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| [http://www.snowlionpub.com/data/img2/asloap.jpg](http://www.snowlionpub.com/search.php?isbn=ASLOAP) | **Channels, Winds, and Drops in the Kalacakra Tradition, *As Long as Space Endures* Book Excerpts**  *These excerpts, taken from* As Long As Space Endures: Essays on the Kalacakra Tantra in Honor of the Dalai Lama*, highlight both a detailed mapping of the subtle body and the extraordinary importance of the Kalacakra teachings and practices for our times. Together they give a hint of the range of material presented in this forthcoming book.*  **Channels, Winds, and Drops in the Kalacakra Tradition**  *by 18th century master Changkya Rölpa Dorje, translated by Gavin Kilty*  ***The stationary channels***  The three main channels—central, left, and right—are located together inside the life channel hosted by the spine and are somewhat closer to its rear than to its front. The upper tips curve forward inside the skull and drop down from the crown to a point midway between the eyebrows. The openings of the left and right channels protrude down to the left and right nostrils. The central or *dhuti* channel is midway between these two. The lower openings of all three reach as far as the tip of the vajra opening. |

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| The cakras are those of the six families. The space cakra at the crown is green and has four petals. The water cakra at the forehead is white and has four inner petals, eight intermediate and four outer petals, two of which are empty. The fire cakra at the throat is red and has four inner petals, eight intermediate petals, and thirty-two outer petals, of which four are empty. The air cakra in the center of the heart is black and has eight petals. The earth cakra at the navel is yellow and has four inner petals, eight petals outside of that, and sixteen outside of that, of which four are empty petals. Of the remaining twelve, six branch off from the right channel and are named Capricorn, Pisces, Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, Scorpio—the six houses of the sun's northern passage. The other six branch off from the left channel and are named Aquarius, Aries, Gemini, Leo, Libra, Sagittarius—the six houses of the sun's southern passage. Outside of these each of the twelve splits off into five petals to make sixty-four when the four empty petals of the intermediate directions are included. The gnosis cakra at the secret place is blue and has six inner petals, ten intermediate and sixteen outer petals. Therefore, it is said to have thirty-two petals, but this method of counting differs from that of the navel cakra and others where the inner and intermediate petals are not included in the count.  From the center of the navel upwards the dhuti central channel is known as the "channel which eliminates" (the other two channels), avadhuti, the Rahu channel, and the neuter channel. It is black and carries wind. The right channel is known as rasana, the sun channel, and the wisdom channel. It is red and mainly carries blood or menstrual blood. The left channel is known as lalana, the moon channel, and the channel of method. It is white and mainly carries seminal fluid. |

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| Below the navel the continuation of the dhuti central channel is known as sankhini. It curves to the right, belongs to the gnosis element, is colored blue, carries seminal fluid, and is also known as the kalagni channel. The continuation of the right channel is known as pingala. It curves to the left, is of the air element, black, and carries urine. The continuation of the left channel below the navel is known as mesa. It travels down the middle of the body, is of the earth element, yellow, and carries excrement.  These are called the six upper and lower major channels. The upper three mainly carry the life-sustaining wind and the lower three carry mainly the downwardly expelling wind.  The twelve main channels at the navel each divide up into five, and their continuation spreads throughout the body. Each of these divides up into six channels, and together they form the thirty channel petals on each of the twelve major joints of the arms and legs. These in turn divide to form the 360 channels of the fingers and toes, and so on. In total there are 72,000 channels. All channels originally divide up from the eight channel petals of the heart cakra.  ***The mobile winds***  There are ten main winds: life-sustaining wind, downwardly expelling wind, coexisting wind, upwardly moving wind, pervading wind, naga wind, turtle wind, lizard wind, devadatta wind, and dhana.jaya wind. In this tradition winds are not classified as main and secondary winds.  The coexisting wind and turtle wind flow through the east and southeastern petals of the heart cakra. The upwardly moving wind and the lizard wind flow through the south and southwestern petals. The pervading wind and devadatta wind flow through the north and northeastern petals. The naga wind and dhananjaya wind flow through the west and northwestern petals of the heart cakra. | http://www.snowlionpub.com/data/img3/N84_5.jpg *Kalachakra Thangka Giclee (GIKA3)* |

The life-sustaining wind is of the space element. The downwardly expelling wind is of the gnosis element. The coexisting wind and turtle wind are of the air element. The upwardly moving wind and lizard wind are of the fire element. The pervading wind and devadatta wind are of the water element. The naga wind and dhananjaya wind are of the earth element.

From the ten winds of the heart cakra winds flow to the cakras of navel, etc. and to all channels located within the body. Therefore, all winds of the body are permeated by the ten winds of the heart cakra.

According to this tradition the twelve great wind shifts occur as follows. One thousand, seven hundred and forty-three and three-quarter breaths flow uninterruptedly from a particular zodiacal petal of the navel cakra. This is followed by fifty-six and a quarter winds from the central channel. This constitutes one great wind shift. The same process then moves to another navel petal. In this way the great shifts are completed in the twelve zodiacal channels in a single day, resulting in twenty-one thousand, six hundred breaths. If the breaths flowing through the central channel are not counted separately, then in one day the flow of winds in each channel totals eighteen hundred.

On the right the winds flow earth, water, fire, air, space, and earth. On the left they flow space, air, fire, water, earth, and space, constituting six great shifts from each side. The first channel petals in the great shift process are toward the back of the body. The latter channel petals are towards the front of the body.

This process can be illustrated from the time that the shifts begin in the navel channel petals on the right. First, one thousand, seven hundred and forty-three and three-quarter earth-mandala breaths flow from the first petal on the right. At this time the same number of earth-mandala breaths flow solely through the right nostril. After that fifty-six and a quarter breaths flow from the central channel. At that time, apart from the quarter breath which when completed in the central pathway does not reach the nostrils, the remaining breaths flow equally through both nostrils. Then without any intervening pause, space-mandala winds of the same quantity as described above flow from the first petal on the left. These flow through the left nostril. This is followed by winds of the same quantity as described above flowing from the central channel and passing equally through both nostrils. Again winds of the water mandala flow from the second channel petal on the right, and so on.

In brief, the cycle of earth, space, water, air, fire, fire again, air, water, space, earth, earth again, and space make up the twelve great shifts. There are six channel petals on each side but only five mandalas. Therefore, there are two earth mandalas on the right and two space mandalas on the left. These are separate channel petals and therefore belong to individual shifts, but it is taught that they are each counted as a single mandala. Externally, when the sun has completed the six great shifts of its southern passage, it moves on to the six great shifts of its northern passage. Inwardly, however, the process alternates between right and left channel petals as described above.

The twelve channels of the navel each divide up into a further five channels to make sixty lesser channels, through which the mandalas of the minor elements flow. These are known as the mandalas of the lesser shifts or the mandalas of the minor elements. These are described as follows. The earth-mandala wind that flows through the first channel petal during the great shift on the right side has parts corresponding to five elements. These elements flow as follows. Together with the number of earth-mandala winds that flow through the first greater channel on the right as described previously, three hundred and forty-eight and three-quarter minor element earth-mandala winds flow through the first lesser channel.

Likewise, a similar number of breaths of water, fire, air, and space flow through the second, third, fourth, and fifth lesser channels, respectively. After that, fifty-six and a quarter gnosis winds flow though the central channel. The same process is repeated with the first channel of the left.

All five lesser channels that branch off from the first great channel on the right are pervaded by the earth mandala in the sense of its being the dominant mandala. A similar correspondence is made with the other groups of lesser channels. All six sets of five lesser channels on the right carry their winds in the dissolution order of earth, water, fire, air, and space. The corresponding sets of channels on the left carry their winds in the creation order of space, air, fire, water, and earth. In this way it can be understood that each great shift of wind at the nostrils carries five minor shifts of wind.

The predominant wind in the upper pathways of the three main channels is the life-sustaining wind. The predominant wind in their lower pathways is the downwardly expelling wind.

Whether it is from the left or right nostril, the earth-mandala wind emerges for twelve finger widths, the water-mandala thirteen finger widths, the fire fourteen, the air fifteen, and the space-mandala wind travels a distance of sixteen finger widths outside the nostrils. When these winds enter the nostrils, the earth-mandala reaches the navel before it returns. The water-mandala stops one finger width before the navel, the fire two finger widths, the air three, and the space-mandala stops four finger widths before the navel and then returns. The flow of the gnosis wind will be the same as the particular mandala winds it follows.

In this tantra the five breath mandalas of the left nostril are known as mandalas of the five aggregates, and the five of the right nostril are known as the mandalas of the five elements. Winds on the left are known as method winds, and those on the right are wisdom winds.

***The positioned bodhicitta drops***   
The center of the forehead cakra carries the body drop that creates the waking state. The throat cakra carries the speech drop creating the dream state. The heart cakra contains the mind drop that creates the deep sleep state. The navel cakra carries the gnosis drop that creates the fourth state. Furthermore, it is taught that the navel, the secret area, the center of the vajra jewel, and the tip of the jewel also carry drops of the waking, dream, deep sleep, and fourth states, respectively.

These drops comprise vital fluid, blood, and wind. In the drops at the throat, navel, and secret area the quantity of red element is greater than that of the white element. At the crown cakra and at the lower end of the central channel in the vajra jewel the quantity of white element is greater than that of the red element.

The red element at the navel is the source of all the red element in the body. The white element at the crown is the source of all the white element in the body. At the heart the white and red elements are equal in quantity. The very subtle wind and mind exists in these four drops by way of absorption. The size of a drop is that of a mustard seed.

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The Kalacakra empowerment has great significance in relation to the present time and the current state of people's minds. For example, right now we are living in an age of great external development. At the same time, there is also a similar acute development of the afflictive emotions of attachment, hatred, jealousy, and so forth, in the minds of sentient beings. Our minds are much cleverer, in a negative sense, than they were in past times. Whenever there are conditions of intense change in our outer world, these outer changes usually trigger inner changes as well. The outer changes that will take place in the world, according to Kalacakra, will be so extreme that they will force inner changes to occur. At such times as these, the Kalacakra is particularly relevant.

The Kalacakra texts predict that there will come a time when, after much degeneration and conflict, there will occur what is sometimes called the triumph of the Kingdom of Shambhala. During that time of peace and harmony, the Kalacakratantra will flourish. It is for people to cultivate a connection with Kalacakra, thereby enabling them to partake in the benefits of the Kingdom of Shambhala when it is established on Earth, that the Kalacakra empowerment ceremony is often given as a blessing to so many people at a time. Whether we full participate in the Kalacakra empowerment, simply take it as a blessing, or merely hear about it, we are creating the causes to meet the Kalacakra teachings again when they reemerge with the triumph of Shambhala. It is for that reason that the Kalacakra is given so widely now.

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With respect to its place in Tibetan Buddhism, the Kalacakra was seminal in shaping Tibetan Astronomy and, to some extent, general views on Cosmology as well. Today, almanacs are produced, solar and lunar eclipses predicted, and summer and winter solstices calculated on the basis of this system of astronomy. For whatever historical reasons, the Kalacakra teachings and practices, and more specifically its empowerment, have come to be hugely popular in the Tibetan tradition, with the ceremony often conducted to a gathering of tens of thousands at a time. I still remember vividly when I first received the empowerment in Dharamsala, India, as a young monk of eleven years old.

Perhaps Kalacakra is the only meditation deity belonging to the class of highest yoga tantra whose empowerment is conferred to even an ordinary, illiterate farmer. These large-scale ceremonies, often conducted by the Dalai Lama or the Panchen Lama, have enjoyed a status similar to public blessings rather than an actual initiation into a highest yoga tantra. So, on the general public level, Kalacakra has become the only highest yoga tantra meditation deity having a status somewhat comparable to Avalokitesvara and Tara.

Furthermore, the Kalacakra myth of the Shambhala kingdom, with its somewhat apocalyptic vision of Shambhala's destruction of the barbarians, exerts a powerful religious appeal to the Tibetan people, for it stands as a reminder that ultimately the forces of good always triumph over those of evil.... In the Tibetan-speaking world, the empowerment still remains the most sought-after religious event in the devout Buddhist's life, hopefully a situation that is likely to remain for a long time to come.

*—Thupten Jinpa, H.H. the Dalai Lama's translator*

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| |  | | --- | | **Health and Astrology in the Kalacakra Tantra, *As Long As Space Endures* Book Excerpt**  *ed. by* [*Edward A. Arnold*](http://www.snowlionpub.com/pages/arnold.php) *on behalf of* [*Namgyal Monastery Institute of Buddhist Studies*](http://www.namgyal.org)*, fore. by Robert A. F. Thurman*  *Perhaps the most widely offered initiation in the last few decades, Kalacakra is considered very appropriate for our difficult times. This excerpt by Vesna Wallace on some of its medical/astrological teachings is adapted from* As Long As Space Endures: Essays on the Kalacakra Tantra in Honor of H.H. the Dalai Lama*.*  The cosmos is the aspect of time that is characterized by the passage of days, months, and years, which is determined by the movement of the sun through the twelve houses of the external zodiac. Thus, time is conceptualized and measured as internal and external. The orbiting of the sun through the twelve houses in the course of a year correlates with the daily passage of vital energies through the twelve subtle channels of the internal zodiac. When the positioning of the twenty-seven constellations and ten planets along the zodiacal belt conform to the flow of vital energies in the twelve channels in the navel cakra, they promote physical and mental health. But when they are in disharmony, the configuration of planets in the celestial sphere has a pernicious effect on one's health and general well-being. This close connection between the external and internal zodiacs is based on the premise that the celestial sphere (*gola*), which holds the constellations and planets, is of the nature of wind, which is nondifferentiated from the wind of vital energies that supports a human body. These two types of winds support their respective spheres by holding and transmitting the elements of earth, water, fire, wind, space, and gnosis. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | The six types of elemental particles, which determine the specific characteristics of the solar houses, their dominating planets, and the twelve sections of the earth, also produce corresponding properties in the plants, metals, minerals, and gems used for medicinal purposes. The elementary particles determine the colors and tastes of these medicinal substances used to counteract imbalances in the elements of the body. For example, the earth-element, which is solidity, produces the color yellow and a salty taste. Substances dominated by this element are used for the elimination of sharp, acute pains, like those of colic, rheumatism, and the like, which are characterized by an excess and disturbance of the wind-element. Being of the nature of solidity, the earth-element calms the bodily wind-element, which is of the nature of mobility. Similarly, substances of the nature of the water-element that are characterized by the color white and a sweet taste are used for balancing the fire-element in the body, for the removal of toxins that aggravate the fire-element, and so on. Substances dominated by the fire-element and characterized by the color red and a hot taste counteract disturbances of the earth-element in the body and diseases caused by spirit possession. Substances of the nature of the wind-element are characterized by the color black and a pungent taste. They counteract disturbances of the water-element and conditions such as stiffness and paralysis. The space and gnosis elements, which produce blue and green colors and give bitter and sour tastes, respectively, facilitate the removal of a wide range of diseases caused by imbalances of various elements. | http://www.snowlionpub.com/data/img3/N87_8a.jpg |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | http://www.snowlionpub.com/data/img3/N87_8b.jpg | The elemental nature and medicinal qualities of the natural substances are contingent upon the time of year and season in which certain medicinal plants grow and upon the geographical areas in which particular medicinal substances are found. The time of year and geographical areas, in turn, accord with the nature of particular constellations, planetary positions, and the time of their influence on specific regions of the earth.  According to the Kalacakra tradition, due to the efficacy of the aforementioned six elements there are two sets of six months and six seasons, which make up a solar year. Each set of three seasons consisting of six solar months is characterized by the qualities of sattva (luminosity, intelligibility), rajas (activity, passion), and tamas (darkness, inertia), which are inherent in the elements. These three qualities are also inherent in diverse natural substances, with one of them being the most dominant quality. Similarly, each of the six seasons, which consists of two months, is divided into five periods due to the nature of these five elements—space, wind, fire, water, and earth. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | With regard to the human body, the six elements are carried by the vital energies in the channels that spread from the twelve zodiacal houses in the navel during the development of the fetus and that make up the mind-body complex. According to this Buddhist system, three hundred and sixty solar days, thirty lunar days (*tithi*), sixteen digits (*kala*) of the moon, and other divisions of time have their individual correlates in the various channels of the vital energies that carry the previously mentioned elements in the body. The vital energies in the body become disturbed by these elements, which constitute the three main bodily humors (*dosa*)—wind (*vata*), bile (*pitta*), and phlegm (*kapha*), which correspond to the three previously mentioned qualities of sattva, rajas, and tamas. In consequence, the disturbed vital energies give rise to physical and mental disorders that can lead to death. In contrast, the equilibrium of the elements of the three humors keeps the vital energies in balance and maintains good health. For as long as vital energies circulate through the twelve houses of the internal zodiac in the course of a day and night, the individual's life is preserved. But when vital energies begin to uninterruptedly circulate in a single left channel, that is, in a single uneven zodiacal house, for a day and night, for a fortnight, or for a month, then premature death becomes imminent within a year, a half year, or three months, respectively.  According to the Kalacakra tradition, the optimal lifespan of the individual is one hundred years. In the course of one hundred years, the bodily elements undergo a process of maturation that lasts ninety-six years and ten-and-a-half months. For the first thirty-two years and three-and-a-half months, vital energies in the body are dominated with the quality of sattva. For the next thirty-two years and three-and-a-half months, the vital energies are dominated by the quality of rajas; and for the last thirty-two years and three-and-a-half months, the vital energies are dominated by the quality of tamas. In the course of the remaining three years, three fortnights, and three days, vital energies gradually cease circulating, as the houses of the internal zodiac begin to collapse. | http://www.snowlionpub.com/data/img3/N87_8c.jpg *Gampopa & Milarepa* |   In this way, vital energies leave the bodily elements, causing their sequential dissolution that results in death. This division of the human lifespan of ninety-six years and ten-and-a-half months corresponds to the length of time it takes eight planets altogether to move through the circle and a half of twenty-seven constellations. |

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**More about the book . . .**

The Kalacakra Tantra—Kalacakra means "wheel of time"—is a tradition of Buddhist theory and practice whose root text treats a fantastic expanse of knowledge ranging from observations of the cosmos to investigations of meditative states and vital bodily energies. In the Tibetan-speaking world, a public Kalacakra initiation remains the most sought-after event in the life of a devout Buddhist. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama has long had a strong connection with the Kalacakra Tantra; he brought the initiation to the West in 1981, performing it in the U.S., Switzerland, Spain, and Australia. This volume has been created to celebrate his long involvement with the Kalacakra teachings.

The twenty-five contributors, scholars who have made tantric studies their specialty, have contributed translations of works by great Indian and Tibetan Kalacakra masters, analyses of historical figures, methods of practice, essays on medicine, ritual expertise, and ethical discipline. The collection also includes practical advice for Western students and practitioners from contemporary Tibetan Kalacakra masters.

"The practitioner's role in creating world peace is not simply a passive one but rather a creative process for the benefit of all beings. Clearly this is why His Holiness has emphasized the Kalacakra teachings."—Edward A. Arnold

"I welcome this rich volume of learned studies by all sorts of scholars and practitioners of the Kalacakra arts and sciences, assembled by the Namgyal Institute of Ithaca to honor and celebrate His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama.... May it please not only His Holiness but also all people who are interested in a positive world, a realized Shambhala or Land of Peace, where everyone, no matter what their religion or race or gender or culture, keeping them all and upgrading them all, can live in peace, enjoy their hard-earned human lifetime, and seek its essential potential by educating himself or herself in all the arts of wisdom, kindness, love, and joy!"—Robert A.F. Thurman, author of *Why the Dalai Lama Matters*

"An astutely philosophical text, ideal for advanced students, researchers, or practitioners of Buddhism, As Long as Space Endures also features practical advice for Western students directly from modern-day Tibetan Kalacakra masters. Highly recommended."—*Wisconsin Bookwatch*

"...essays and writings on a wide range of fascinating subjects...easily succeeds in giving the reader adequate background and evidence as to why the Dalai Lama has been so instrumental in contributing to what is now seen as a 21st-century global consciousness...lovely book."—Thomas Peter von Bahr, *New Age Retailer*

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