhā', *Samjñāvyākaraṇam, Studia Indologica Internationalia*. (Poona/Paris: Center for International Indological Research) vol. I, pp. 1–37 [reprinted in Gonda, *Selected Studies* (Leiden, 1975) vol. II, pp. 338–374].
- Goudriaan, Teun (1970). 'Vaikhānasa Daily Worship According to the Handbooks of Atri, Bhṛgu, Kāśyapa, and Marīci', *Indo-Iranian Journal* 12: 161–215.
- Grag-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216) (1968). 'Arga'i cho-ga dang rab-tu gnas-pa don gsal-ba', *The Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa Skya Sect of the Tibetan Buddhism*. (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko) vol. 4, pp. 237–252.
- Gyatso, Tenzin, the Dalai Lama (1985). *The Kalachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation*. Translated, edited and introduced by Jeffrey Hopkins (London: Wisdom Publications).
- Hokei, Idumi (1929–1931). 'The Hymn on the Life and Vows of Samantabhadra', *The Eastern Buddhist* 5: 226–247.
- Khri-byang Blo-bzang-ye-shes-bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho (1901–1981) (1975). 'Dgon-gnas Stag-brag Bsam-gtan-gling-du rab-tu gnas-pa'i cho-ga dge-legs rgya-mtsho'i char-'bebs dang/ rab-gnas rta-thog-ma/ arga'i cho-ga bcas dpal-ldan Smad-rgyud-pa'i phyag-bzhes lta mdzad rgyun nag-'gros-su bkod-pa', *Dgon-gnas Stag-brag Bsam-gtan-gling-gi Phyag-bzhes Mdo-sngags Chos-spyod*. (New Delhi) vol. 3, pp. 355–469.
- Kong-sprul Yon-tan-rgya-mtsho (1985). *Shes-bya Kun-khyab*. (PRC: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang) 3 vols.
- Lamotte, Étienne (1970–1976). *Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse (Mahā-prajñā-pāramitā-śāstra)*. (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste) 4 volumes (vol. 1 & 2 originally appeared in 1944–1949).
- Manen, Johan van (1933). 'On Making Earthen Images, Repairing Old Images & Drawing Scroll-pictures in Tibet', *Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art* 1: 105–111.
- Nagao Gadjin M. (1973). 'On the Theory of Buddha-Body (*Buddha-kāya*)', *The Eastern Buddhist* 6: 25–53.

- Nagao, Gadjin M. (1981). 'The Bodhisattva Returns to This World', in Leslie S. Kawamura, ed., *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhism*. (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press) pp. 61—79.
- Pañ-chen Bla-ma I Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1570—1662) (1973). 'Rab-tu gnas-pa'i cho-ga lag-len-du dril-ba dge-legs rgya-mtsho'i char-'bebs', *Collected Works*. (New Delhi) vol. 4, pp. 813—874.
- Python, Pierre (1981). 'Le rituel du culte mahāyānique et le traité tibétain 'phags pa Phui po gsum pa (sanskrit: *Ārya-Triskandhaka*)', *Asiatische Studien/ Études Asiatique* 35: 169—183.
- Reynolds, Frank E. (1977). 'The Several Bodies of Buddha: Reflections on a Neglected Aspect of Theravada Tradition', *History of Religions* 16: 374—389.
- Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, Sde-srid (1635—1705) (1973). 'Rab-tu gnas-pa'i skor brjod-pa'i sgra', in *Mchod-sdong 'Jam-gling Rgyan-gcig Rten Gisug-lag-khang Dang Bcas-pa'i Dkar-chag Thar-gling Rgya-mtshor Bgrod-pa'i Gru-rdzing Byin-rlabs-kyi Bang-mdzod*. (New Delhi) vol. 2, pp. 151—356.
- Śikṣā-samuccaya*. Ed., Cecil Bendall (St. Petersburg, 1897) tr., Cecil Bendall and W. H. D. Rouse (London, 1922) [reprinted in Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971/1981].
- Tajima, R. (1936). *Études sur le Mahāvairocana-Sūtra*. (Paris: Maisonneuve.)
- Tatz, Mark (1977). 'The Vow of Benevolent Conduct', *Studies in Indo-Asian Art and Culture*. Vol. 5, eds., Lokesh Chandra and Perala Ratnam (New Delhi: Śatapitaka Series no. 238) pp. 153—176.
- Tucci, Giuseppe (1961). *The Theory and Practice of the Maṇḍala*. (London: Rider & Company).
- Wayman, Alex (1971a). 'A Jotting on the Mirror: Those of Ladies', *Mahfil* 7: 209—213.
- Wayman, Alex (1971b). 'The Mirror-like Knowledge in Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature', *Asiatische Studien/ Études Asiatiques* 25: 353—363.
- Wayman, Alex (1973). *The Buddhist Tantras: Light on Indo-Tibetan Esotericism*. (New York: Samuel Weiser.)
- Wayman, Alex (1974). 'The Mirror as a Pan-Buddhist Metaphor-Simile', *History of Religions* 13: 251—269.
- Wayman, Alex (1977). *Yoga of the Guhyasamājantra*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass reprinted, 1991.)
- Williams, Paul (1989). *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. (London: Routledge.)
- Witzel, Michael (1987). 'The Coronation Rituals of Nepal with Special Reference to the Coronation of King Birendra (1975)', in Niels Gutschow and Axel Michaels, eds., *The Heritage of the Kathmandu Valley*. (Sankt Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag) pp. 415—467.

*The Hebrew University
Jerusalem*