THE WISH~FULFILLING
GOLDEN SUN
OF THE
MAHAYANA
THOUGHT TRAINING

by
Thubten Zopa

(The greatest simpleton amongst
all the followers of Guru Shakyamuni)
THE MIND IS BEGINNINGLESS

If the mind had its beginning with the birth of the being then there would be no purpose to life nor any reason for the mind to exist. If then there were no reason for birth or rebirth and death, then there would be no continuity of lives nor existence of different beings, and there would certainly be no reason for seeking the Truth (inner method), nor for eagerly running after external possessions.

If there were no continuity of mind there would be no logical reason for the suffering of life to exist in spite of all human attempts to find happiness in, for example, material comfort and scientific progress. However, the present world is becoming more unsatisfactory, aggressive and unsubdued.

No worldly educated physicians have been able to preserve life indefinitely for themselves or others, nor have they been able to overcome undesirable physical decay; this situation proves that external conditions are not the principal cause of suffering and happiness. Neither do the same external material enjoyments always give the same pleasure to all living beings. As this shows, the principal cause of suffering is to be found nowhere but within the person’s mind.

In the same way, the sperm and the egg of the parents are not the principal cause of the mind but only the co-operative cause. The principal cause of a baby’s mind exists before the relationship of its parents; therefore, the principal cause of most present suffering and happiness was created in the continuity of past lives.

As is explained by the fully Enlightened Ones, the nature of the mind is clear light and formless, and the mind has the ability to perceive objects. If the fertilised egg were the principal cause of the mind then this also should have a formless nature. Something whose nature is formless, e.g., space, cannot become a principal cause of something whose nature is form, e.g., earth. Thus the sperm and the egg are the seeds of the brain and the other parts of the body but not of the mind. No logic or experience can prove or find that the mind began to exist at the same time that the sperm and the egg conjoined.

Another wrong conception is to think that nothing of the physical part is mind but that the baby’s mind comes from its parents’ minds, in which case all of that generation of children should have the same understanding and experience as all the previous parents back to and including the original. Thus, if one boy’s father was suffering and strongly angry and his mother happy and strongly patient then he would have to be suffering and happy, angry and patient with the same object at the same time. But anyway, two ignorant minds cannot become oneness while they remain uncontrolled.

In reality the mind is beginningless. Ten children of the same family, who are all brought up in the same way and educated in the same manner, never have exactly the same interests or level of Wisdom. These children’s minds are all affected by different pasts.
Another example demonstrating mental continuity is that of children born with imperfect bodies from parents whose bodies are perfect. Some may think that this is due to external and environmental factors such as drugs, irradiation and so forth; but while this may explain how the situation arises, it doesn’t explain why it should occur to the particular beings involved. Furthermore, no matter how much parents want their baby to have a beautiful shape, without choice it is born resembling one or the other parent or looking completely different from either. What causes this whole evolution of external conditions and results? Despite the eagerness of parents to implant their levels of knowledge in the minds of their children, they are not free to do so and find it difficult. All this shows that a baby’s mind comes from no other source than its own previous mind, and not from the mind of any other being.

A split second of mind causes the next split second; today’s mind causes the future life’s mind. That is why the mind is impermanent and continual. The mind is created by impulse and depends on many conditions; because the mind is dependent it is not self-existent. Hence, the ignorant mind is beginningless. If beings’ minds began with their birth, then what created the original being’s mind?

In addition, there are many factual stories of children from both East and West who do remember their previous lives; therefore, it is greatly worthwhile to believe and try to realise such a logical evolution of the mind. If we can believe in the scientific explanation of the evolution of mind merely because it has been written by scientists in scientific books, not even doubting that the scientific mind is fully understanding and without error, then we are extremely ignorant to discredit such a realistic evolution of the mind that truly exists, and to have complete trust instead in the non-existence of our past and future lives. We dare not say that the true nature of our mind and the experiences of other living beings do not exist just because they are not perceived by our limited wisdom.

We people, whose minds are full of wrong conceptions negating the logical objects of the logical pure mind, and who believe in the non-existent wrong objects of wrong conceptions, only close the door to infinite Dharma Wisdom and to realisations such as perception of our own and other beings’ past and future lives. All Wisdom and realisations of outer and inner subjects are blocked by ignorance. The thousands of deluded ignorant minds can all be cleaned away by the achievement of different levels of Wisdom through methods based on the understanding of the evolution of reincarnation. The perfected Being is never overwhelmed by ignorance; he has not even the slightest mental problem once his mind has been completely cleaned. Such ignorance is the source of all the various sufferings that we uncontrollably experience. Since we do not desire such physical and mental sufferings, but wish to achieve the supreme happiness of these perfected Beings, it is extremely necessary that we utterly extinguish ignorance and subtle wrong conceptions. Thereby we extinguish the resulting sufferings and completely achieve fully purified Enlightenment, the Omniscient Mind of the Buddha, completing our purpose of leading all other sentient beings into the most supreme happiness of Enlightenment, and away from sufferings. But trying to achieve Enlightenment without feeling the
necessity of utterly extinguishing ignorance and subtle wrong conceptions is just dreaming.

**BUT HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO RECEIVE ENLIGHTENMENT?**

There exists a state of mind completely free of gross ignorance (the delusions) and subtle ignorance (the impressions of delusion). This is the Svabhavakaya (Tib., *Ngo.wo nyid.ku*)—the pure, clearlight nature of the Omniscient Mind. To experience this is Enlightenment, and the Enlightened Being is also called a Buddha.

Why have we not experienced Enlightenment yet? Because in us the pure nature of mind has always been obscured by the pollution of ignorance.

The potentially pure mind obscured by ignorance is like a mirror covered with slime. The mirror can be made clear because it is not inextricably mixed with the slime, and, similarly, the mind can be purified of ignorance because the two are not inseparable. And just as there are many ways to clear the mirror, yet all involve removal of the slime, so too are there many ways to reach Enlightenment, but all require destruction of ignorance.

Not only the minds of humans, but those of all sentient beings contain this potential purity that is not one with the ignorance that obscures it. However, it is only when this impermanent obscuration has been completely removed, and not before, that the being can be said to be Enlightened.

Ignorance can be permanently eradicated by following the perfect path of Method and Wisdom, experienced by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and taught in his Tripitaka (Tib., *De.nö sum*)—the “Three Baskets” of Teachings on Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom.

It was because of his infinitely Great Compassion for all sentient beings that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha showed this perfect Teaching, and if we aspire to his Enlightened State we must train our minds to become One with the Dharma, as he himself did.

**THE LINEAGE OF THESE MAHAYANA TEACHINGS**

The Lineage of the Graduated Path began with Guru Shakyamuni, the Founder of this period of Buddhadharma (Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana). The whole subject matter of the Teachings is included in two divisions—Profound Wisdom and Extensive Method.

The Method of the Graduated Path was handed down by Maitreya to Asanga (*P’ag.pa.tog.me*) in about 400 A.D. He was the main Teacher of the Yogacara Philosophy, or Vijñayanavada. From Asanga the Teachings were gradually handed down through the great Indian Pandits. The first of these was *Jik.nyen*, one of the most learned beings in the world at that time; then came *P’ag.pa Nam.dr’ol.de*, the finder of the middle way; *Tzun.pa Nam.dr’ol.de*, the faithful; *Ch’o.kyi.de*, the subdued in Wisdom; *Dr’ol.wa.de*; *Na.nam.tze*; *Seng.ge Zang.po*, who developed the Paramita path; *Ku.sa.li*, the holder of all the techniques of Buddha; *Ge.wa.chan*; Dharmakirti
(Ser.ing.pa) who had great achievement of Bodhicitta; then the Teachings passed to the great Atisha.

The Wisdom lineage was passed down by Manjushri, and came to the great philosopher Nagarjuna (Lu.drub), the writer of the Madhyamaka Philosophy, in about 150 A.D. His successor, Chandrakirti (about 600 A.D.) made clear the pure views of Nagarjuna and transmitted the Teachings to the second Rig.pa.k’u.j’ug; he passed them on to the great holder of the Teachings, Atisha, who handed them down to Ton.pa Rin.po.ch’e.

DIPANKARA SHRIJNYANA (ATISHA)

Atisha was born in Bengal in 982 A.D. as a prince into a noble family.

During his life, he achieved all perfect Knowledge, and having thus equipped his Holy Mind, he did great work for the Buddhadharma.

He gained full understanding of the profound meaning of the Tripitaka Teachings, and on the basis of this achievement—Knowledge of the Trainings in higher Conduct, higher Concentration and higher Wisdom—he completely realised the Three Vehicles: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana.

Atisha adhered strictly to the moralities and ordinations of all three of these Vehicles. He guarded these and his Bodhicitta precepts as his life, just as a yak, with his beautiful tail caught in a bush, will protect it from harm, although hunters threaten his life.

Atisha worked for the Buddhadharma in both India and Tibet.

In India, at Mogada, Odantapuri, and Vikramashila he completely destroyed by logical debate the pagans’ evil speech, discussions, complaints and wrong realisations. After these victories, he became the leader of all, established the Sangha, and gave Teachings.
Amongst his Indian disciples were Pi.to.b’a, Dhammakaramati, and
U.ma.song.ge.sä.nying.po.

Atisha was invited to Tibet by Ta.lä.la.mä.ku.kye who sent the great
translators, Gya.tzän.seng and Nag.tse tsül.tr’il, to India. They were successful in
their mission, despite many hard and dangerous travels, and Atisha arrived in Tibet
in 1042 A.D.

He spent three years in Ü (central Tibet) and Tzang. He established the
Teachings of the Buddha in places where they had become non-existent, and revived
and developed them where the practice of the Teachings had degenerated.

He completely purified heretically wrong realisations and views of
Buddhadharma, and wrote the most precious Text J’ang.ch’ub lam.drün - the “Light
of the Enlightenment Path.” This contains all the meanings of the Sutras and
Tantras, in a form to be understood by even very limited-minded people: those who
cannot realise the profound views of Buddhadharma, who do not see the practice and
have beliefs opposite to those of the Buddha. He founded the school known as the
Ka.dam.pa.

There are said to be prerequisites that one needs to be qualified to write Holy
Works on Buddhadharma. One must have one of these three:

1. Expertise in the five divisions of Knowledge:
   a. Inner Knowledge (Knowledge of Dharma).
   b. Knowledge of handicrafts including painting and especially intricate
      mandalas.
   c. Knowledge of medicine and hygiene.
   d. Logic.
   e. Knowledge of sound, e.g., language, poetry, animal sounds, that of
      water, etc.

2. Teachings received in a continuous line, from Guru Shakyamuni, through
   only Holy, realised Beings, without interruption, and dealing with the
   practice of the subjects contained in the Lam.drun.

3. Permission from a Deity or Guru, who gives it to great Pandits before
   they can write books on initiations, and so on.

Atisha was qualified with all prerequisites and was, therefore, nothing like
the modern, inexperienced scholar who writes books on Buddhadharma.

There are four great Knowledges from the J’ang.ch’ub lam.drun Text:
1. The Knowledge which brings the realisation that none of the different
   aspects of the Buddhadharma are opposed to each other.

To see no difference between the purpose of the Hinayana, Mahayana and the
Vajrayana is most important to understand at the very beginning of our practice.
However, we should have the right Guru, who will give right instructions, according
to the disciple’s level of mind.
Some who have not tasted the essence of Buddhadharma, think with the egocentric mind, “I am a Mahayanist and need not practise Hinayana,” or “I am a Vajrayanist and Mahayana is not for me.”

With such conceptions we shall never achieve the practice of Buddhadharma, and shall only pass further from Enlightenment. Therefore, all followers must take care on this point.

Enlightenment is the complete purification of every single defect, and perfection in all realisations. This can be reached by the Mahayanist, but these purifications and perfections include realisations from the other paths.

There is no Buddhadharma that does not clean every single defect, or does not bring every single realisation; so there is nothing that the follower of the Mahayana path cannot attain.

For the Mahayanist, receiving Enlightenment depends on accomplishing the general practice, i.e. keeping the precepts from the Hinayana division of the Teachings. Thus, there is no way that the true Mahayanist avoids Hinayana practice.

Similarly, the Vajrayanist must progress by living in Bodhicitta and the practice of the six Paramitas, as is much emphasised in Tantric Teachings; and so, he also follows the Mahayana path.

2. The Knowledge by which we see all the aspects of Buddhadharma in the essential techniques.

Through the study of the Lam.drün Teachings, we can clearly understand the vast concourse of commentaries on the pure views of the Enlightened One, in essential techniques, and the firm belief arises that this concourse contains the best techniques.

3. The Knowledge by which we fully realise the profound pure views of the Enlightened Ones.

Beings of lower intelligence take much time, and have to surmount great obstacles to accomplish understanding of the profound vast treatises. But, through the practice of the Lam.drün we can easily understand the important points of the profound works of the Buddha.

4. The Knowledge that automatically stops all the great vices.

Some beings create incredibly bad karma by avoiding or denigrating Dharmas—e.g., pointing at some Teachings as bad, others as Holy; some of worth, others as worthless - not understanding that all Buddhadharmas are either direct or indirect methods of reaching Enlightenment.

The negative karma of avoiding Dharma is amongst the worst; it is worse than tearing down all the Holy Stupas in the universe, or than killing as many Arhants as there are atoms in all the grains of sand of the Ganges. This was said by Guru Shakyamuni.

Thus, the understanding and practice of the Lam.drün guides one from these negative creations, and decreases the power of those negativities created before.
Atisha had the following Tibetan disciples: Rin.ch’en.zang.po nag.tso lo.tsa.wa (the great translator) from Nga.nyì, upper Tibet.

Lha la.ma j’ang.ch’ub.ö, from Tzang.
Gar.ge.wa gö.k’ug.pa lhä.wa.tzä from Lho.dr’ag.
Ch’ag.pa tr’i.ma.ch’og, from K’am.
Näl.gor.chen.po, Gön.pa.wa, She.rab dor.je, and Ch’ag.d’ar tön.pa.

Also from Central Tibet were K’u.Ngog, and Drom.sum.

But the closest of all was Drom.tön.pa.

I and all sentient beings prostrate to and take refuge in the Guru Lo.zang t’ub.wang dor.je ch’ang, who is the basic door through which comes all Knowledge, happiness and perfection.

**Guru Tzong.k’a.pa**

The Teachings were handed down from the great Indian Pandits to the great Guru Tzong.k’a.pa (about 1380 A.D.) through about twenty famous meditators in the lineage of the Ka.dam.pa tradition. From Guru Tzong.k’a.pa the Teachings were passed on through seventeen or eighteen of his disciples.

This great Guru wrote a commentary on Atisha’s Lam.drün Teaching, called the J’ang.ch’ub lam.rim - the “Graded Path to Enlightenment.” This was for extremely ignorant followers.

It is well known that many fortunate beings, through the practice of the Lam.rim clearly saw all the pure views of the Buddha that were expounded in the commentaries, as vast and as deep as a limitless ocean. Through the essential techniques, they received complete understanding of all the Buddha’s Knowledge, and thereby attained Enlightenment.

Guru Tzong.k’a.pa handed these Teachings on to many of his fellow meditators, and they have come down to the Tutors of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. From these most honourable external guides, these Gurus, have I received them.
Figure 2—Guru Tzung.k’a.pa
MORNING PRAYERS

To receive the Graduated Path through the practice of meditation we have to depend on the accumulation of merit and the purification of obscurations. Therefore, those who have wisdom will realise that it is extremely important to follow these preparatory practices. It is unskilful to make ourselves ignorant by rejecting making visualisations and saying prayers, thinking “this is not my desire.”

REFUGE TO THE HOLY GURU
THE TOTAL EMBODIMENT OF THE INFINITE BUDDHAS
LA.MA SANG.GYÄ LA.MA.CH’Ö
Guru is Buddha Guru is Dharma
DE.ZHIN LA.MA GE.DÜN.TE
just as this Guru is Sangha also
KUN.GY’I J’E.PO LA.MA.TE
all creators is Guru also
LA.MA NAM.LA KYAB.SU.CH’I (CH’Ö.PA.BÜL)
Guru all I go for Refuge (I make offerings)

(Guru is Buddha, Guru is Dharma, Guru is Sangha also, Guru is all creators, to all Gurus I go for Refuge (I make offerings).)

GURU: the principal leader showing Teachings of practice and avoidance for attaining Enlightenment.

LAMA: heavy; heavy in inner Dharma Knowledge.

SANG: clean, purified of all obscurations.

GYÄ: perfect in Knowledge, having all realisations.

How quickly we receive Enlightenment depends on Guru Yoga practice. The essential practice is to see all Buddhas in the essence of Gurus, and all Gurus in the essence of Buddhas.

As there are infinite sentient beings, so are there infinite Buddhas. And from our side, all Buddhas definitely help and guide, according to my level of fortune.

The Buddhas received Enlightenment for the sole purpose of continuously working for each and every sentient being’s happiness. With their Enlightened Knowledge they guide by countless different actions, but the limited mind finds incomprehensible the limitless range of the Buddhas’ help. However, the main way of helping is by appearing in ordinary form as the Guru. Even to one being the Buddhas can appear in countless forms—human or suffering animal, enemy or friend—and their method of assistance is not restricted to oral Teachings. They teach at many different levels.
It is important to know how to seek the Guru, because he is the guide, the saviour of this and any future lives until Enlightenment it reached. The most important things in this life are both seeking and checking the Guru—checking, because the wrong Guru, with wrong realisations, can ruin so many lives for his followers by leading them incorrectly. But it must be emphasised that one does not seek the Guru as a dog seeks and eats meat.

We are too ignorant to be able to see Buddha in his most perfect aspect, and so he can appear to us on the material level, as statues and t'ang.k'a’s. These material formations symbolise the Buddha so that we, the followers, can create merits with understanding faith, by remembering his Knowledge and kindness, and by making sincere offerings. But the limited mind views the statue itself as Buddha, or regards Guru Shakyamuni as some ancient personality of merely historical interest, thus limiting understanding, belief and contact.

Buddha’s Holy Body is adorned with many physical signs—perfect qualities and physical perfections. We can see these only by tearing away our veils of ignorance until our inner nature is completely purified, and reaches a level of Knowledge equal to that of the Buddha in the form of the Guru. In this way we can become one with Buddha, and it depends on becoming one with the Guru.

A Tantric Teaching says:

*Even the name “Buddha” does not exist before the existence of the Guru.*

The whole process to Enlightenment depends on Guru Yoga practice, more important and useful than life itself, because every mental progression, happiness and Enlightenment must all depend on the Guru.

In Tantric Teachings, Buddha said:

*The Vajra Guru and his deeds should always be looked upon as Knowledge and free of fault. No realisations can be achieved if they are looked upon as faulty; realisations can be achieved if they are looked upon as Knowledge.*

It is logical, and proven by practical experience, that through purification we can see the Guru in the actual Buddha; thus the Guru himself is not Enlightened from his side alone.

Good karma (virtuous work) is not created intuitively but depends on example and Teachings, shown in different ways by the Guru Buddha. This is the Holy action of the Guru’s Knowledge. True happiness arises from good karma. The Dharma and Sangha, created by the Buddha, are responsible for good karma. Therefore, true happiness comes from the kindness of the Buddha, who in turn comes from the Guru.

Thus the Guru, as well as being the creator of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, is the creator of all happiness.
The ordinary being, with limited, ignorant view, sees the Three Jewels as unconnected with the Guru. In reality the Guru is one with the Three Jewels.

**GENERATING BODHICITTA**

DAG.D'ANG ZHÄN.D'ÖN DRUB.LÄ.D’U
I and others success attain for
DAG.G’I J’ANG.CH’UB SEM.KYE.D’O
I Enlightenment thought generate

(I will generate the Enlightenment thought in order to attain success for myself and all other living beings.)

**PURIFYING THE PLACE**

T’AM.CHÄ D’U.NI SA.ZHI.D’AG
all in ground purified
SEG.MA LA.SOG ME.PA.D’ANG
Thorns etc. not existing and
LAG.T’IL TAR.NYAM B’E.DUR.YÄI
palm equal as lapis lazuli
RANG.ZHIN JAM.POR NA.GYUR.CHIG
nature smooth place become any

(May all the realms where sentient beings are be purified and devoid of thorns and impure objects, and may they be transformed into the smooth, flexible nature of lapis lazuli, as plain as the hand’s palm.)

**INVOCATION**

MA.LÜ SEM.CHÄN KÜN.GY'I GÖN.GYUR.CHING
all living beings of all saviour become
DÜ.TE PUNG.CHÄ MI.ZÄ J0M.DZÄ.LHA
evil committees grounds endless destroyer Buddha
NGÖ.NAM MA.LÜ YANG.D’AG KY’EN.GYUR.PÄI
every existence every and all fully realising
CHOM.DÄN K’OR.CHÄ NÄ.DIR SHAG.SU.SÖL
control having all here descend please

(Holy Buddha, you have the complete control and all realisations, are the saviour of every sentient being, the destroyer of evil committees and groups with only your everlasting great love, fully seeing each and every existence: you and your surrounding attendants, please be at this place.)
ECSTATIC PROSTRATING MEDITATION TO ONE THOUSAND-EYES-HANDS CHENREZIG

Chenrezig is the manifestation of all the Buddhas’ infinite compassion. His one thousand eyes symbolise the Knowledge of one thousand Buddhas. The one thousand hands symbolise the power of the kings of one thousand worlds. This suggests the great power of Chenrezig.

Prostrating to this form of the Buddha creates limitless merits making us receive Enlightenment sooner.

1. Benefits of the mantra

Prostrating and saying the mantra creates great fortune for listening to, contemplating, and meditating on the three divisions of the Teachings (Tripitaka: “Three Baskets”), which contain all the Teachings on the three higher trainings: Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom.

   a. Vinaya Pitaka
      The treatise of moral discipline, it is the remedy for delusions that lead us into extreme conduct, and also teaches Concentration.

   b. Sutra Pitaka
      General religious discourses; concentration on: the twelve dependents, the four Noble Truths, the five skandhas, the different elements, the Paramitas and the six different objects of the six sense bases. There is also the explanation of Madhyamak Pratipad (“The Middle Path”)—the explanation of Absolute Truth, and the remedy for wrong conceptions that lead us into the two extreme views of non-existence and self-existence. The Sutras teach Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom.

   c. Abhidharma Pitaka
      Metaphysical instructions, explaining the right nature of changeable phenomena, e.g., impermanence, suffering, and non-self. The Abhidharma teaches the Wisdom that is the remedy for the wrong conception of ourselves as self-entities.
      There are great benefits from merely saying the mantra.

2. Benefits of the prostrations

The action of the three doors:

The benefits are numberless, as Chenrezig symbolises numberless Buddhas, and appears in numberless bodies.

   a. Body
      The action of the physical body prostrating is mainly to purify the physical negative karmas.
b. **Speech**

The action of reciting the mantra is exalting the Buddhas by speaking of their supreme power and Knowledge. It purifies negative karmas of speech.

c. **Mind**

The action of remembering the supreme power and Knowledge of the Buddhas arouses faith. It purifies the mental negative karmas.

3. **Ecstatic prostrating meditation**

Being one with one thousand-eyes-hands Chenrezig:

a. We prepare ourselves with a short Shunyata purification meditation, beginning with the thought: “There is no self-existent I,” annihilating ordinary conceptions of the self-I, the impure mind and its object, the ordinary body, which depends on the five skandhas.

b. When the conception of the self-existent I has disappeared and the body becomes void, we clearly visualise Chenrezig and become one with him, thinking, “I am the real manifestation of Chenrezig.”

c. We concentrate on the manifestations of Chenrezig as being equal to the number of atoms in the universe, and on ourselves as appearing in the presence of each of these Chenrezigs in the pure realms, making prostrations to them. Here the ground is soft and divinely beautiful, very transparent and mirror-like, and one with Chenrezig’s Holy Mind.

d. **Offering**

From the letter རི in our divine heart many light rays emanate, bearing numberless Chenrezigs carrying offerings of flowers, incense, music, silks, delicate foods, and the heavenly light of Wisdom, to the six senses of each of the Chenrezigs previously visualised.

The offerings give much happiness to all the Chenrezigs, who, in return, grant us their Holy Body, Speech and Mind.

e. **Mantra for prostration**

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OM NA.MO MAN.JU SHRI.YE
NA.MO SU SHRI.YE
NA.MO UT.TA.MA SHRI.YE SO.HA
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While prostrating, we visualise much rainbow light streaming into us, purifying all negativities of body, speech and mind.
f. Prayer and request at the end of the prostrations

PLEASE PURIFY MY BODY, SPEECH AND MIND OF ALL NEGATIVITIES SO THAT I MAY FULLY RECEIVE ALL KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR HOLY BODY, SPEECH AND MIND.

With this is visualised much divine rainbow light beaming into us, purifying all negativities and completely removing all delusions and illusions of body, speech and mind. Our body is filled with this great light, the complete Knowledge of Chenrezig's Holy Body, Speech and Mind, and with the feeling of supreme bliss.

g. Now we are purified and each Chenrezig is absorbed into our many bodies, which all absorb into just one. We are completely Chenrezig with no differentiation. Now from Chenrezig streams much light, reaching all sentient beings, purifying their negativities and wrong conceptions. Then all sentient beings are completely purified and transformed into Chenrezig, and their realms into Chenrezig pure land. All these countless Chenrezigs are absorbed into us, and without differentiation, we all become one in the form of Chenrezig.

h. Dedication

GE.WA DI.YI NYUR.D’U.DAG
Virtue by this soon I
CHÄN.RÄ.ZIG DRUB.GY’UR.NÄ
Chenrezig attain and
DRO.WA CHIG.KYANG MA.LÜ.PA
living beings even single and every
KY’E.KYI SA.LA GÖ.PAR.SHOG
your of to realm lead may

(May I quickly become Chenrezig and lead each and every sentient being into his enlightened realm, because of these merits.)
THE VISUALISATION OF GURU SHAKYAMUNI

Merely to remember the Buddha, let alone making visualisation, is of great benefit—we become closer to him, create merits and protect ourselves from evil creations and the temporal life’s dangers.

Visualising the Buddha, seeing him in the imagination, lessens our negativities and arouses the desire to become like the Enlightened One; our faith in him increases, and the desire to seek his supreme Knowledge grows stronger, making our mind calm and peaceful and preventing the arising of negativities.

As we develop a taste for the Dharma this can be experienced. Therefore, it is unskilful to make ourselves ignorant by rejecting visualisation and the saying of prayers, saying that it is not our desire to do so. The person doing this has not understood the meaning of prayer or its purpose. It is a ridiculous mind that thinks visualisation and prayer is distracting and meaningless—such a person has no understanding. The visualisation of Guru Shakyamuni is done in order to receive blessings and realisations from him.

The whole visualisation is seen as made of pure light, having nothing to do with physical matter. The object is at the height of the forehead, at a distance of one body length, as large as possible and facing ourselves. We visualise Guru Shakyamuni’s throne, a square platform fully and perfectly adorned with all precious jewels, and supported by eight white snow lions (two at each corner). The snow lions are transformations of great Bodhisattvas and are visualised alive and made of light.

On the throne there is a white lotus, and on the lotus are the sun and moon discs, cushions of light for Guru Shakyamuni who is seated upon them.

His Holy Body is transparent, made of pure golden light, and light rays emanate from every pore, streaming outward in all directions. Although these rays extend into infinite space, we visualise them as an aura of light surrounding him to a distance of an armspan.

He is clad in Bhiksu (monk’s) robes, which do not touch his Body, but remain about one inch from it, showing the power of his realisations. His aspect is very peaceful. Every atom of his Holy Body has the power to give realisations.

The right hand over his knee touching the moon disc (the “earth-touching mudra”) symbolises his control of evil (Mara) by his infinite great love. His left hand holds the bowl containing the four nectars (amrita). These nectars control or destroy the four Maras: the elixir of long life, preventing death; the universal medicine, preventing illness and the suffering of the physical body; the nectar purifying the impure skandhas; and the nectar of undeluded transcendental Wisdom, destroying the Mara of delusion.

Surrounding Guru Shakyamuni are Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings.
Figure 3—Guru Shakyamuni
We pray for realisations and, in the form of light, the infinite Knowledge of his Holy Body, Speech and Mind comes from his Holy Body and fills us with great happiness, dispelling all wrong and impure conceptions, completely purifying our three doors. This is how we visualise while saying Guru Shakyamuni's prayer and mantra.

Having visualised in this way, the throne dissolves into pure light and is absorbed into the lotus, which is then absorbed into the sun, the moon, and finally into Guru Shakyamuni. He comes to the top of our head and, becoming light, sinks into us so that we become one with him.

At this point we can make the breathing meditation.

Now the meditation on the Graduated Path is made.

At the end of the meditation comes the prayer from the Tantric Text, Guru Puja, with the visualisation described with the prayer.

After the prayer, we visualise that the throne becomes light, and absorbs into the lotus, sun and moon, which are absorbed into Guru Shakyamuni, who descends to the top of our head and, becoming light, is absorbed into us. We are now one with no differentiation, in the form of all-encompassing space: we concentrate on this for as long as possible.

Then Guru Shakyamuni's Holy Mind appears again in the form of the throne, lotus, sun, and moon, and ourselves in the form of Guru Shakyamuni's Holy Body.

(At all times we should try to see ourselves as described in this visualisation. As our mind is Guru Shakyamuni's Holy Mind, so should we see every other being in that way, and the outer world as his pure land.)

The whole of Guru Shakyamuni's Teachings are included in his mantra and through achieving the Knowledge represented by these words the Buddhas of the past, present and future attained Enlightenment. As a whole, it signifies laying the foundation for the blessings to take root.
GURU SHAKYAMUNI PRAYER

La.ma. Drön.pa Chom.Dān.dā
Guru founder destroyer (having all realisations)
passed (to the other shore)
(cessation of all ignorance, suffering)
D’e.zhin Sheg.pa Dra.chom.pa
suchness realised every delusion and gross illusion
Tathagata destroyed (also Tibetan term for Arhant)
Yang.d’Ag.par Dzog.pā Sang.gyā
fully completed Buddha
Pāl.Gyā.l.wa Shak.ya Tub.pā.la
magnificent king Buddha control to
Ch’ag.tsāl.ching Kyab.su.ch’i.wo
prostrate and go for refuge
Ch’ō.do J’in.gy’i Lab.tu.söl
making offering blessing please bestow

(Guru founder Lord Buddha, the fully realised destroyer of all defilements; fully completed Buddha, having fully realised the Absolute Truth as it is in objects. Magnificent King Buddha, to you I prostrate and go for refuge, to you I make offerings; please, bestow your blessings.)

GURU SHAKYAMUNI MANTRA

Ta ya tha om Muné Muné Maha Munié Soha

Ta ya tha: It is like this.
Om: The All-Knowledge of the Trikaya and of the infinite Buddhas’ Holy Body, Speech and Mind. The Knowledge of the two paths to Enlightenment (Method and Wisdom), and of the two Truths (Absolute and relative) that contain all existence within them.
Muné: Control over the suffering of the three lower realms and over the wrong conception of the self-existent I.
Muné: Control over the suffering of all samsara and over self-cherishing thoughts.
Maha Muné: Great control over the suffering of subtle illusions and over the dualistic mind. (The Hinayana Arhant has not overcome this problem.)
Soha: May my mind receive, absorb and keep the blessings of the mantra, and may they take root.
THE SEVEN BRANCHES (*Yan.lag dun.pa*)

(I prostrate with body, speech and mind in faith: each and every offering (I make) including those really performed and those mentally transformed; every sin collected from the beginninglessness of samsaric life is confessed (offered); I rejoice in all ordinary beings’ and Noble Beings’ actions; please Buddha, by living as our guide until samsara ends (the void of samsara); reveal the Teachings to sentient beings; I dedicate my own virtues and those of others to the great Enlightenment.)

The seven actions of this very profound prayer come in every puja:

1. Prostration counteracts pride.
2. Offering counteracts greed.
3. Confession is the antidote for the three poisons of greed, ignorance and hatred.
4. Rejoicing in the virtues of others counteracts jealousy and envy. It creates much good karma. We should rejoice even at someone offering only one stick of incense. This keeps the mind always happy.
5. Asking Buddha to exist until samsara ends causes us to live longer (for gaining realisations) and purifies negative karmas created with Gurus, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
6. Asking Buddha to reveal the Teachings purifies the negative karmas created by avoiding Dharma, by carelessness such as stepping over books or leaving them on the floor or in a dirty place, or by underestimating the value of Dharma.
7. Dedication destroys the selfish negative mind, and preserves the merits created by virtuous deeds so that they are not destroyed by the worst poisonous minds, anger and heresy. Thus, the merits we have created for ourselves and others are never lost.

Dedication helps to purify delusions and illusions (gross and subtle superstitions), the two minds which prevent our attaining Enlightenment.

To make any positive action pure and perfect, we should:

- have right impulse,
- perform it correctly, and
- dedicate the merits.

The perfect, powerful puja has these three aspects.
MANDALA OFFERING

THE LEGEND OF THE BEGINNING OF THE UNIVERSE, MOUNT MERU

A void, dark emptiness was before all time. From within this nothingness came a wind, gentle and quiet. From east and south, west and north, it filled the void, growing in power with the passing years. After many, many years, the wind became thick and heavy, forming *Dor.je gya.dram*, a great double Vajra in the form of a cross.

From the Vajra came clouds, one upon the other, growing thick and heavy, as did the Vajra wind. Then, from the clouds came the great rain. Each drop as big across as a wagon wheel, each drop enough to cause a flood. For countless years the great rain fell, and when it had stopped falling it had created *Gya.tso*, the primeval ocean.

When *Gya.tso* was still, its surface smooth and quiet, there came once again a wind, gentle and smooth, like *Gya.tso*, moving the face of the waters softly back and forth. As the churning of milk brings forth cream to the surface, so the moving of the waters caused a light foam, *Wang.ch’en ser.gy’i sa.zhi*, which covered them becoming heavier as the wind grew in strength, until the foam was heavy and yellow, like the milk given by a mother cow when her child is born. And, as cream becomes butter, so from the ocean was earth created.

The earth arose like a mountain, around the top of which blew the tireless winds, covering the peaks with clouds. When the rain fell once more, the water it dropped was salty—and so, ocean upon ocean, our universe was made.

In the centre was the great mountain, *Ri.rab lhün.po*, a four-sided column of precious stones, the abode of gods. Around it lay a lake, and around the lake, a circle of golden mountains. Beyond the golden mountains was another lake, encircled again in turn. In all, there were lakes and seven rings of golden mountains, the innermost being the mightiest. Seven times earth, seven times water. Beyond the outer mountains lay the outer ocean, *Ch’i Gya.tso*. It is in *Ch’i Gya.tso* that the four worlds are found, like islands, each with its own shape and different nature. The world of the south is pointed downward, like a cone; the western world is circular; the wealthy land of the north is square in shape; and the eastern world is a crescent. On each side of each world is a smaller island, of similar shape: four worlds and eight islands. This was the universe, and it was dark.

To *Ri.rab lhün.po* came the gods and demigods. They divided the mountains between them, into different levels, the highest being the most blessed. The centre of the universe was like our world, with hills and valleys, rivers and streams, with trees and flowers, and beautiful things; but everything was more beautiful than we can imagine, being most beautiful at the top. There lived the *Lha*, the embodied gods, but even they, like us, must suffer and die.
Far above the universe of the worlds of desire and form of Ri.rab lhün.po exist other heavenly worlds, the formless universe of Zug.me k'am. In the mountain itself, in its lower regions, are the six worlds of Dö.k'am, the universe of desires. Above this lie the seventeen formed worlds of Zug.k'am, peopled with gods embodied, on whom we can call when in need.

Of Ri.rab lhün.po there is more knowledge. This mountain has a tree, rising up through its very centre, bursting into flower and fruit at the top. The mountain is populated by gods and demigods, living at four different levels of the mountainside. Those at the top are the most powerful. You can pray to these gods, to be born amongst them on Ri.rab lhün.po. But each level is more powerful than the level below, and constant fighting is the suffering of these gods, for the demigods of the lowest level say that the tree does not grow only on the top of Ri.rab lhün.po, but that it has its roots way down at their level and is nourished from the base of the mountain; so that they are entitled to a share of its wonderful fruits. Therefore, with the gods of the other two lower levels they all fight, to force their way to the top of the mountain to claim their share of the fruit, and even to Ri.rab there is suffering.

Ri.rab lhün.po is the centre of our universe, and each of its four sides looks out across the seven lakes and the seven rings of golden mountains, the four worlds. The gods on the side of Ri.rab lhün.po facing south are guards; those facing northward look after the northern world; and the worlds of east and west are the same. It is said that the chief of the northern gods, and the guardian of the northern quarter is Nam.tö.sä; the guardians of the east and the west are Yül.k'or.kyong and Chän.mi.zang. The guardian of the southern gate, facing our world of Dzam.b'u ling is P'ag.kye.po.

After Dzam.b'u ling was created, a prak.cha tree grew up in the middle of a river. When its fruit was ripe it would fall into the water, making a noise that sounded like “dzambu.” Many lu (water creatures) lived in that river, and they ate the fruit of the prak.cha tree. Their excrement turned to gold, so wonderful was the fruit. The best gold in our world comes from the water of the prak.cha tree, and our world takes its name from the sound of the falling fruit. Now we do not know where the river with the tree is, but it is here somewhere.

The original human beings, because of their power and greatness, did not need to work. Food was there for the taking; there was no famine, no hunger even. There was no sickness, and the gods lived a long time, far longer than any of us can live. Their power was received from sam.tän.sa, and deep meditation, in which creation issues from the mind. Their power was such that there was no need for light; each god’s body was his own light, and by his own power his body glowed like a heavenly body.

After many years of content in Dzam.b'u ling, one of the gods noticed a kind of fat, like cream, called sa.ch’a. This fat came from the earth itself. Touching and tasting it, the god found it good and told others to try it. The gods from Ri.rab lhün.po began to eat the sa.ch’a rather than other foods. The more they ate, the more their powers diminished, and the light they created became more feeble. Finally,
when all the *sa.ch’a* was gone, they had lost their long life, and they had lost their light, for they had lost the power of *sam.tän.sa*. They lived in darkness. Then, due to karma, the sun, stars and moon came into existence, and the human beings depended on the sun and the moon and the stars for light.

They ate a corn-like plant called *nyu.g’u*, which bore large fruits. Each day, each person took one fruit, and the next day there was another ready for him. Thus, there was no hunger or famine; it was still a world of plenty. Each person had his own *nyu.g’u* plant. One day, a greedy person, finding that his *nyu.g’u* had provided two fruits, plucked and ate them both. The following day there was no fruit at all and he became hungry—so hungry that he took someone else’s fruit. The latter, having no food, became hungry in turn, so he took the fruit from yet another person’s *nyu.g’u* plant. Soon everyone was forced to take what was not his, and in this way theft came into our world. So also came work, for everyone had to start planting so that he would have enough food even if some were stolen from him.

All this time, these people, who had been gods, were in the shape of men. But once they started stealing, and the planting, they began to feel and think strange things. One man felt that his genitals were troubling him; he found them uncomfortable so he tore them from his body. In this way he became a woman. Having contact with men, she gave birth to children, and from them came more children; and soon the world was filled with men and women, all having more children.

With so many people, there was more and more difficulty in finding enough food, and in finding places to live. Instead of living together peacefully, each family began to look after its own needs, no longer bothering about the others—and they soon began fighting each other. After much fighting the people came together in a huge assembly and determined to end the fighting. They chose a leader, and called him *Mang.kur*, meaning “many people made him king.”

Once made king, *Mang.kur* taught the people. He taught them how to build houses, telling that each family should have its own house and its own fields, each family planting, growing and reaping its own food. In this way we became subject to the round of life and death, for while living we must work, fight, steal and get sick. Thus the world was created.

The sun, moon and stars, the sky and the clouds are not seen by the other worlds. Nor can we see those worlds or travel to them, unless we have supernatural powers. Some of us may have come from them. They have people living on them, but these are very different from us.

*Lü.p’ag* is the eastern world, shaped like a half moon. The people living there are giants, with moon-like faces. They live for three hundred years. They are not like us because they do not fight. They are quiet and peaceful. But they have no real religion. The average size is eight cubits tall, double our size.

The western world is *B’a.lang chö*, shaped like the sun. The people there are like those on *Lü.p’ag*, though their faces are round and they are sixteen cubits tall,
and live for five hundred years. *B'a.lang chö* is a land of cattle—many, many cattle, and the people eat mostly butter and cheese.

North of *Ri.rab lhün.po* and furthest away from our own world of *Dzam.b'u ling* is *Dra.mi.nyän*. Unlike *Lü.p'ag* and *B'a.lang chö* *Dra.mi.nyän* is square in shape. People there have square faces, like horses; they are thirty-two cubits tall and live for a thousand years. There is no fighting and no work. *Dra.mi.nyän* is the land of plenty where food grows in abundance and needs no tending. When you are born on *Dra.mi.nyän* you are born with everything you need. Never in your lifetime need you look for clothes, shelter or food. When you die on *Dra.mi.nyän*, your wealth dies with you. It is a land of quiet, peace and bliss, for the whole thousand years; for all continents but our own, the life span is set. Only the last seven days are evil for these people, for *Dra.mi.nyän* is also the land of the unpleasant voice. Seven days before you die you receive a sign. The clothes that have always been kept fine and clean for you become dusty and torn. Decay sets in. You hear the chilling voice of death whispering in your ear, a sound that brings the first pain in a thousand years, telling you that now the time to die has come. The voice whispers to you and tells you how you are going to meet your death, where you will be sent afterwards, what hells and sufferings are in store for you. For nearly a thousand years the people who live on *Dra.mi.nyän* do not know suffering, want, pain or fear. For the last seven days of the thousand years they know more suffering than we know in a lifetime.³

**SIZE AND PARTICULARS OF MANDALA**

1. *Lü.p'ag* (east)

This world has a white sky because that face of *Ri.rab lhün.po* is composed of silver. The size is two thousand *pag.tsä*⁴ across, and its name—“body longer (double body)” —applies to its inhabitants, who are much taller than those in the southern world.

³ This legend is taken from *Tibet* by Thubten Jigme Norbu and Colin Turnbull, published by Penguin Books.

⁴ The measure seven louse eggs equals one louse; seven lice, one wheat grain; seven grains, one finger width; twenty-four finger widths, one cubit; four cubits, one armspan; five hundred spans, one *g'än.tag*; and eight *g'än.tag* are one *pag.tsä*, or approximately four miles. The width of the air circle that was the first thing in existence is immeasurable, for it is infinite; the height is six hundred *pag.tsä*.

The second foundation, water, is 800,000 *pag.tsä* high and 320,000 *pag.tsä* wide, and the golden land is the same size.

The iron fence that surrounds all of the worlds and Mount Meru is 312 times four *pag.tsä* wide.

The four levels where the form gods live are each 80,000 *pag.tsä* square, and they rest on the seven golden mountains and lakes.
2. Dzam.b’u ling (south)
   
   This is a blue continent because the colour of the jewel, lapis lazuli, of which that face of Ri.rab lhün.po is composed, is reflected in the sky. The size of this world is two thousand pag.tsä across.

3. B’a.lang chö (west)
   
   This world has a red sky, reflecting the jewel ruby. Its size is two thousand pag.tsä wide, and the name means “cow enjoyments.”

4. Dra.mi.nyän (north)
   
   The northern world has a golden sky because of the jewel sapphire on Mount Meru. The size is two thousand pag.tsä, and the name means “uninteresting sound.”

The names of the mountains are:
1. Nyä.shing.dzin
2. Shäl.da.dzin
3. Seng.deng.chän
4. Ta.na.dug
5. Ta.na
6. Nam.dü
7. Mu.ky’ü.dzin

The position of the worlds with Mount Meru at centre: the east always faces the chest of the person, i.e.,

   west
   south     north
   east

DESCRIPTION OF OFFERINGS

All offerings made in a mandala are visualised around Mount Meru. Each thing offered is the best possible for that particular world, and gives the greatest happiness to the beings who live there.

Base plate

1. Precious mountain. East

   This is made of the seven most precious things: gold, silver, lapis lazuli, coral, gems, diamonds and pearls.
2. **Wish-granting tree. South**
   
   This is of infinite dimensions, and is also composed of the seven precious jewels: the roots are gold; the stem, silver; the branches, lapis lazuli; the leaves, coral; the buds, gems; the flowers, pearl; and the fruit, diamond.

3. **Wish-fulfilling cow. West**
   
   This is composed of precious jewels, and grants all wishes. The horns are of diamond, the hooves of sapphire, and the tail is like the great tree. The colour of the cow is red-yellow and its beauty is magnificent. The cow gives all things, such as meat, milk, etc.

4. **Crops that need no cultivation. North**
   
   These crops are absolutely perfect. The fruit has no skin or covering, is clean, easy to pick, tasty, beautiful to the eye, and completely satisfies all desires.

   First level

5. **Precious wheel. East**
   
   This wheel is the perfect chariot. It is extremely bright, made of gold, and has one thousand spokes. It can roll for one hundred thousand pag.tsä and carries universal monarch to any part of the mandala.

6. **Precious jewel. South**
   
   This is composed of lapis lazuli and has eight sides, each perfectly smooth. The jewel is as bright as a sun and emits five rays that can be seen from one thousand pag.tsä, and these rays have the power to make us cool when hot or warm when cold. It can bring all success and keeps beings from illness or an untimely death.

7. **Precious queen. West**
   
   She is extremely beautiful, has a camphor-scented body and upala breath, and is dressed in perfect clothing. She can confer the power to achieve all success and guides beings from sadness and physical pain. She has no greed for or miserliness with men or other objects, and has the eight perfect qualities of a lady: harmonious mind, bearing only sons as children, high caste and noble birth, having no jealousy for other women, never gossiping or heretical (having ignorant beliefs), and not being affected by objects of the senses.

8. **Precious minister. North**
   
   He possesses the eye of a god and can see for one hundred pag.tsä. He desires to do only good for people, always acting with love and never with treachery, and he directs his will to accomplish Dharma projects to benefit all beings.
9. **Precious elephant. South-east**

   It is as large as a mountain, and has the strength of one thousand ordinary elephants. Its trunk, tail, and testicles touch the earth. It has the ability to travel three times around the mandala in one day without shaking the rider's body. It reads the rider's mind, is completely obedient and conquers all opposing forces. Being peaceful, it cannot cause harm to other beings.

10. **Precious horse. South-west**

   It is white in colour and of perfect shape. It already has all equipment; saddle and all ornaments are covered with the jewels of the gods. It can travel around the whole mandala three times in one day. It never becomes tired and is completely free from all sickness.

11. **Precious general. North-west**

   He never harms others, having abandoned all irreligious actions, but he can never be defeated in battle. He has the power to know the exact wishes of the ruler, never tiring in his service. He can lead his armies on elephant, horse chariot or on foot.

12. **Great treasure vase. North-east**

   This is made of gold, having all sorts of jewels decorating it. The base is flat and the middle is very large, rising to a long neck which is decorated with a cloth from the realm of the gods. For a stopper it has an extremely beautiful tree, which retains much water inside the pot. The pot contains all manner of treasures, providing whatever we desire.

**Second level**

13. **Beauty goddess. East**

   She is white in colour, and stands in an s-shaped dancing position, with her hands on her hips and holding two vajras.

14. **Garland goddess. South**

   She is yellow in colour, extremely beautiful and at her breast holds a rosary made of precious vajras, with both hands. With this she gives initiation to all who come before her.
Figure 4—Mandala
15. **Music goddess. West**  
She is pink and plays a violin as she sings. She offers this music to all beings.

16. **Dancing goddess. North**  
She is of many colours: her face and feet are white, her neck and upper chest are pink, her hands and hips are white-blue, and her thighs are white-yellow. She holds a vajra in each hand, the right on top of her head and the left on her hip.

17. **Flower goddess. South-east**  
She is brilliant yellow and holds a vase with a vajra inside it in her left hand. It also contains all types of beautiful flowers and she casts these in the air with her right hand.

18. **Incense goddess. South-west**  
She is white in colour and carries an incense pot in her right hand at shoulder level. This incense gives complete satisfaction to whomever it is offered. Her left hand is in a special mudra also at shoulder height: the two end fingers point up in the air, the palm faces forward, and the thumb holds the two middle fingers down.

19. **Light goddess. North-west**  
She is pink and holds a beautiful lamp on her left shoulder with her right arm, which comes over the top of her head. Her left hand is at her heart.

20. **Perfume goddess. North-east**  
She is like a rainbow, and with her left hand holds a conch shell containing a vajra at her heart. With her right hand, she sprinkles the water in all directions.

*Top level*

21. **Sun. South**  
This sun is like a disc or cushion which is fifty *pag.tsä* wide and five and ten-eighteenths high. It is like a magnifying glass which can dispel all darkness—the gross and subtle delusions of beings. On this sun is a golden fence going around the edge, with stairs leading to a palace at its centre, where all the sons and daughters of the gods are singing and dancing.

22. **Moon. North**  
The moon is of the same size as the sun, but its cool light only has the power to dispel the gross delusions of beings. There is also a similar palace enclosed by a golden fence, where the children of the gods sing and dance.
23. Precious umbrella. East

It is white in colour, with a jewel handle, spokes of gold, and a sapphire top with a border and fringe of pearls.

24. Victory banner of all directions. West

This has three pieces of material hanging down on a handle made of jewels, and at the top is a half moon. From the banner hang many small bells which have a very pleasing sound. This banner makes us victorious in all lands.

All the offerings, with the exception of the sun, moon, victory banner, umbrella and all the offering goddesses are piled up to the base of the golden hills. Above the hills are the offering goddesses and above them are the four remaining offerings. Filling the rest of the space are all the merits we have accumulated from the three periods of time—past, present and future—in the form of infinite enjoyments for all beings living in the mandala. We repeat the last part of the mandala prayer while holding the mandala plate at heart level.

How the wheat is placed on the mandala plate:

First, we wipe out all evil from the plate by rubbing our arm three times clockwise. Then we rub the plate three times counter-clockwise to place all goodness into the plate. Then beginning the prayer, we place wheat at the centre and around the outer edge of the plate, which blesses the offering, then again at the centre of the place for Mount Meru, and, accordingly, as the places on the plate are called.
OUTER MANDALA

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM
Blessing the foundation diamond ground Holy Body, Speech and Mind
WANG.CH’EN SER.GY’I SA.ZHI
great golden ground
OM VAJRA REKHE AH HUM
iron fence
CH’I.CHAG.RI.K’OR YUG.GY’I KOR.WÄ Ü.SU
outer iron fence circle of surrounding in centre
RI GYÄL.PO RI.RAB,
Mount king Meru
SHAR LU.P’AG.PO, LHO DZAM.B’ULING,
east body higher south this world
NUB B’A.LANG.CHÖ, J’ANG DRA.MI.NYÄN,
west cow enjoy north sound not sweet
LÜ.D’ANG LÜ.P’AG, NGA.YAB.D’ANG NHA.YAB.ZHÄN,
two small quarters of east two small quarters of south
YO.DÄN.D’ANG LAM.CH’OG.DRO, DRA.MI.NYÄN.D’ANG DRA.MI.NYÄN GY’I.DA
two quarters of west two small unimaginable quarters of north
RIN.PO.CH’E RI.WO, PAG.SAM GY’I.SHING, DÖ.JÖ.B’A,
treasure mountain wish-granting tree wish-granting cow
MA.MÖ.PA.YI LO.TOG, K’OR.LO RIN.PO.CH’E,
crops that need no cultivation wheel precious
NOR.B’U RIN.PO.CH’E, TZÜN.MO RIN.PO.CH’E, LÖN.PO RIN.PO.CH’E,
jewel precious queen precious minister precious
LANG.PO RIN.PO.CH’E, TA.CH’OG RIN.PO.CH’E, MAG.PÖN RIN.PO.CH’E,
elephant precious horse best precious general precious
TER CH’EN.PÖ.YI B’UM PA, GEG.MA, TR’ENG.WA.MA,
treasure pot beauty goddess garland goddess
LU.MA, G’AR.MA, ME.TOG.MA, DUG.PÖ.MA,
song goddess dance goddess flower goddess incense goddess
NANG.SÄL.MA, DR’I.CH’AB.MA, NYI.MA, DA.WA
light goddess perfume goddess sun moon
RIN.PO.CH’E DUG CH’OG.LÄ NAM.PAR GYÄL.WÄ GYÄL.TSÄN,
precious umbrella banner of victory in all directions
Ü.SU.LHA.D’ANG.MI PÄL.JOR P’ÜN.SUM TSOG.PA,
in centre gods and men possessions perfect gather
MA.TSANG.WA ME.PA, TZANG ZHING YID.D‘U WONG.WA
not missing without complete beautiful
DI.D‘AG DR‘IN.CH‘EN TZA.WA D‘ANG GYÜ.PAR
there kind principal Guru and lineage
CHÄ.PÄ PÄL.DÄN LA.MA D‘AM.PA NAM. D‘ANG,
having magnificent Guru Holy all and
CH‘EN.PO LHA.TSOG K‘OR.D‘ANG CHA.PÄ NAM.LA
great gods assembly surrounding and all to
ZHING.GAM ÜL.WAR.GYIO
offering
TUG.JE DRO.WÄ D‘ÖN.D‘U ZHE.SU.SÖL,
compassionate one all beings for accept
ZHE.NÄ DAG.SOG DRO.WA MAR.GY’UR
after accepting me so on sentient beings become mother
NAM.K‘Ä TA.D‘ANG NYAM. PÄ SEM.CHÄN TAM.CHÄ.LA
sky edge and equal sentient beings all to
TUG.TZE.WA CH‘EN.PÖ GO.NÄ JIN.GY’I LAB.TU.SÖL.
Holy compassion great with please grant blessings
SA.ZHI PÖ.KYI JUG.SHING ME.TOG.TRAM.
ground incense put over flowers also
RI.RAB LING.ZHI NYI.DÄ GYÄN.PA.DI.
Mount Meru worlds four sun moon adorn this
SANG.GYÄ ZHING.D‘U MIG.TE ÜL.WAR GYI
Buddha realm to visualised offering
DRO.KÜN NAM.D‘AG ZHING.LA CHO.PAR.SHOG.
all beings pure realm in enjoying
TÖN.PA LA.NA ME.PÄ TÄN.PA.D‘ANG.
Founder higher not teaching and
JÄL.WA DI.DRA LA.MÄ DR‘IN.YIN.PÄ
meet this such Lama’s kindness is by
GE.WA DI.YANG DRO.WA MA.LÜ.PA.
Virtue this even living beings each and every
SHE.NYEN D‘AM.PÄ DZIN.PÄ GYU.RU.NGO
Guru holy hold cause for dedicate
OM IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI.

5 Alternative versions: LA.MA LO.ZANG T‘UB.WANG DOR.JE.CH‘ANG
Guru Tzong.k’a.pa Lord Buddha Vajradhara
KYE.PER DU.YANG NYE.ME SHAK.YA
(Om Vajra bhumi ah hum
Here is the mighty and powerful base of gold.
Om Vajra rekhe ah hum
Here is the diamond-hard fence.
The outer ring is encircled with this iron fence.
In the centre of which stands Mount Meru, the king of all mountains.
In the east is the continent Purva-Videha.
In the south is the continent Jambudvipa.
In the west is the continent Apara-Godaniya.
In the north is the continent Uttarakuru.
Around the east the sub-continents Deha and Videha.
Around the south the sub-continents Chamara and Apara-Chamara.
Around the west the sub-continents Satha and Uttara-Mantrina.
Around the north the sub-continents Kurava and Kaurava.
In the east is the treasure mountain.
In the south is the wish-granting tree.
In the west is the wish-granting cow.
In the north is the unplowed harvest.
Here is the precious wheel.
Here is the precious jewel.
Here is the precious queen.
Here is the precious minister.
Here is the precious elephant.
Here is the precious and best of horses.
Here is the precious general.
Here is the precious vase.
Here is the goddess of beauty.
Here is the goddess of garlands
Here is the goddess of song.
Here is the goddess of dance.
Here is the goddess of flowers.
Here is the goddess of incense.
Here is the goddess of light.
Here is the goddess of perfume.
Here is the sun.
Here is the moon.
Here is the umbrella of all precious things.
Here is the banner of victory in all the directions.
In the centre are all the possessions precious to both gods and men.
This magnificent and glorious collection,
Lacking in nothing,
I offer to you, my most kind root Guru,
Together with you venerable and holy lineage Gurus.
And to you, Lama Je Tzong.k’a.pa,
To you, the Buddha, and to you Vajradhara,
Together with the entire assembly of gods.
Out of your great compassion
Please accept all these offerings
For the sake of the welfare of all sentient beings.
And after accepting them bestow on me please
And on numberless mothers as vast as all space
Your true inspiration with loving compassion.
By the virtue of offering to you assembly of Buddhas
Visualised before me, this mandala built on a base
Resplendent with flowers, saffron water and incense,
Adorned with Mount Meru and the four continents,
As well as the sun and the moon,
May all sentient beings share in its good effects.
It is solely from the kindness of the Gurus who have taught me
That I have come to be acquainted with the peerless Buddha words,
Thus I dedicate this merit so that every sentient being
May be cared for in the future by most kind and holy Gurus.
I send forth this jewelled mandala to you precious Gurus.)
INNER MANDALA

**My greed hate ignorance three born of object**

**enemy friend stranger three body and possessions, etc.**

(Please enjoy well, and bless me and all sentient beings to be released from the three poisonous minds, for I am offering without attachment my body; enemy, friend and stranger; and all possessions which are the object of my greed, ignorance and hatred.)

This inner mandala is offered mainly to control our greed, ignorance and hatred, which cause us to discriminate other beings as friend, stranger and enemy. In this prayer, our three negative minds and the objects they discriminate with attachment, indifference and aversion, and all our possessions are offered in the form of our body and transformed into the mandala (Shunyata). As all this belongs only to the Guru Buddha, there is no reason to feel either attachment or aversion to these things.

Transforming our body into the mandala:

- Our skin is transformed into a golden fountain.
- Our blood is transformed into an ocean of nectar.
- Our flesh becomes beautiful garlands of flowers.
- Our hands and feet are transformed into the four great worlds, and the upper and lower parts of our arms and legs become the eight small quarters.
- Our stomach is transformed into Mount Meru.
- Our head is a beautiful palace; our eyes, the sun and the moon.
- Our heart is transformed into a beautiful jewel.
- All our inner organs become beautiful possessions and enjoyments for humans, asuras and suras.

Material offerings must be made to please ordinary beings, but our mind, renouncing the three poisons, is the best offering to the Guru Buddha. He is pleased not for himself but for us, as our achievement is the only way to Liberation. The essential meaning of giving up is not to give up the material object, but the attachment to it. This is difficult when there is no understanding and the mind is not free. A renounced mind makes the best offering.

This is the Heart of the Mahayana Teaching: nothing is possessed by ourselves—we belong to every sentient being. By this practice attachment is made to lose its grip and makes no sense.
THE TEACHINGS OF THE DIRECT MEDITATIONS

A prayer including the salient points of the Graduated Path.

Refuge

I take Refuge in the Holy Guru who is the essence of all Buddhas, the originator of the granting of all Holy Teachings (realisations and holy words, orders of the Buddha), and Lord of all Supreme Beings.

Prayer for success in Dharma practice and in following the Guru Buddha

Please, all you Guru Buddhas, bestow upon me the ability to transform my mind in the Dharma and to be successful in practising Dharma for receiving the Graduated Path. May no hindrance occur in receiving the Path.

Prayer of the being of lower intelligence

Please bless me to realise that I have received a perfect human rebirth which is highly meaningful, for many reasons difficult to obtain, but perishable, transient and fragile, decaying in the shortest second because of its changeable nature. Thus, my death is definite but its actual time is most indefinite, and after death I am far more likely to be reborn in the lower suffering realms, having created infinitely more negative than positive karma in this and all previous lifetimes.

Please bless me to comprehend how incredibly unendurable is the suffering of the three lower realms, that I might take Refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha with all my heart, and to realise the evolution of karma in its profundity that I might perform only virtuous actions and abandon all negative creations.

Prayer of the being of medium intelligence

By practising in this way I may be reborn in the upper realms, but would still have to experience unlimited samsaric suffering because of uncontrolled delusion and karma.

Please bestow upon me the ability to realise fully the evolution of samsara, from uncontrolled rebirth to death to rebirth, and to be able to follow, night and day, the three higher practices of the Path: higher Conduct, higher Concentration and higher Wisdom, which are the main methods to release me from samsara.

Prayer of the being of higher intelligence

1. To achieve the Sutra Path (Paramitayana).

As each sentient being has been my mother, and as most of them are in extreme suffering, please grant me blessings to bring success to all by renouncing the perfect happiness of self (the Hinayana ideal), and by practising the Bodhisattvas’ deeds of the six Paramitas with a Bodhisattva’s mind (exchanging oneself with others) on the basis of the Equilibrium Meditation.
2. To achieve the Tantric Path (Vajrayana or Mantrayana).

   Thus shall I have no sorrow in experiencing the samsaric sufferings of all other sentient beings for no matter how long, having trained my mind in the general path.

   Please, grant me blessings to be able to follow the quick Vajrayana Teachings, by feeling sentient beings’ suffering—very unimaginably unbearable for even the shortest second—as my own, and to be able to achieve the attainment of Guru Shakyamuni immediately, at this very moment, by keeping the ordinations and orders of the Guru with the best and highest care in life.

For all these reasons shall I meditate on the Graduated Path.

Figure 5—Precious Umbrella