

Glossary for Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism

List of Terms

ABHIDHARMA (Tib. *chö ngön pa*): The Buddhist teachings are often divided into the Tripitaka (the three baskets) primarily from the type of trainings that they emphasize: the sutra (on concentration); the vinaya (on conduct); and the abhidharma (on wisdom). Abhidharma deals with the sensorial and non-sensorial phenomena related to the science of perception, sensation, emotions, motivation, awareness, consciousness as well as cosmology concept in Buddhism.

ABSOLUTE TRUTH (Skt. *paramartha satya* Tib. *don-dam*): There are two truths or views of reality—relative truth which is seeing things as ordinary beings do with the dualism of "I" and "other" and the absolute truth, also called ultimate truth, which is transcending the domain of duality and seeing things as they are.

AGGREGATES, FIVE (Skt. *skandha*, Tib. *phung po nga*): Literally "heaps," These are the five basic transformations that perceptions undergo when an object is perceived. First is form, which includes all sounds, smells, etc. everything that is non-thought. The second and third are sensations (pleasant and unpleasant, etc.) and identification. Fourth is mental events which actually include the second and third aggregates. The fifth is ordinary consciousness such as the sensory and mental consciousness.

ARHAT (Skt.): An *arhat* is someone who has attained NIRVANA (q.v.)

ATTACHMENT (Tib. *doe-chag*): It is the inability to separate from a person or thing, although it will ultimately lead to suffering. Usually it exaggerates the good qualities of the object. It is one of the mental delusions that prevent the achievement of enlightenment.

AVALOKITESHVARA (Skt. = Tib. *Chenrezi*): Mahayana and Vajrayana deity representing compassion. The patron deity of Tibet.

AVERSION (Tib. *doe-chag med-pa*): An exaggerated desire to be apart from a person or thing; the opposite of ATTACHMENT and another mental delusion.

AYATANAS (Tib. *key-che*): These are the six sensory objects such as a sight, a sound, a smell, a taste, and body sensation; the six sense faculties such as the

visual sensory faculty, the auditory sensory faculty, etc. and the six sensory consciousnesses such as the visual consciousness, the auditory consciousness, etc. They make up the eighteen constituents for perception.

BARDO: bardo (Tib.) Literally, bardo means "between the two." It refers to the time between death and a rebirth in a new body.

BODHICITTA (Skt., = Tib. *chan-gch'ub kyi sem*): Central motivational state believed by the Mahayana to be essential for the attainment of Buddhahood, and defined as the desire to attain Buddhahood from compassion for the sufferings of other beings, and in order to acquire the ability to liberate them from their sufferings.

BODHISATTVA (Skt., = Tib. *chan- ch'ub sem-pa*): For the Mahayana schools, it refers to (1) anyone who has irreversibly entered on the path to Buddhahood through arousing within himself or herself the central Mahayana motivation of BODHICITTA (q.v.); (2) certain highly-attained beings such as Avalokiteshvara or Manjushri who can be contacted in ritual for aid and who are, in effect, deities or *sambhogakaya* forms of the Buddha (see TRIKAYA DOCTRINE).

BON (Tib): Term used in various senses for aspects of pre- and non-Buddhist religion in Tibet. The main senses are (1) early Tibetan folk religion, before the times of the kings or emperors; (2) court religion of the kings or emperors in the 7th to 9th centuries; the term *bon* seems to have referred to some of the priests of this sect; (3) "Reformed" Bon, essentially a variant Buddhist order, see BONPO below;

BON(-PO) (= Bon, sense 3): A Tibetan religious tradition originating in the teachings of Tönpa Shenrab, who the Bonpo hold achieved Enlightenment many centuries before the time of the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni. Essentially, it is a variant Buddhist order that developed from the 10th century onwards.

BUDDHA (Skt. = Tib. *sangyé*): Awakened one; a person who has achieved complete enlightenment (Skt. *bodhi*, Tib. *chang-ch'ub*). For the Mahayana, the concept of Buddhahood is extended from the historical Buddha Shakyamuni, who is seen as an emanation of the Buddha-nature (*dharmakaya*) underlying all phenomena. Within the Mahayana, there are numerous Buddhas and Buddha-forms such as Tara, Avelokiteshvara, Vajrasattva, etc. usually associated with the emphasis of specific, virtuous, qualities.

BUDDHA, HISTORICAL = SHAKYAMUNI: teacher who was the historical origin of Buddhism, c. 6th cent. BCE.

CHAKRA (Skt., = Tib. *k'orlo*; the literal meaning is "wheel"): One of a series of focal points (forehead, throat, heart, etc.) through which PRANA circulates within the SUBTLE BODY

CITTAMATRA (Skt. = "Mind Only"; Tib. *semtsam pa*): A school (i.e. more accurately, a group of schools) of Mahayana philosophy stressing the fundamental role of consciousness (*citta*) in creating our experience of reality. Also known as YOGACARA.

CLARITY/LUMINOSITY (Tib. *Selwa*): The nature of mind is that it is empty of inherent existence, but the mind is not just voidness, completely empty because it has this clarity that is awareness or the knowing of mind. So clarity is a characteristic of emptiness (*SHUNYATA*) of mind.

CONDITIONED EXISTENCE. (Skt. *samsara*, Tib. *khor wa*): Ordinary existence which contains suffering because one still possesses attachment, aggression, and ignorance. It is contrasted to liberation or nirvana.

CONSCIOUSNESSES, EIGHT (Skt. *vijnana*, Tib. *nam shé tsog gye*): These are the five sensory consciousnesses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and body sensation. Sixth is mental consciousness, seventh is afflicted consciousness, and eighth is ground consciousness.

DALAI LAMA (Mong. "Ocean" + Tib. "Guru"): Series of Gelukpa reincarnate lamas that began in the 15th century. The 5th Dalai Lama became ruler of much of Tibet, with his capital at Lhasa since 1642. The present Dalai Lama, the 14th, went into exile in 1959 and was, until 2011, de facto Tibetan national leader. The Dalai Lamas are held to be emanations (see TULKU) of AVALOKITESHVARA

DELUSIONS: Misconceptions and their resultant afflicted states of MIND. Delusions are contaminated mental functions that are obstacles to LIBERATION and are the causes for SUFFERING; they disturb our mental peace and propel us to act in harmful ways to self and others. See DISTURBING EMOTIONS.

DHARMA (Skt.; = Tib. *chö*): (1) Buddhist teachings; (2) underlying order of the universe; (3) category in ABHIDHARMA philosophy

DHARMADATU (Tib. *chö ying*): The all-encompassing space, un-originated and without beginning, out of which all phenomena arises. The Sanskrit means "the essence of phenomena" and the Tibetan means "the expanse of phenomena" but usually it refers to the emptiness, which is the essence of phenomena.

DHARMATA (Tib. *chö nyi*) : Dharmata is often translated as "suchness" or "the true nature of things" or "things as they are." It is phenomena as it really is or

as seen by a completely enlightened being without any distortion or obscuration so one can say it is "reality."

DHATU (Skt., Tib. *kham*) : There are five elements of everything in the world in Buddhism: earth, water, fire, wind, and space (or ether). The internal elements are the same but have a property associated with them so there is: earth (solidity), fluidity (water), fire (heat), wind (movement), and space (the vacuities within the body).

DISTURBING EMOTION/ KLESHA (Skt. *klesha*, Tib. *nyön mong*): The emotional obscurations (in contrast to intellectual obscurations) which are also translated as "afflictions" or "poisons." The three main kleshas are (passion or attachment), (aggression or anger); and (ignorance or delusion). The five kleshas are the three above plus pride and (envy or jealousy).

DZOGCH'EN (Tib.) : Non-tantric tradition common to the Nyingmapa and the Bonpo and regarded as a final and higher teaching to be undertaken as the culmination of Tantric practice. Dzogch'en is said to have been revealed sometime after the life of the historical Buddha Shakyamuni by an Indian teacher known (in Tibetan) as Garab Dorje, and to have been transmitted to Tibet by Padmasambhava and other teachers.

EMPTINESS/VOIDNESS (Skt. *shunyata*, Tib. *tong pa nyi*): The Buddha taught in the second turning of the wheel of dharma that external phenomena and the internal phenomena or concept of self or "I" have no real existence and therefore are "empty."

ENDOWMENTS, TEN (Skt. *dashasashpada*, Tib. *jor wa chu*): These are the factors conducive to practicing the dharma. They are: being human, being born in a Buddhist place, having sound senses, being free from extreme evil, having faith in the dharma, a buddha having appeared, a buddha having taught, the flourishing of his teachings, people following the teachings, and having compassion towards others.

ENLIGHTENMENT (Awakening): This is the conventional English-language term for the state attained by a BUDDHA. It is the highest state of development, in which one has forever eliminated all DEFILEMENTS and karmic imprints, and having developed all good qualities and WISDOM to their fullest extent. Enlightenment supersedes LIBERATION.

GELUK(-PA) (Tib.): Tibetan Buddhist tradition founded by the disciples of the 14th century lama Tsongk'apa. Emphasises solid scholastic preparation before Tantric practice and claims to be a more authentic version of Indian Buddhism

than other schools. In the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, the Gelukpa became politically dominant in much of Tibet.

GESHE: (Tib. *dge bshes*, short for *dge-ba'i bshes-gnyen*, "virtuous friend"): This is an academic degree in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, considered functionally equivalent to a western PhD. It is primarily awarded by the three, great, Geluk monastic universities, Drepung, Sera and Ganden. With the Dalai Lama's encouragement, nuns are now also able to study for the Geshe degree, and the first woman, Ven. Kelsang Wangmo, received the degree in 2011. 'Geshe' is used as a title to address the holder of the degree in much the same way westerners might use 'professor' or 'doctor.' When speaking to a geshe, the polite way to address them is "Geshe-la," with the honorific suffix "la" added. When speaking about a person who isn't present, you can refer them with the title + name + la e.g. Geshe Thupten-la or Geshe Wangchen Tenzin-la.

GOMPA (Tib.): A spiritual community; often but not necessarily, a community of celibate monks or nuns living close together, sometimes used as a synonym for monastery or nunnery.

GROUND-PATH-FRUITION: This is a logical method for describing something that is used in many Buddhist works. First one describes the beginning causal conditions (ground), then the coming together of these causes towards some goal (path), and finally the result (fruition).

GURU-YOGA (Skt.; Tib. = *lamé neljor*): Ritual practice within Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism in which the guru or lama is visualized in the form of a Tantric deity so that the student can identify with the virtuous qualities they represent.

HINAYANA. Literally, "Lesser vehicle," it is a term for early schools of Buddhism and their followers, applied by the followers of the MAHAYANA q.v. It refers to the first teachings of the Buddha that emphasized the careful examination of mind and its confusion. Also known as the THERAVADIN path. Actually, the distinction between Hinayaya and Mahayana relates to the scope of mind of a follower being limited or unlimited as to their aspiration towards becoming a Buddha.

IMMEASURABLES, FOUR (Skt. *apramanani*, Tib. *tse me shi*): These are four qualities one achieves with complete enlightenment that help others. They are inconceivable because ordinary persons cannot conceive of them. They are limitless loving-kindness, limitless compassion, limitless joy, and limitless equanimity.

KAGYÜ(-PA) (Tib.): Group of Tibetan Buddhist traditions founded by the disciples of the 11th century saint, poet and lama Milarepa. Emphasises practice of tantric yoga according to the New Tantras.

KALPA (Tib., Skt. *yuga*): An eon which lasts in the order of millions of years.

KANGYUR (Tib.): Collection of sutras and tantra texts translated into Tibetan. Along with the TENGYUR, collected treatises and commentaries by Indian teachers, it forms the main canonical collection of Tibetan Buddhist texts comprising of more than 200 volumes. There are however numerous later texts by Tibetan teachers and it is generally these that are studied by Tibetan Buddhists.

KARMA. (Tib. *lay*): Literally "action." Karma is a universal law that when one does a wholesome action one's circumstances will improve and when one does an unwholesome action negative results will eventually occur from the act—in future lives, if not in the current one.

KARMAPA. (1) Monastic tradition, one of the major Kagyüpa group of traditions; (2) its senior reincarnate lama, also known as the Gyalwa Karmapa. This is usually regarded as the oldest reincarnate-lama lineage, and is claimed to go back to the 12th century lama Düsüm Ky'enpa.

KLESHA: See DISTURBING EMOTION

LA (Tib.): "Soul" or "spirit" which can be lost, so causing illness. The vitality energy of a person must not to be confused with mind or life.

LAMA (Tib.): corresponds to Sanskrit *guru* but has a wider range of meanings in Tibetan. Can mean (1) personal religious teacher, especially of Vajrayana (Tantric Buddhism); (2) head or leading figure within a spiritual community (*gompa*); (3) a properly qualified performer of Tantric ritual. Note that the roles of lama and MONK are different. Most monks are not lamas, and lamas are not necessarily monks.

LIBERATION: The state achieved after the removal of all DELUSIONS and the KARMA that cause uncontrolled rebirth in SAMBARA.

LHA (Tib.): General term for deities, celestial beings and gods not the GOD as understood in Christianity.

LHASA: Central Tibetan town, capital of the early kings of Tibet (7th to 9th centuries CE) and of the Dalai Lamas (17th to 20th centuries CE).

LUNGTA (Tib.): "Prayer- flags" strung up around buildings and sacred places to bring good fortune.

MADHYAMAKA (Skt; also **MADHYAMIKA**. Tib. *u ma*): The most influential of the four schools of Indian Buddhism, it was founded by Nagarjuna in the second century C.E. The name comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "the Middle-way" meaning it is the middle way between eternalism and nihilism. The main postulate of this school is that all phenomena—both internal mental events and external physical objects—is empty of any true nature. The school uses extensive rational reasoning to establish the emptiness of phenomena. This school does, however, hold that phenomena do exist on the conventional level of reality.

MAHAYANA (Tib. *tek pa chen po*): Literally, the "great vehicle." These are the teachings of the second turning of the wheel of dharma by Shakyamuni Buddha, emphasizing SHUNYATA, compassion, and universal buddha nature. Key Mahayana emphases are on the partial nature of the ARHAT's enlightenment as compared with that of a fully-enlightened BUDDHA, and the need to arouse the motivation of BODHICITTA in order to attain full enlightenment.

MAHAYANA SUTRAS see **MAHAYANA**: Well-known Mahayana sutras include the Prajnaparamita Sutras (among them the *Astasahasrika* or 8000 Verse Prajnaparamita Sutra, the "Heart Sutra" and the *Vajracchedika* or Diamond Sutra), the *Saddharmapundarika* or Lotus Sutra, the *Lankavatara Sutra*, the *Avatamsaka Sutra* (a large collection of texts which includes the *Gandavyuha Sutra*), the *Vimalakirtinirdesa Sutra*, etc.

MANJUSHRI (Skt. = Tib. *Jambeyang*): Mahayana and Vajrayana deity of transcendent insight (*prajna*), patron of scholarship.

MANTRA (Skt.; = Tib. *ngak*): These are invocations to various meditation deities that are recited in Sanskrit. These Sanskrit syllables, representing various energies, are repeated in different vajrayana practices.

MERIT: The idea of transfer of the merit from one's religious practice to another person or for the good of other beings is an essential part of all practice in Mahayana Buddhism. Might best be understood to be meaning positive energy earned from doing good work - physical, verbal or mental primarily in spiritual sense.

MIND: That which is clear and knowing," mindstream. Non-physical phenomena that perceives, thinks, recognizes, experiences and emotionally reacts to the environment. 1. Mental faculties (Tib.: yid) 2. Ways of being conscious, conscious phenomena (Tib.: rnam par shes.pa).

MONK: Those male monastics who have either or both the novices and fully-

ordained vows (Skt. *bhikshu*). Monks are celibate and must adhere to the rules of discipline they vow to uphold. Monks are respected in Tibetan culture, but not all monks are lamas i.e. teachers or ritual leaders.

NADI (Skt., = Tib. *tsa*): Vein or channel through which PRANA circulates about the SUBTLE BODY.

NIRVANA (Skt.): Literally, "extinguished." The state of release or deliverance from SAMSARA, cycle of compulsive rebirth in the any of the six realms of existence, in which all false ideas and conflicting emotions have been extinguished.

NUN. Like monks, female monastics (generically called *ani* or *choela*) are celibate and adhere to a code of discipline. They are greatly outnumbered by male monastics and traditionally/culturally may be viewed as having lower status than monks. Effectively, however, women are accorded the same ability to achieve enlightenment as men and there are highly accomplished female yogis and teachers, past and present.

NYINGMA(-PA) (Tib.). Tibetan Buddhist tradition originated in the teachings of PADMASAMBHAVA and his associates in the 8th century. Emphasizes Tantric practice and also includes Dzogch'en teachings. The *terma* revelations are found mostly among the Nyingmapa and BONPO. The Nyingmapa tradition is less centrally organized than other traditions, although there are six principal teaching monasteries in Central and East Tibet, and specific traditions linked to each of these.

OM MANI PADME HUM: MANTRA of AVALOKITESHVARA, the Buddha of compassion. Universally recited by Tibetan monastics and lay people.

PALI CANON: Body of Buddhist texts written in the Pali language and regarded as canonical by the Theravada. For the Tibetan equivalent, see Kanjur.

PERFECTIONS (Skt. *paramita*): Six (usually) qualities whose bringing to perfection defines the path of the BODHISATTVA. They are generosity, ethical discipline, patience, perseverance, meditative concentration and discriminative awareness (*prajña*).

PRAJÑA (Skt.): Wisdom or discriminative awareness.

PRANA (Skt., = Tib. *lung*): "Breath"; Life supporting energy.

SAMSARA: Conditioned existence of ordinary life in which suffering occurs because one still possesses attachment, aggression, and ignorance. It is contrasted to nirvana.

REBIRTH: This is the concept that each individual is born into one of the six realms of existence again and again as a result of their actions in previous lives. The only way to end SAMSARA and to achieve LIBERATION is by purifying the accumulated negative imprints in the mind stream and accumulating merit through virtuous actions.

REFUGE: The taking of Refuge in the THREE JEWELS (q.v.) is an important element of Buddhist practice, and usually forms the first stage of a SADHANA or other ritual sequence.

REINCARNATION: In Tibetan Buddhism the English word 'reincarnation' is used to refer to the process by which rare individuals with spiritual attainments have the ability to affect the circumstances in which they are reborn. See **RINCARNATE LAMAS.**

REINCARNATE LAMAS/TULKUS (Tib. *tulku*; *yangsi*): Lama who is recognized, usually in childhood, as the rebirth of a specific, previous lama, and who takes over the previous lama's position and property by virtue of this recognition.

RINPOCHE (Tib. = "Precious"): Honorific applied to reincarnate lamas and other highly respected persons like abbots. The polite way to address the person is simply as "Rinpoche."

SAKYA(-PA) (Tib.): One of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhist tradition founded in the 12th century at the monastery of Sakya in Central Tibet. Stressed scholarship and Tantric practice, mainly of the New Tantras (especially Hevajra).

SAMSARA: This is the realm of existence for ordinary beings, characterized by the constant cycle of rebirth in one or another of the six planes of rebirth (gods, asuras, human beings, animals, pretas, beings in hell).

SANGHA (Skt.; = Tib. *gedün*): This term refers to both the monastic or non-monastic community of the Buddha dharma - venerated as the holy spiritual community.

SADHANA (Skt.; = Tib. *drubt'ab*): Meditational practice, normally involving visualization, recitation of verses and mantras, physical gestures, and real or visualized offerings to a particular deity, in order to attain ENLIGHTENMENT and other accomplishments for the benefit of others (see SIDDHI). When referred to a text it like the manual/guide book for a specific practice.

SCIENCES, FIVE MAJOR: (Tib. *rig gnas che ba lnga*): These are inner science (Skt. *adhyatma*), study of grammar (Skt. *sabdavidya*), logic (Skt. *hetu*), painting and the arts (Skt. *Silpa*), and medicine (Skt. *cikitsa*).

SELFLESSNESS (Tib. *dag me*): Also called egolessness. In two of the hinayana schools (Vaibhashika and Sautrantika) this referred exclusively to the fact that "a person" is not a real permanent self, but rather just a collection of thoughts and feelings. In two of the mahayana schools (Chittamatra and Madhyamaka) this was extended to mean there was no inherent existence to outside phenomena as well.

SHAKYAMUNI: "Sage of the Shakyas" (also known by his personal name Gautama or his family name Siddhartha). This is the historical Buddha, who lived in the 6th century BCE in North India.

SHERPA: Tibetan Buddhist community in Northern Nepal.

SHUNYATA (Skt) (Tib. *tong pa nyi*): Usually translated as voidness or emptiness. The Buddha taught in the second turning of the wheel of dharma that external phenomena and internal phenomena or the concept of self or "I" have no real existence and therefore are "empty."

SIDDHA (Skt.; = Tib. *drubt'ob*): Person who has acquired SIDDHI; especially applied to the Tantric adepts or practitioners of India from the 8th to 12th centuries.

SIDDHI (Skt.; = Tib. *ngödrub*): Special accomplishments. The Tibetans speak of the "ordinary *siddhi*" meaning magical powers of various kinds that are more commonly found also in other spiritual traditions, and then the "extraordinary *siddhi*", which is Buddhahood, unique to Buddhism.

SUBTLE BODY (Tib. *lus phra-mo*): A network of invisible channels and focal points within the gross human body through which PRANA circulates.

SUTRA/SUTRAYANA (Skt. = Tib. *do*): 1. Texts purported to present teachings given by the historical Buddha in his own words. 2. "exoteric or common path" of Buddhism based on Buddha's sutras.

TANTRA/TANTRAYANA (Tib *gyüd*): Continuity, stream. (Continuity maintained throughout the practice.) 1. In general referring to the systems of esoteric meditation described in the tantric texts. These esoteric teachings are not found in the SUTRAYANA and require the initiation of a tantric LAMA. 2. More specifically; a scripture describing a TANTRAYANA practice. See VAJRAYANA.

TARA (Skt.; = Tib. *Drölma*): Important Mahayana and Vajrayana female deity, associated with the compassionate activity of the Buddha in order to rescue beings from suffering. In Buddhist legends, she is said to have been born from the tears of AVALOKITESHVARA.

TENGYUR (Tib.): A canonical collection of over 100 works of commentary (shastras) translated in Tibetan by Indian master scholars on the Buddha's teachings.

THERAVADA: A modern school of Buddhism, found mainly in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia (Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, parts of Vietnam). Its origins go back to one of the early schools of Buddhism and it can be classified as HINAYANA.

THREE JEWELS: BUDDHA, DHARMA and SANGHA.

TIBET: The term Tibet is somewhat contested for political reasons. While it is frequently applied (especially by pro-Chinese sources) to the "Tibet Autonomous Region" of the Chinese People's Republic, which corresponds roughly to the region of the Gelukpa state at Lhasa in 1950, this includes less than half of the Tibetan population within the Chinese People's Republic. Several other Chinese provinces (Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu) include substantial Tibetan populations. Other culturally Tibetan regions include Ladakh, Zaskar, Lahul, Spiti, Kinnaur and Sikkim in India, much of Northern Nepal, and the independent kingdom of Bhutan.

TRIKAYA DOCTRINE: Doctrine of the three "bodies" (better, levels of manifestation) of the Buddha, developed within Mahayana Buddhism. The three *kaya* are (1) Dharmakaya (Skt., = Tib. *chöku*), the ultimate nature of Buddhahood as inherent in all phenomena and beings (2) Sambhogakaya (Skt., = Tib. *longchöku*), the level of visionary manifestation of Buddhahood, as with the *yidam* or Tantric deities such as Avalokiteshvara or Tara; (3) Nirmanakaya (Skt., = Tib. *tulku*), the physical form or emanation of Buddhahood, such as the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni. See also TULKU.

TRIPITAKA (Skt.): Literally meaning "baskets," it is a general term for the three collections of Buddhist scriptures; 1. VINAYA (Skt.): Discipline; 2. SUTRA and 3. ABHIDHARMA (Skt.): Knowledge/phenomenology.

TULKU (Tib., corresponding to Skt. *nirmanakaya*). Literally, physical form or emanation of the Buddha. It is used to refer to REINCARNATE LAMAS (q.v.).

UPAYA (Skt.): Means, methods, techniques; in full *upaya-kaushalya*, "skillful means," referring to the Buddha's ability to teach appropriately for any student.

VAJRA (Tib. *dorje*): "thunderbolt", ritual implement used by Tantric practitioners, usually in conjunction with the bell (*drilbu*), symbolizing means and wisdom respectively.

VAJRAYANA "vehicle of the Vajra": Tradition of Buddhism which became widespread in later Indian period (5th to 12th centuries CE) and was transmitted to Nepal, Southeast and East Asia, Tibet and Mongolia. It flourished most in Tibet and Mongolia although it exists to greater or lesser degrees elsewhere including Japan, Nepal and Bali. Vajrayana consists of a body of methods for the attainment of the central goal of Buddhism (Enlightenment or *bodhi*). These methods involve the visionary transformation of one's ordinary self and one's environment into the pure realms of the Tantric deities (*yidam*).

VINAYA (Skt.): See VOWS.

VOWS: The vows common to all Buddhist practitioners, whether lay or monastic, are those according to the rules of the VINAYA or disciplinary code. These vows are known as Pratimoksha in Skt. (individual liberation vows). In addition, there are also two further sets of vows. These are Bodhicitta vows, which centers around generating and practicing BODHICITTA (q.v.), and Tantric vows, which are associated with VAJRAYANA practice.

YIDAM: Tantric deity; tutelary deity. See SADHANA; TRIKAYA DOCTRINE; VAJRAYANA

WISDOM: 1. Prajñā(Skt.), *shes.rab* (Tib.); discriminative awareness. 2. Jñāna (Skt.), *ye.shes* (Tib.); deep/pristine awareness, wisdom-knowledge, primal wisdom, gnosis.

YOGA (Skt.; Tib. = *neljor*): General term for techniques of meditation and spiritual practice in Indian religions. In Tibet, it usually refers to Tantric practice.

YOGI (Skt.; Tib = *neljorpa*): Practitioner of yoga (also female, Skt. *yogini*, Tib. *neljorma*). In Tibet, generally refers to lay Tantric practitioners, though monks and nuns also perform Tantric yoga.

YOGACARA. See CITTAMATRA.

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