The Uttara Tantra

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commentary on buddhist canonical text ascribed to asanga

glossary and translation of a major mahayana tibetan text

a groundbreaking english translation of a key tantric text in the history of indo tibetan buddhism this volume contains an english translation of the root text of the tara mula kalpa a scripture ritual compendium that captures an important buddhist tantric tradition in mid formation in this regard it is utterly unique and unlike any other text in the buddhist canon its contents document

the emergence of the quintessential female buddha tara in seventh century india as her popularity grew her cult spread throughout southeast asia as well as tibet where she became revered as the mother of the tibetan people tara is worshiped for a variety of reasons from health and long life to wealth protection from enemies and ultimately the mind of enlightenment her presence pervades the evolution of buddhism in tibet including within royal circles as well as mentor and guide to many important buddhist scholars practitioners and lineage holders

an entrée into the world of tantric buddhism a unique collection of texts concepts and meditation practices presented by tibetan masters teaching in the west the vajra world vajradhatu in sanskrit is a realm of indestructibility the level of reality beyond all thought and imagination all impermanence and change which a fully realized person knows and inhabits used metaphorically vajra world refers to the traditional culture of tibet and the unique spirituality that is its secret strength secret of the vajra world is the companion volume to the author's earlier book indestructible truth the living spirituality of tibetan buddhism while that book focuses on the history cosmology philosophy and practice of the more public exoteric side of tibetan buddhism this work treats its more hidden and esoteric aspects as they take shape in vajrayana together the two volumes provide a broad introduction to the major traditions of tibetan buddhism topics include the tantric view of human nature and the external world the special role of the guru or tantric mentor the preliminary practices that prepare the student for full initiation the major dimensions of vajrayana practice including visualizations liturgies and inner yogas the tradition of the tulku or incarnate lama the lore surrounding the death of ordinary people and of saints the practice of solitary retreat the epitome of traditional tibetan buddhism

presents a new vision of the buddhist history and philosophy of emptiness in tibet this book brings together perspectives of leading international tibetan studies scholars on the subject of zhentong or other emptiness defined as the emptiness of everything other than the continuous luminous awareness that is one s own enlightened nature this distinctive philosophical and contemplative presentation of emptiness is quite different from rangtong emptiness that lacks independent existence which has had a strong influence on the dissemination of buddhist philosophy in the west important topics are addressed including the history literature and philosophy of emptiness that have contributed to zhentong thinking in tibet from the thirteenth century until today the contributors examine a wide range of views on zhentong from each of the major orders of tibetan buddhism highlighting the key tibetan thinkers in the zhentong philosophical tradition also discussed are the early formulations of buddhanature interpretations of cosmic time polemical debates about emptiness in tibet the zhentong view of contemplation and

creative innovations of thought in tibetan buddhism highly accessible and informative this book can be used as a scholarly resource as well as a textbook for teaching graduate and undergraduate courses on buddhist philosophy the book contains extremely interesting material and makes a valuable contribution to the study of tibetan buddhism it will be appreciated by those interested in the development of one of the important and yet understudied of its traditions the other emptiness tradition georges b j dreyfus coeditor of the svātantrika prāsaṅgika distinction what difference does a difference make

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the buddha's definitive teachings on how we should understand the ground of enlightenment and the nature and qualities of buddhahood all sentient beings without exception have buddha nature the inherent purity and perfection of the mind untouched by changing mental states thus there is neither any reason for conceit nor self contempt this is obscured by veils that are removable and do not touch the inherent purity and perfection of the nature of the mind the mahayana uttaratantra shastra one of the five treatises said to have been dictated to asanga by the bodhisattva maitreya presents the buddha's definitive teachings on how we should understand this ground of enlightenment and clarifies the nature and qualities of buddhahood this seminal text details with great clarity the view that forms the basis for vajrayana and especially mahamudra practice

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