Illustrations

Tables

2.1 Contrasting Tibetan Ritual Music: Monastic Ensemble vs. Chöd Ritual 79
2.2 Stages of the Actual Practice 86
2.3 Ritual Structure of the Chöd Sādhanā, *Dedicating the Illusory Body* 89
2.4 During Meditation Sessions: Actual and Mentally Performed Ritual 105
2.5 Post-meditation Periods: Disposition of Mind In-between Sessions 105
5.1 Perfection of Wisdom Mantra with Ḍamaru: Variation 1 175
5.2 Mantra of the Perfection of Wisdom with Ḍamaru: Variation 2 175
5.3 Calling Forth Beings with the Thighbone Trumpet (Kangling) 178
5.4 Layers of Depth in Mantric Visualization: Interpreting Symbolism 179
5.5 Utterance of the Mantric Syllable “Āḥ” (21x): Variation 1 182
5.6 Utterance of the Mantric Syllable “Āḥ” (21x): Variation 2 182
9.1 Mauss’s Gift Economy vs. Market Economy 270
9.2 Gift Economy with the Mahāyāna Buddhist *Bodhicitta* Motivation 270
# Illustrations

## Figures

Vulture Peak—rock formation resembling a vulture on the sacred mountain at Rājgrha

Vulture Peak with Tibetan prayer flag offerings

1.1 Machik Labdrön (Ma gcig lab sgron), founder of the Chöd Tradition

1.2 Machik Labdrön, central figure, Merit Field of the Chöd Tradition

1.3 Padampa Sangyé (Pha dam pa sang rgyas)

1.4 Varjyoginī (Tib. Rdo rje rnal ’byor ma)

1.5 Tibetan liturgy: Transliteration, Romanization, and translation (line 1)

1.6 Tibetan liturgy: Transliteration, Romanization, and translation (line 2)

1.7 “Going for Refuge”: Musical transcription

2.1 General structure of a moment within Chöd performance

2.2 Ritual elements experienced during a moment of Chöd performance

3.1 “The White Distribution” melody (dkar ’gyed)

3.2 “Seven Branch Offering Practice” (yan lag bdun pa)

3.3 The “Seven Branch Offering Practice”

3.4 “Devotion to the Spiritual Guide” (bshes gnyen tshul bzhiṅ)

4.1 Machik Labdrön, holding the drum (dāmaru) and Tibetan bell (dril bu)

4.2 Relative stability of tradition: Core beliefs and the extent of variation

4.3 His Eminence the Ninth Khalkha Jetsun Dampa Rinpoché, Jampel Namdröl Chökyi Gyaltṣen (1932–2012), head of the Ganden Chöd lineage

4.4 Position of the Chöd dāmaru’s suspended pellets and length of the strings, as modified by Ven. Pencho Rabgey

4.5 Ven. Pencho Rabgey “Pala” demonstrating how to practice with the dāmaru
Illustrations  xi

4.6  Ven. Pencho Rabgey adjusting the drum’s rotation subtly with arm, hand, and wrist  162

8.1  Ven. Pencho Rabgey, “Pala,” giving an invited lecture in the Interfaith Chapel, University of Rochester, at the event “Music, Healing & Ritual in Tibetan Cultural Contexts”  227

Companion Website*

See Companion Website / www.soundofvultureswings.com

*Traditionally, the Chöd melodies are held sacred, passed from master to disciple through many generations of Chöd practitioners, and should not be taken as the basis for compositions outside the Chöd tradition.

According to tradition, a person who wishes to practice the meditational and musical aspects of the Chöd tradition, must receive the oral transmission of sacred liturgical Chöd melodies from a qualified teacher who possesses all the appropriate initiations and permissions.

The music notations and transcriptions that appear in this book also should not be taken as the basis for creative compositions outside the context of the Chöd traditional practices.

With thanks for your compassionate understanding.
Top photo: Vulture Peak—rock formation resembling a vulture on the mountain at Rājgīr (Rājgrha), India. Bottom photo: Vulture Peak with Tibetan prayer flag offerings. (Photos by Iria Crespo)