

Extensive Instructions on the Transference of Consciousness to the Land of Great Bliss

From the *Namchö* Wisdom-Mind Treasure

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Guru Deva Ḍākinī Hūṃ!

What follows is a commentary on *Transference to the Land of Great Bliss*, which is part of the secondary literature connected with the *Land of Great Bliss* (*bde chen zhing*) sādhana from the cycle of the profound aural lineage of the *Namchö* wisdom-mind treasure.

To tell a little of the history of this teaching, “The Chronicle of the King”, which is one of *The Five Chronicles*, says that at the end of time, thirty-three vidyādhara, lords of secret mantra, will appear. In the prophecy of their supreme enlightenment, it is written:

In the buddhfield of Śākya[muni] known as Do Kham¹, a yogi who practises the secret mantra of the Great Vehicle, a lord of mantra, Dorje Drakpo, will appear. Having transferred from there, he will perform vast activities. In the northern direction of this three thousand-fold world-system in the pristine buddhfield known as Forest of Sandalwood, he will become a tathāgata, a guide to beings, an unsurpassable teacher nurturing a gathering of three-thousand, the victorious one known as Jñāna Samantabhadra (Yeshe Kunzang).

Thus, the nirmāṇakāya known as Mingyur Dorje, who was foretold in many treasures, such as the prophecy just cited, is the essential embodiment in a single emanation of both the great lotsāwa Vairotsana and Shüpu Palseng. And in the future he will become the buddha Jñāna Samantabhadra.

While performing the deeds of a bodhisattva, at the age of thirteen, on the seventh day of Saga Dawa² in the year of the Golden Pendant (*hemalamba*, i.e., 1657)³ he actually saw the face of Buddha Amitābha and his two attendants, their bodies as vast as mountains and immeasurable in their splendour. At that time, he received directly the sādhana of the Land of Great Bliss, the method for seeing the Land of Great Bliss in dreams, the longevity sādhana of Amitāyus, the transference of consciousness to the Land of Great Bliss, the prayer for the Land of Great Bliss, the aspiration for the Land of Great Bliss, and the empowerment for the Land of Great Bliss. Then, that evening, having once again seen the face of Buddha Amitābha and his retinue, he was given both the prayer for dream yoga and the oral instructions.

All of this is reminiscent of the following statement from the *Bodhisattva Piṭaka*:

Bodhisattvas, who remain devoted in this way, are recognized by all the buddhas, the transcendent conquerors, as fit vessels for the Dharma. Appearing before them, the Buddhas perfectly reveal to them the bodhisattva path.

Even though there are many traditions for the transference of consciousness in the school of Early Translations and the New Schools, this is a very recent lineage, one still warm with the speech of Amitāyus, and is therefore especially blessed. Moreover, the Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna said:

I, the Lotus-born, and those like me
Have, for the sake of lazy yogis,
Revealed the instruction on transference.

Distracted practitioners may have received profound teachings on the Great Perfection and the like, but still not find any time to train. Then there are those who, because of the afflictive emotion of laziness have not yet gained the indwelling confidence of liberation. For such practitioners, this oral instruction is for attaining Buddhahood at the time of death without the need for further training. As a powerful method, applicable even to great wrongdoers, it is a vitally important instruction on attaining buddhahood.

It is best if, by training from now on, you are able to practise the transference by yourself when you are certain that you are about to die. Yet, should you be unable to do that, even to receive the oral transmission for the transference of consciousness now will make it easier for a guru to perform the transference of consciousness for you when you die.

As for the benefits of the skilful means of the transference of consciousness, it is said in *The Four Vajra Seats*:⁴

Completely untainted by evil deeds,
You will cross to saṃsāra's supreme and distant shore.

And:

This opening of brahma above
Is directly⁵ explained as “transference.”
Emao! It is the path of the supreme teaching.
Emao! It cuts through saṃsāra.
Emao! It remains in the state of freedom.
Emao! Primordial wisdom is amazing!

Also:

One stained by every fault
Is freed through the practice of transference.

The Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna also said:

Through transference at the proper time,
Even perpetrators of the five deeds of immediate fruition⁶
Will gain rebirth in the higher realms or liberation.

Therefore, the benefits are extremely great. It is also said:

If you perform the transference of consciousness in this way, then no matter how severe your evil deeds may be, through the blessings of the visualisation you will take the extraordinary form of a god, or a human being and so on for as long as the teachings of even a single buddha remain. Then, having quickly exhausted your remaining karma, you will attain Buddhahood. And some individuals will attain the state of a vidyādhara in the extraordinary buddhfield of Manifest Perfection.

Moreover, there are several types of transference, including:

- dharmakāya transference,
- sambhogakāya transference,
- nirmāṇakāya transference,
- ordinary transference,
- forceful transference, and
- the transference of entering another body.⁷

Dharmakāya Transference

Through excellent practice of Mahāmudrā, or the Great Perfection's practice of Trekchö in this lifetime, the mother and son luminosities will meet at the time of death. You will then remain in that state [of luminosity] for seven days or some other length of time. As this is the ultimate form of transference, free from the concepts of something to be transferred or one who transfers, there are said to be no good or bad openings.

If you perform the dharmakāya transference in this way, the outer sign will be a pure, immaculate sky; as the inner sign, the body's radiance will not fade for a long time; and as the secret sign, syllables, such as a white ĀḤ, or a blue HŪṂ, will appear.

Sambhogakāya Transference

This is the form of transference to be explained here on this occasion.

As a sign of having performed it the sky will be filled with rainbows and lights. As an inner sign, blood or serum will emerge from the brahma-aperture at the crown of the head, and a dew-like moisture will appear there. The same part of the head will swell up, and steam or vapour will rise from it. Just below the brahma-aperture, hair will fall out and the body's heat will be concentrated there. As a secret sign, as many as five types of relics, or the deities' bodies and hand implements will manifest.

Nirmāṇakāya Transference

For this you lie down on your right side, and breathe through your left nostril. You place an image of Śākyamuni, or the Lotus-born, or a similar figure, in view, visualize the deity's presence, and then transfer your consciousness through the left nostril. You then generate the intention to appear as a nirmāṇakāya for the benefit of beings, and make prayers of aspiration. As an outer sign of performing this kind of transference, there will be clouds or rainbows in the form of wish-fulfilling trees, and rains of flowers will fall. As an inner sign, blood, serum or bodhicitta will emerge from the left nostril, or shimmering dewdrops will appear. As a secret sign, the whole skull will remain [even after cremation], or the hand implements of the deities or many tiny *ringsel* will appear.

Forceful Transference

It is wrong to practise forceful transference. Even if all the signs of impending death are present, you must perform the ritual for deceiving death three times. To enact the transference without having performed such a ritual would be to incur the fault of murdering the deities. Even in the case of punishment by the state,⁸ chronic illness or severe pain—no matter what might occur—it is still wrong to perform the transference before the actual time for death arrives, as it would bring about the transgression of killing deities.

Therefore, even when life is at an end, the transference should not be performed until it is certain that the vital channel in the neck has actually been cut. If the lifespan has not been exhausted and there is still a chance of revival, the transgression of killing deities can and will occur. 'Deities' here means the assembled deities of the hundred sublime buddha families, who reside within the body. This is the equivalent of killing them all. Thus, to perform the transference at any time other than when the lifespan has definitively run its course will not only be of no benefit, it will actually lead to the lower realms. And this holds the key as to why the forceful method of transference is unacceptable. As *The Four Vajra Seats Tantra* says:

When the time is right, perform the transference,
But to do so at other times would be deity murder.

It is also said in the verses of an authentic scripture in the chapter on transference:

To transfer at the wrong time is to kill the deities.
As long as you are alive, practise Dharma,
And for that long the flow of virtue will increase.

Similarly, the Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna said:

Then, earnestly practise the ritual for deceiving death in accordance with the signs of impending death. Even though the signs and marks of death may be complete, if you were to practise transference without having first performed the ritual for deceiving death, you would incur the transgression of killing the deities and the transgression of suicide. As this is even than worse than the five deeds of immediate fruition, perform whichever general or particular rituals for deceiving death are most appropriate.

Transference of Entering Another Body

It is well known that the right interdependent circumstances did not come together for this teaching to be passed on in Tibet. And that is why, although the textual transmission exists, there is no lineage of actual practice.

Ordinary Transference

Even though this is not a forceful transference it is still referred to as ‘instantaneous transference’. As the circumstances of death—which include ravines, water, arrows, piercing weapons, strokes and more—can arise unexpectedly, whenever fear or panic strike train in focusing your awareness on Amitāyus or the Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna at the crown of your head. Doing this continually will ensure that if serious life-threatening circumstances should occur all of a sudden, you will direct your consciousness to the crown of your head through the force of habit, and your consciousness will exit there. The Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna said, “Directing your intentions toward the guru at your crown is of inconceivable value.”

For the ordinary transference, you should lie on your right side with your head pointing north. Visualize a deity such as Buddha Śikhin, or the Buddha of Medicine (*Bhaiṣajyaguru-vaiḍūryaprabharāja*) above the crown of your head. Then recite any names of the Three Jewels with which you are familiar, as well as blessed dhāraṇī mantras, and make aspirations. By doing so, it said, you will avoid rebirth in the lower realms.

Furthermore, the vajra song that encapsulates the six dharmas says:

Eight doorways open on to saṃsāra,
One door is the path to Mahāmudrā.

The *Profound Inner Meaning*, which draws upon several classes of unsurpassable tantras, also teaches:

Then, if the all-ground consciousness departs
From the brahma-aperture this means the formless realm;
From the *bindu*, the great goddess;
From the navel, a god of the desire realm;
From the eyes, a powerful person in the desire realm;
From the nose, the realms of the *yakṣa*;
From the ear, a god of accomplishment;
From the door of existence, a hungry ghost, it is said;
From the urethra, we will become an animal;
From the lower door, the eight hells.

This means that if you have not trained in the instructions for the transference of consciousness, and still, under the power of karma, your consciousness leaves the body through the brahma-aperture, you will be reborn in the formless realm. Through the oral instructions on transference, however, departure through the brahma-aperture will lead to rebirth in pure celestial lands. This is one tradition of explanation. The *Vajra Verses of the Hearing Lineage* says:

When the signs of death arise, be joyful,⁹ and cast away attachment.
Block the nine doors, apply substances and adorn with aspiration.

Thus, in this case [i.e., when nine doorways are blocked], another 'brahma-aperture' is being referred to: a cranial opening, which is four finger-widths back from the hairline, and if consciousness departs from there you will be reborn in the formless realm. The actual brahma-aperture, however, is located in the centre of the coil of hair eight finger-widths back from the hairline. And if consciousness leaves from there you will be reborn in the celestial lands.

Although there exist these two traditions of explanation, the Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna also said:

There are great differences in the various paths of transference: three each for superior, middling, and inferior, making nine in all. As the brahma-aperture on the crown of the head is the path for travelling to pure celestial lands, if consciousness emerges there you will obtain liberation. Therefore, since this is the supreme path it is crucially important that this is where you direct your intentions. If consciousness departs through the eyes, you will be reborn as a *cakravartin* king. If consciousness exits from the left nostril you will be reborn in a clean human body. These are the three superior doors. If consciousness exits through the right nostril you will be reborn as a *yakṣa*; from the two ears, as a god in the form realm; from the navel, a god in the desire realm. These are the three middling doors. If consciousness exits from

the urethra, you will be reborn as an animal; from the so-called 'door of existence', the path journeyed by the cause and seed, the white and red essences, you will be born as a hungry ghost; from the anus, you will be reborn in the hells. These are the three inferior doors.

Now, as for the actual instruction for the transference of consciousness, *The Four Vajra Seats Tantra* says:

That to be purified, the one and a half syllables.
Drawn up with the third to the last of eight.
This seed, a fierce fire,
Rests on a maṇḍala of wind.
Focus on this with the mind.
Above, the brahma-aperture
Is supreme on account of the nine.
Without a body, the entity that is mind's essence
Meditates on entities.

The Vajra Verses of the Hearing Lineage says:

The alchemy of transference, which brings Buddhahood without meditation...
...Draw HŪṂ and prāṇa-mind indivisible up into the central channel
(*avadhūti*).
Visualise the syllable KṢA and propel it through the path of brahma.
Transferring it to the dharmakāya-guru and buddha-realm.

The Precious Master of Oḍḍiyāna said:

Should you fail to accomplish nirvāṇa without remainder in this life,
Since you wish to find the celestial lands at the time of transference
Apply yourself to the necessary trainings and actions!

And:

This instruction is a powerful means for bringing buddhahood even to great evildoers. This instruction, a transformative golden dharma, through which a yogi can leave the seal of the body and simultaneously awaken, is revealed herein.

What follows is in two parts: 1) training in transference, and 2) the actual application.

1. Training in Transference

In order to request the teaching on the visualisations for training in transference, it is necessary to offer the maṇḍala. For this, repeat the following:

Having transformed this maṇḍala of bronze into precious substances,
And these grains of barley too into gold and turquoise,
I offer them with devotion to the one nirmāṇakāya, the compassionate guru:
Look on me with your compassion!

Then, for taking refuge and generating bodhicitta, repeat the following three times:

Namo! In the three jewels and the three roots,
In all the sources of refuge, I take refuge.
In order to lead all beings to buddhahood
I set my mind upon supreme awakening.

Now, consider that in an instant you appear as the Great Compassionate Lord (i.e., *Mahākārunika*, a form of Avalokiteśvara), with a body that is white in colour, and with one face, peaceful and smiling. You have four hands: the palms of the first two joined at your heart, and the lower two holding a white crystal rosary and a white lotus flower. With your legs in the vajra posture, you sit on a lotus and moon-disc seat. Your topknot of hair is adorned with the five small crests of jewels. You are wearing silken garments and jewel ornaments, and you are radiant and resplendent with all the marks and signs. Meditate on this vividly.

From the outside, the Great Compassionate One's body is like a white silk tent, while on the inside it is empty like an inflated balloon.¹⁰ Inside this clear, empty space is the central channel with its four characteristics: as a sign of bliss, it is white on the outside; to symbolize clarity, it is red on the inside; to signify the bodhisattva path, it stands perfectly upright; and to signify that the doors to the lower realms have been closed, its lower tip, which is below the navel, is sealed. To allow for travel along the path to higher realms, the upper tip opens straight onto the brahma-aperture at the crown. Visualize this.

Above the crown of your head,
On top of a lion-throne, lotus, and moon-disc seat,
Is the protector Amitābha, his body red in colour.
With one face, and two hands in the gesture of equanimity,
On top of which he holds an alms-bowl; he wears the dharma robes;
He is seated with his two legs in the posture of Maitreya,
And his two big toes
At the upper tip of the central channel.
To his right is Lokeśvara, Lord of the World, white in colour,
With one face and four hands: two joined at the palms,
And the remaining two, to the right and left, holding a rosary and lotus.
He is in the standing posture, upon a lotus and moon.
To his left is Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might (i.e.,
Mahāsthāmaprāpta).

He has one face, two hands and is blue in colour.
 He holds a vajra in his right hand and a bell in his left.
 He is in the standing posture, upon a lotus and moon.
 They are surrounded by countless buddhas, bodhisattvas,
 Śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and arhats.
 Light shines out from the three seed-syllables
 At the three centres of each of the three main figures,
 Inviting the deities from Sukhāvati to merge indivisibly.

Then, there is the prayer for transference:

Emaho!

Exceedingly wondrous protector, Amitābha,
 Great Compassionate One, and Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might,
 With a one-pointed mind, I pray to you:
 Grant your blessings so that I may master the profound path of the
 transference.
 When the time of death eventually arrives,
 Grant your blessings so that my consciousnesses may be transferred to
 Sukhāvati.

Pray like this as much as possible, and then consider the following.

At your heart-centre, inside the central channel, is, like Hrīḥ
 a knot in a length of bamboo, an eight-petalled red
 lotus. On top of it is a moon-disc, about the size of half a grain. On top of that is the
 essence into which prāṇa-mind and consciousness are gathered, a white *bindu*, and
 red syllable HRĪḤ (ॐ), complete with the long-vowel sign and the *visarga*, and
 radiant and bright. Consider that it is on the point of ascending, just about to rise.

From that HRĪḤ there emanates a single ray of light in the form of another HRĪḤ
 syllable, which seals off the lower gateway, the doorway to the hells. Then, another
 HRĪḤ emerges to seal the doorway to rebirth as an animal, the urethra. Then two
 further HRĪḤ syllables shoot out, sealing the doors of the secret place and the mouth,
 gateways to rebirth as a hungry ghost. Then, another HRĪḤ appears, sealing the
 navel, which is the gateway to rebirth as a god in the desire realm. Then, two more
 HRĪḤ syllables shine out, blocking the two ears, which are gateways for rebirth as a
 demi-god, in the form realm, or as a *kumbhāṇḍa*. Next, two further HRĪḤs emerge,
 block the two nostrils, gateways to rebirth as a *yakṣa* or a human being who must
 experience birth, ageing, sickness and death. Then, three HRĪḤ syllables shine out to
 block the spot between the eyebrows, which is the gateway to rebirth in the form
 realm; the right eye, which is the gateway for rebirth as a human king; and the left
 eye. Then, another HRĪḤ shoots out and blocks the cranial opening, which is the
 gateway to rebirth in the formless realm. You can also verbally recite HRĪḤ during

this process.

Then, consider that as you utter HIK, your mind, which is represented by the *bindu* and the white syllable HRĪḤ, shoots upwards through the path of the central channel. It just about touches the big toe of Amitābha, who is on the crown of your head. Then, consider that as you utter KA, it descends again and remains on the moon seat at your heart centre.

You can combine this with expelling the stale breath three times, and holding the prāṇa. While holding the prāṇa, keep it sealed for a long time. Consider that as you mentally utter HIK, the prāṇa from the right and left channels emerges from the central channel at the crown of the head as blue smoke just as the *bindu* touches Amitābha's big toe. As you mentally utter KA it falls back down and remains in the heart centre. Then send it up again. As you send it up you can hold vajra-fists at the top of the thighs and gather together the prāṇa, mind, and all appearances in the upper part of the body.

If you do not know how to control the prāṇa like this, you should consider that as you utter HIK the *bindu* shoots up through the central channel and touches the big toe of Buddha Amitābha's foot. And as you say KA it descends and remains in the heart centre. Visualise this clearly, sending the *bindu* up and bringing it back down again, about twenty-one times in all.

Then recite the following prayer of aspiration:

Emaho!

Amitābha, magnificent Buddha of Boundless Light,
With the great compassionate lord Avalokiteśvara to his right,
And Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might, on his left,
Surrounded by an assembly of countless buddhas and bodhisattvas
In the place of wonder and boundless joy and happiness
That is the heavenly realm of Sukhāvātī, the Blissful Paradise.
When the time comes for me to leave this present life,
May I go there directly, without any other birth upon the way,
And being reborn there, may I see Amitābha face to face!
May this, my fervent prayer of aspiration,
Be blessed by all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions
So that it is accomplished, without the slightest hindrance!
Tadyathā pañcendriya avabodhanāya svāhā

Consider that making these aspirations causes a stream of deathless *amṛta* nectar to flow from the alms-bowl in Amitābha's hands, dissolving into and filling your body.

Then, as a prayer for longevity, recite the following:

Emaho!

To the perfect Buddha Amitāyus,
The Great Compassionate One, Vajrapāṇi, and
All the countless buddhas and bodhisattvas,
With a devoted mind I prostrate and praise you all.
I pray to you: please bestow the siddhi of longevity!
Oṃ amideva āyusiddhi hūṃ

Recite this for a single rosary or as many times as you can.

Consider that the main deity, Amitābha, and his retinue melt into light and then dissolve into you, and your brahma-aperture is blocked by HAM and various vajras.

By practising like this in six, four or however many sessions, the signs of having perfected the transference will arise: warmth and heat at the brahma-aperture, or itchiness, stinging, numbness, and swelling; the crown of the head may feel soft and pulpy; and blood or serum may emerge at the brahma-aperture. When such signs appear, carefully examine the spot eight finger-widths behind the hairline. If you insert a stalk of *kuśa* grass there, it should stay firmly planted.

When this happens, to persist any further could create obstacles for your life-force, so put the visualisation aside. Don't send the *bindu* up and down in the central channel, and don't recite HIK or KA.

There are also some people who do not have a brahma-aperture or cannot locate it, and who may find that they get headaches or become dizzy. In this case, you should visualize Amitābha a forearm's length above their head, and consider that the *bindu*, which is combined with the syllable HRĪḤ, ascends into the sky until it touches his lotus seat. Then, having returned, it remains in their heart centre inside the central channel. By meditating like this for a few sessions the brahma-aperture will open, and blood or serum will emerge from it.

This concludes the explanation of how to train in the transference of consciousness.

2. The Actual Application

i. Transference for Oneself

When performing transference for yourself, if all the signs of death are fully present, perform the ritual for deceiving death¹⁰ three times. If even this should prove ineffective however, then it is said [in *The Root Verses on the Six Bardos*]:

Kyema! Now when the bardo of dying is dawning upon me,
I will abandon all grasping, yearning, and attachment,
Enter, undistracted, a state in which the instructions are clear,

And transfer my own awareness into the sphere of unborn space;
As I am about to leave this compound body of flesh and blood,
I will know it to be a transitory illusion.

As this indicates, you must offer your own body, possessions and relatives as a maṇḍala to Buddha Amitābha. Then, having offered them, let go of all attachment.

As when training in the visualisation for transference, block the nine doors by means of the syllable HRĪḤ, and meditate on the main deity, Amitābha, together with his retinue, in the sky about a forearm's length above you. Propel your consciousness—represented by the bindu and HRĪḤ—so that it shoots upwards and dissolves into the heart centre of Amitābha. Repeat this visualization again and again until your breathing stops. Recite the prayer and the aspiration for transference as many times as you can. Dharma friends and others too should also recite these on your behalf. Through this, your consciousness will depart at the crown of the head, and it is certain that you will be reborn in Sukhāvātī in your next life.

ii. Transference for Others

When it is certain that a person who was very ill has died and their outer breath has ceased, arrange the corpse so that the head is upright. Then begin by reciting aloud the verses of taking refuge and generating bodhicitta, as well as any buddhas' names that are familiar. Then, when it is certain that the vital channel has been cut, go through the visualization for the transference in your mind, while reciting the following verses in a gentle and melodious voice:

Kyema! Noble child, whose life has ended,
Your body is that of the yidam, the white sattva,
Inside your body is the central channel, like an arrow of bamboo,
At your heart, imagine a red syllable HRĪḤ,
Complete with long vowel and *visarga*.
Then, as six further HRĪḤ syllables emerge,
They seal the gateways to rebirth in the six classes,
While the brahma-aperture at your crown is open.
Above your crown, on a lotus and moon-disc seat,
Is the protector Amitābha, his body red in colour,
With one face, and two hands in the gesture of equanimity,
On top of which he holds an alms-bowl; he wears the dharma robes,
And is seated in a cross-legged posture.
To his right is Lokeśvara, Lord of the World, white in colour,
With one face and four arms: two joined at the palms,
And the remaining two, to the left and right, holding a rosary and lotus.
He is in the standing posture, upon a lotus and moon disc.
To his left is Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might.
He has one face, two hands and is blue in colour.

He holds a vajra in his right hand and a bell in his left.
He is in the standing posture upon a lotus and moon.
They are surrounded by countless buddhas, bodhisattvas,
Śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and arhats.
Light radiates out from the three seed-syllables
At the three centres of each of the three main figures,
Inviting the deities from Sukhāvātī to merge indivisibly.

Then visualize that this consciousness of yours,
In the form of a white *bindu* marked with the syllable HRĪḤ,
Is transferred into the heart of Amitābha.

Emaho!

Exceedingly wondrous protector Amitābha,
Great Compassionate One, and Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might,
This departed one prays to you with one-pointed mind:
Grant your blessings so that their consciousness may be transferred to the
land of great bliss!

Repeat this, together with the necessary visualizations, seven or twenty-one times.
Recite KA and HIK as many times as you can. Then, utter a loud PHAṬ, and pull a
single tuft of hair from the crown of the deceased, eight finger-widths back from the
hairline. The hair should come out as easily as if it had moulted. There might also be
a “Kak!” sound, and the appearance of steam, or swelling, or serum or dew-like
moisture. There could also be some gentle warmth or more intense heat. When
practising for someone without hair, you should continue to press your finger until
you notice some swelling or serum, or the other signs occur.

Consider that rays of light shine out from Amitābha’s heart, so that the whole
retinue and the aggregates of the deceased all melt completely into light, which then
dissolves into Amitābha’s heart. Then recite the following prayer three, five or seven
times:

Emaho! Amitābha, magnificent Buddha of Boundless Light,
With the great compassionate lord Avalokiteśvara to his right,
And Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might, on his left,
Surrounded by an assembly of countless buddhas and bodhisattvas
In the place of wonder and boundless joy and happiness
That is the heavenly realm of Sukhāvātī, the Blissful Paradise.
As soon as the deceased transfers from the present life,
May they go there directly, without any other birth upon the way,
And being reborn there, may they see Amitābha face to face!
May this, my fervent prayer of aspiration,
Be blessed by all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions

So that it is accomplished, without the slightest hindrance!

Tadyathā pañcendriya avabodhanāya svāhā

Then, in a melodious voice, recite the following verses of showing the way:

Emaho!

Exceedingly wondrous protector Amitābha,
Great Compassionate One, and Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might,
This departed one prays to you with one-pointed mind:
Grant your blessings so that their consciousness may be transferred to the
land of great bliss!

Kyema! Noble child, whose life has ended,
Without becoming attached to saṃsāra,
And without even the slightest doubt or hesitation,
Go directly to the land of great bliss!

Phat! Phat! Phat!

With this, consider that Amitābha travels to the realm of Sukhāvātī as swiftly as an arrow in flight. Then recite the verses beginning, “Not experiencing the sufferings of the lower realms...”¹¹ and “Like a lotus, unsullied by the mire...”

If you can practise the transference for the deceased in this way, without being corrupted by pursuit of personal wealth, and with love and compassion, it will be of unimaginable benefit.

If there are no signs of the transference having been effected, it might mean that the consciousness had already transferred—for it may remain no longer than an instant or the time taken to eat a meal.

If you arrive to perform the transference before the outer breath has ceased, you should perform the mental visualization of sealing the nine gateways and so on, and spend a long time simply reciting the names of the buddhas and prayers of aspiration, without causing consciousness to ascend and so forth. By proceeding in this way, it is certain that the transference will be effected properly.

It is well known that consciousness remains in the body for up to three nights and a day, and it is therefore crucial that transference is performed during this time. Still, as *The Book of Kadam*¹² explains that it might remain for three to seven days, it is also acceptable to practise the transference up until the seventh day. Those who conduct village rituals also say that it is appropriate to send consciousness from an effigy or name-card, and they have a tradition of summoning consciousness into a corpse after many days have passed, so that it can then be re-transferred from there. Although this is not taught in the tantric scriptures, I do not think there is any real contradiction.

All this has been by way of commentary. Now, as it is extremely beneficial to cite the root text of the *Namchö* wisdom-mind treasure itself, I shall do so.

Root Text

The stages of the transference:

At my heart I visualize a red syllable HRĪḤ,
Complete with the long vowel sign and *visarga*.
From this there emerge six further HRĪḤs,
To seal the gateways to rebirth in the six classes,
Leaving the brahma-aperture open at my crown.
Then, at my crown is Amitābha, ‘Boundless Light’,
I visualize him and the two attendants as described above.
Then my own consciousness appears
As a white *bindu* marked with a syllable HRĪḤ,
Which, I consider, transfers into Amitābha’s heart.
Without even the slightest doubt or hesitation,
I pray that I may be reborn in the land of great bliss.
Samaya. Gya. Gya. Gya.

Then, the prayer for transference:

Emaho!
Exceedingly wondrous protector Amitābha,
Great Compassionate One, and Vajrapāṇi, the one of great power and might,
With one-pointed mind, I pray to you:
Grant your blessings so that my consciousness may be transferred to the land
of great bliss!
Samaya. Gya. Gya. Gya.

The prayer of aspiration was already cited above.

I, Rāgāśya composed this elaborate explanation of the transference of consciousness to Sukhāvātī, having been urged to do so by the words of the nirmāṇakāya [Mingyur Dorje] himself. Whatever contradictions, mistakes, and faults I may have made I hereby confess. Through this virtue may all sentient beings who see or hear this text be reborn in Sukhāvātī!

| Translated by Lhasey Lotsawa and Adam Pearcey, 2016.

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Notes

1. i.e., Eastern Tibet ↔
2. The fourth month in the Tibetan calendar. ↔
3. The thirty-first year in the Tibetan cycle of sixty years. ↔
4. *Catuṣpīṭha*. Although the Tibetan translators took the Sanskrit title of this tantra to be a reference to four seats (*gdan bzhi*), Péter-Dániel Szántó, has noted that the original meaning of *pīṭha(m)* in this context is more likely 'heap', and by extension 'collection', and by extension of that, 'chapter', so that a better translation might be *The Four Vajra Chapters*. See Péter-Dániel Szántó, *Selected*

Chapters from the Catuspīṭhatantra: Introductory study with the annotated translation of selected chapters (D.Phil. Thesis), Balliol College, Oxford University, 2012, Part 1, p. 26. ↩

5. Although some versions of the Tibetan have “*mdo las*” meaning “from the sūtras”, the texts of the *Catuspīṭha* preserved in the Tibetan canon have the similarly written “*mod las*” and it is the latter reading which has been followed here. ↩
6. 1) killing one’s father; 2) killing one’s mother; 3) killing an arhat; 4) creating a schism in the sangha; and 5) with a harmful intention, drawing blood from the body of the Tathāgata. ↩
7. *grong du 'jug pa'i 'pho ba* (Skt. *purapraveśa*) literally means 'the transference of entering the city', but 'city' here signifies another's body. ↩
8. Literally 'by the king'. ↩
9. Although the Tibetan of Karma Chakme's text has *skol*, the original text of Nāropa’s *Vajra Verses* reads *dga'* in all available versions and the translation has been made accordingly. ↩
10. *phru ma phus btab pa*. Literally ‘like an inflated bladder’. ↩
11. i.e., *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, X, 47. ↩
12. *bka' gdams glegs bam*. See *The Book of Kadam: The Core Texts*, translated by Thupten Jinpa, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008, p. 248. ↩



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