

THE CHARIOT
for Travelling the Path
TO FREEDOM



The Life Story of Kalu Rinpoche

TRANSLATED BY KENNETH I. McLEOD



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through this work, may all beings find the path to freedom



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by Kenneth I. McLeod

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Foreword

To talk about the life of Kalu Rinpoche, we should talk about each aspect of his life: his body, his speech, his mind, his capabilities, and his activity.

Generally, to understand fully a lama's life, it is necessary to know about his outer, inner, and secret lives. The outer life is the life everyone sees—his birth, his education, the way he lives, and so on. The inner life is his spiritual life, his practice and meditation. The secret life is his realization—his understanding of the nature of reality and the dreams, visions, and other experiences which arise from this understanding. To be able to understand and appreciate all these, one must have a deep understanding oneself and one must see and appreciate one's teacher as being buddha. In fact, only someone who has attained the bodhisattva levels of realization can fully appreciate his lama's life of freedom.

Ordinary people such as we are see different aspects of Rinpoche's life. Some see wonderful qualities in one area, others in another. Some see only the obvious qualities, others notice more subtle ones. Here, I can say only what I see. It wouldn't be right for me to say that Rinpoche has qualities which he doesn't have; nor would it be right to say that he doesn't have qualities which he does have. Other people may have different ideas about Rinpoche. Each person sees and appreciates different things.

To begin, let me talk about Kalu Rinpoche's form, his body. I remember that when I first met him over twenty years ago, he seemed to be a frail old man, thin and not very strong. As time passed, he seemed to grow younger. Generally, old

people have difficulty in moving. Their bodies are heavy and their joints are stiff. Rinpoche, however, moves easily. When he wants to stand up, he simply stands up. When he wants to walk, he walks. There is no stiffness or difficulty in his movements—his body is light and flexible like a child's. He is not bothered by cold, either. Even if he is wearing only thin clothing, he never seems to be cold. It is the same with heat. Most old people are very sensitive to heat and cold, but this isn't the case with Rinpoche.

His body is always relaxed and at ease—he can sit all day quietly and peacefully. Most of us become uncomfortable and unhappy after sitting in one place for more than a few hours. During the recent series of empowerments for *The Treasury of Precious Treasure Teachings*, Rinpoche sat all day and every day on the same seat, never tired and completely at ease. His sight is also remarkable. At an age when most people have difficulty in seeing and reading, he has no trouble reading texts. It is the same with food. Tibetan food, Indian food, Chinese food, Western food, whatever he is offered he accepts and is never troubled with indigestion or other problems. His relaxation and peacefulness are so pronounced that anyone who comes to see him soon feels better. Even people who are excited or troubled become calm and peaceful in his presence. The same thing happens to animals: cats won't kill mice when Rinpoche is present.

As for his speech, when a person asks Rinpoche for personal advice, Rinpoche always gives him something meaningful and relevant, something which helps immediately and in the future. He never

speaks without purpose. Scholars, contemplatives, and ordinary people find what he says meaningful, pertinent, and easily understandable. When they hear Rinpoche's replies to their questions, they invariably feel, "Yes, that's right; I understand." Rinpoche never boasts about his own achievements and never expresses dislike for another person. In short, he has the speech of an attained master.

As for Rinpoche's mind, we should consider his knowledge and wisdom, his love and compassion, and his ability and effectiveness. There are two kinds of knowledge: knowledge of reality and knowledge about phenomena. The first is knowledge of the nature of phenomena—emptiness, mahamudra, the dream-like nature of phenomena. Rinpoche has this kind of knowledge. He sees the emptiness of phenomena and understands that they arise just as experiences arise in a dream. How do we know? Rinpoche exhibits no attachment to anything. He has many patrons. When one of them helps Rinpoche with a major project, Rinpoche acknowledges the help but he doesn't lavish praise on the patron or expect him to do even more. In fact, some of Rinpoche's patrons haven't always appreciated his quiet response and the lack of attachment that underlies it. Basically, while Rinpoche is very happy to see his projects come to completion, he doesn't cling to that happiness or try to build on it. It is the same with difficulties or misfortune. Rinpoche remains cheerful and unperturbed even when a situation turns out badly. He doesn't become depressed but just accepts the situation as it is. This kind of behavior is only possible for some-

one who truly understands and experiences the emptiness and dream-like nature of our world and our lives. Ordinary people become much more involved with their own reactions, they become very excited or very unhappy and lose themselves in their feelings. Rinpoche isn't like that—when things go well, fine; when things go badly, well, that's what happened. In either case he doesn't lose himself in excitement or depression.

As for his knowledge about phenomena, he seems to know everything. He is very knowledgeable about the way people function and understands well how to work with people. He is skillful in business and administrative matters, too. At the same time, he knows all aspects of Dharma—rituals, prayers, meditations, philosophy, music, shrine preparation, iconography, and so on. Although he knows all these subjects, he doesn't display his knowledge. If some of the arrangements for a ritual are wrong or there is some mistake in the sequence of a ceremony, he rarely makes any comment. Some lamas are very strict; they point out all the mistakes and punish the people who make them. Rinpoche doesn't cling to formal tradition that way. Yet if one asks him what the proper sequence is or how the shrine should be arranged or how to do a certain meditation, he always knows the answer.

Rinpoche's wonderful love for all beings is mainly a result of his practice of mind training. He really has a great love for all beings—people, animals, and others. When someone is ill, Rinpoche does as much as he can for them. He prays for their recovery and generally carries out a





Kalu Rinpoche with translator Chu Chi Nyima

special Shangpa prayer ritual which he composed himself. He is always ready to help anyone, without prejudice or discrimination.

As for his ability and effectiveness, Rinpoche is a teacher of Dharma. Whether he is teaching or just talking with people, he is being helpful. He is able to help scholars, contemplatives, and ordinary people—anyone, regardless of their background. He speaks to them in a way that they can understand. His help is not simply academic or theoretical. It is meaningful assistance which helps people understand their minds.

Turning to Rinpoche's capabilities, we find that he is a master of all the five traditional sciences: crafts, healing, language, logic, and Dharma. He draws well, paints beautifully, knows the proportions and methods of construction for stupas, tem-

ples, and other structures, sews, makes images from clay, and so on. He is very knowledgeable in the science of healing and gives people sound medical advice based on his knowledge of the movement of energy in the body. Rinpoche also has an excellent command of language. Sometimes, of course, he just writes quickly, yet when he wishes to, he writes beautifully and his work is deep and, if necessary, formal and scholarly. His mastery of logic and rhetoric enables him to draw fine distinctions and to reason with subtlety. As for his knowledge of Dharma, even though he is not a scholar, he still has a vast and profound knowledge of the main authoritative texts and is able to clarify the philosophical distinctions among different systems such as the Middle Way, Self-Emptiness, or Other-Emptiness. When Rinpoche explains topics such as these, his



beyond comparison. Moreover, it is truly enlightened activity, for it flows naturally and effortlessly, arising spontaneously from the power of prayer and blessing.

These, then, are the wonderful qualities which I see in Kalu Rinpoche. In truth, the full scope of his life is beyond comprehension. Just as children in the same family will have different impressions of their father, so all of us will see and appreciate different aspects of our teacher. We are all very fortunate to be able to meet and study with such a teacher as Rinpoche.

Bokar Rinpoche
Samdup Tarjeyling Monastery
1983

comments are not just clarifications of a difficult idea, but explanations which are meaningful and helpful in understanding mind.

Finally, we should consider Rinpoche's activity. He is regarded as the activity emanation of Jamgon Kongtrul. In fact, except for a few high lamas, most people in Tibet were not aware of this connection. Nevertheless, Rinpoche was famous in Kham for the great work he did as service to the Doctrine and to sentient beings—teaching, establishing retreat centers, restoring stupas and temples, and so on. When he came to Lhasa, his activity in the Dharma soon became well known. In Bhutan, too, he established retreats and built stupas, and then again in India and also in the West, in France, Canada, and the United States. The full extent of his activity to help beings of all kinds is



Bokar Rinpoche



Translator's Introduction

Lineage and transmission are essential elements of all religious traditions. In Buddhism, the lineage of teachers starts with Buddha Sakyamuni who attained enlightenment in Bodhgaya, India, about two thousand, five hundred years ago. Buddha Sakyamuni's enlightenment has been faithfully transmitted through an unbroken succession of teachers over the centuries, down to the present day. This experience of enlightenment is the essence of the Buddha's teachings, for through it the confusion and ignorance which create and perpetuate suffering come to an end. In each generation there have been teachers who have experienced enlightenment themselves and have passed on that experience to their students.

The teacher is the student's actual contact with enlightenment. In seeing the simplicity and calm of his teacher, the student is initially inspired to practice the Dharma. As he discovers the depths of his teacher's compassion and wisdom, the student's trust in his spiritual friend grows and he is led to follow this example of one who lives to help others. Through the student's faith and devotion, his confusion and fixations dissolve, his mind opens, and he becomes one with his master's mind—enlightenment. For the student, then, the teacher is the embodiment of enlightenment, the prime example of freedom.

The Tibetan word for a teacher's life is *mam-thar* which means "full freedom"—the teacher's life of freedom, how he has attained freedom, and how he leads others to freedom. Consequently, such a life story is not really a biography. It is an account of the life of a teacher which con-

veys the way he has lived and the way he would encourage his students to live. There may be little personal information, only general descriptions of specific events in his life, and little of his personal reflections. Nevertheless, a work of this kind conveys the essence of a teacher's life, how he has lived to realize freedom. Thus, it acts as an inspiration and guide to his students.

The essence of Kalu Rinpoche's life is simplicity and directness: avoid evil actions, practice virtue, and train and understand the mind. Rinpoche lives and teaches this way. He deals directly with situations as they arise, avoiding alternatives which would hurt or offend others and seeking equitable and effective solutions. In his teaching, he simply presents the essential points of practice including only enough philosophy or background for the practice to be understood. There are no elaborate explanations or philosophical interpretations. The present Situ Rinpoche describes him as one who teaches the meaning of the Dharma, not the dogma. This same simplicity and directness are evident in Rinpoche's writings about his life.

As for the translation itself, a few comments about its presentation here are in order. First, since this work will be of interest primarily to people who know Kalu Rinpoche and many of them will already be familiar with the basic terms of Buddhism, it was felt that the use of some technical terms in English and Sanskrit would not cause problems. Nevertheless, to make this work accessible to as many people as possible, several appendices, footnotes, and a glossary have been in-



cluded. (Words marked with an asterisk [*] will be found in the glossary.) In addition, the books mentioned in the bibliography will provide further explanations should they be needed.

Secondly, the text of the life story itself has three components. Rinpoche originally wrote a life story prayer at the request of Kardorje Rinpoche of Sera. This prayer (including later additions made by Kalu Rinpoche at the request of Bokar Rinpoche) appears as a separate unit to facilitate its use as an actual prayer. The second component is a more detailed life story, again written by Kalu Rinpoche at the request of Bokar Rinpoche. In this section, each verse of the prayer is explained by a prose commentary. In writing this commentary, Rinpoche used a traditional method, namely the insertion of additional sentences and phrases among the words of the original verses. A literal translation is difficult and at best awkward, so the prose commentary has been rendered in the first person while the prayer remains in the second person. In effect, Rinpoche explains each verse of the prayer in his own words.

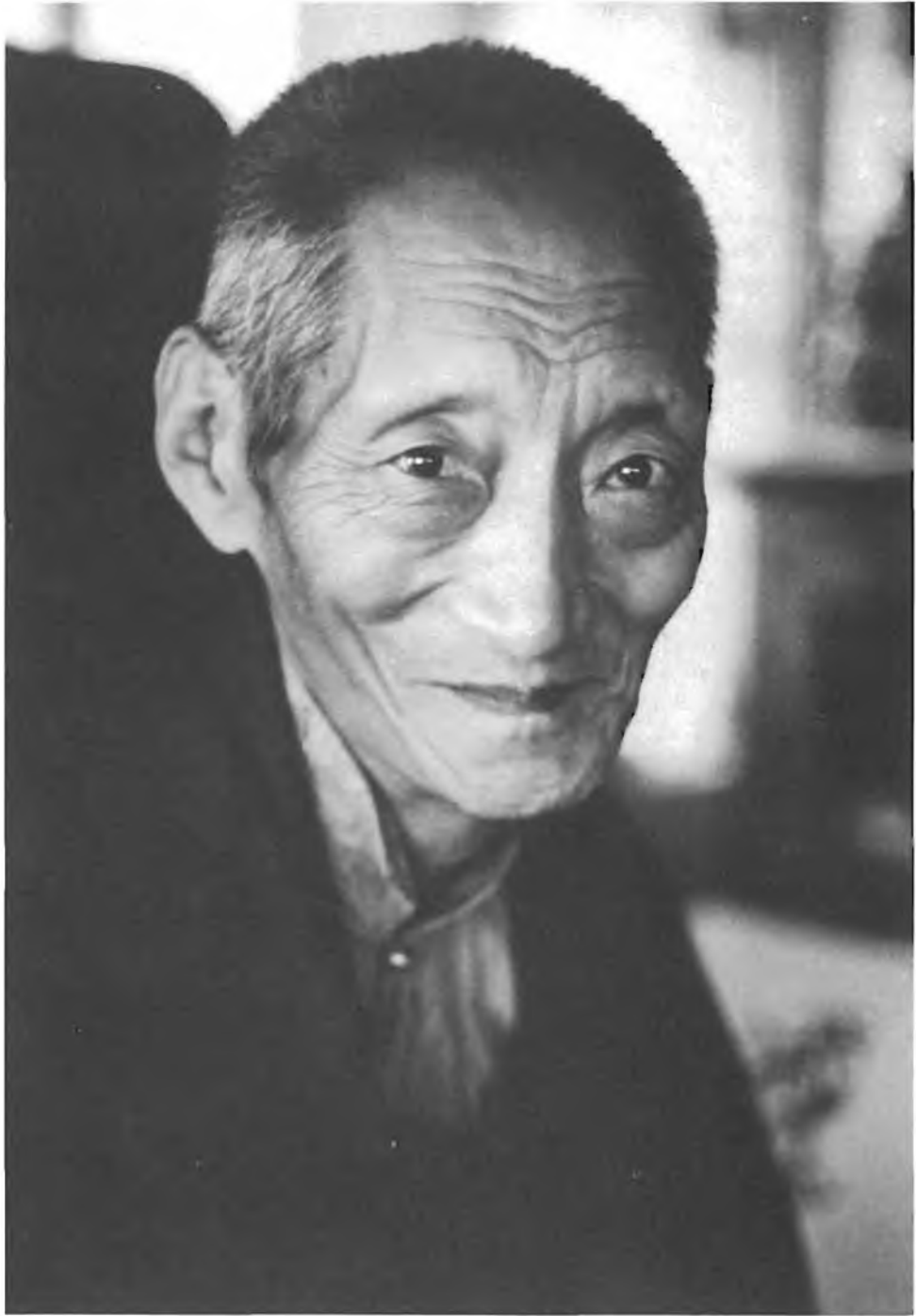
The third component is a set of insertions written by the translator and printed in italics. These paragraphs contain additional information about Rinpoche's life, information which has come from Rinpoche himself or from people who know him well.

Rinpoche states explicitly that he wrote this book at the request of his students and with the intention of helping the Doctrine of the Victorious One. To describe his life, he adopted the formal poetic conventions of biographical prayers in the



Tibetan tradition. This literary mode celebrates the richness and majesty of spiritual values, but it is a kind of language no longer in use in English. Some readers may be surprised by the presentation here, but anyone who has met Rinpoche will know that his intention is simply to help all who come into contact with him. If the rendering of the commentary in the first person leaves anyone with the impression that Rinpoche is simply lavishing praise on himself, the responsibility is the translator's alone.

This book will mean different things to different people. For some, it may be interesting simply as a Tibetan lama's account of his life. For others, it will provide a means to deepen and to express their faith and respect for their teacher. For everyone, however, it will plant a seed which will one day grow into the wish to undertake that journey to freedom to which Rinpoche so clearly shows the way.





A SHOWER OF BLESSING

a prayer to one's lama

NAMO GURUBHYA—HOMAGE TO THE LAMA!

M *riad forms appear without break from relationships and coincidence.
The lama of appearance as symbol arises around me.
Indescribable this dance of magical forms.*

*In experiencing appearance and emptiness as naturally free, I pray to you.
Bless me with the direct understanding of actively appearing nirmanakaya.*

*Sounds and voices of all kinds come without break from different sources and conditions.
The lama of sound as mantra arises intermediately.*

Inconceivable this concert of melody and song.

In experiencing sound and emptiness as naturally free, I pray to you.

Bless me with the direct understanding of unceasing sambhogakaya.

*Thoughts and memories of different things, indescribable awareness which is no thing,
The ultimate lama of awareness itself arises within.*

Limitless this panorama of thought and memory.

In experiencing the bliss of clarity and emptiness, I pray to you.

Bless me with the direct understanding of unborn dharmakaya.

In these ways, all phenomena, appearance, sound, and thought,

As signs to me to understand directly the nature of being,

Are solely expressions of my glorious lama.

In recollecting your great kindness, I pray to you.

Bless me with the direct understanding of the nature of being of all phenomena.

Whole oceans of the Three Roots everywhere present

Dance like moons in the water of the student's devotion.

They never are anything but the venerable lama himself.

In experiencing the perfection of all capabilities, I pray to you.

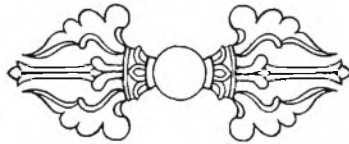
Bless me with the fusion of my mind with yours.



*Bless me with the surrender of ego-fixation.
Bless me with the birth of being without needs.
Bless me with the full development of love and compassion.
Bless me with the birth of uncontrived devotion.
Bless me with the cessation of materialistic thinking.
Bless me with the subsiding of confusion on its own ground.
Bless me with the direct understanding of mahamudra, the nature of being.
Bless me with the attainment of buddhahood in this single life.*

*From now until I attain enlightenment
May I wear the jewelry of perfect discipline and ethics.
Enriched with ability in the equanimity of bodhicitta,
May I see the phases of development and completion to their end
And, with no distinction between the mind of student and teacher,
attain full enlightenment.*

This heartfelt song about experiencing the phenomenal world as one's lama was sung spontaneously by Karma Rangjung Kunchab at the request of the diligent practitioner Karma Sherab. May it cause the blessings of the glorious lama to enter his heart.







THE SONG OF THE
SPONTANEOUS ACTIVITY OF ENLIGHTENMENT

a prayer about the life of freedom of the glorious lama as he spoke it himself

Gloriously filled with the two accumulations over countless previous aeons
And mastering development, completion, and bodhicitta,
You enjoy the splendor of benefits for both others and yourself.
To you, Rangjung Kunchab, I humbly pray.

Achieving the stage of mastery through the practice of the Shangpa teachings,
Palzang Tulku intentionally took rebirth
As the Mantra-Holder Lekshe Drayang, your father.
To you, who approached your mother's womb, I humbly pray.

On the occasion of the celebration of the tenth-day feast,
Your parents dreamt that their noble lama Jamgon Kongtrul said,
"I need a place to stay," and merged with them,
And that Orgyen Rinpoche and his consort actually came.
To you, who were conceived amidst portents, I humbly pray.

During her pregnancy, your mother glowed
And wonderful signs came continually in her dreams.
To you, who were born upright
In a rainbow pavilion and a rain of flowers, I humbly pray.

As soon as you were born you smiled radiantly and spoke.
Your parents were full of joy.
To you, who were greatly honoured by all and held to be
A wonderful incarnation, I humbly pray.

Even while you were a child, virtuous tendencies stirred.
To you, who naturally and spontaneously wished only
To dismiss ordinary life and keep simply to practice
In the solitude of a mountain valley, I humbly pray.

To you, whose innate propensities for compassion and devotion
Would move you to tears for all sentient beings afflicted and oppressed by suffering
And for lamas to whom you were connected
By maturing empowerments and liberating teachings, I humbly pray.

At the age of thirteen you were ordained in the Doctrine.
At the age of fifteen, before the assembly of the summer retreat,
You spoke fearlessly and confidently on the three ordinations.
To you, whose clear intellect captured the hearts of all, I humbly pray.

At the age of sixteen you entered the three-year course
In the great retreat center of Lama Jamgon.
Foretold by the Victorious One, Lama Jamgon was Khyungpo really returning to the world.
To you, whose faith and enthusiasm were limitless, I humbly pray.

During this time your venerable lama, Norbu Don-kun Drub,
Who had reached the peaks of experience and realization,
Gave you innumerable empowerments, authorizations, and instructions from the
 Old and New Traditions
And, in particular, The Golden Doctrines of the great master Khyungpo.
To you, into whom were poured all the contents of this vessel of teachings, I humbly pray.

In addition, you studied with many learned and attained teachers
And continually worked diligently at studying, contemplating and meditating on
Innumerable collections of instructions from the sutras and tantras of the
 Old and New Traditions.
To you, who became the spiritual son of them all, I humbly pray.

In your dreams, the great Lama Jamgon
Conferred in full the four empowerments and you yourself
Changed into the form of Padmasambhava and brought gods and demons
 under your control.
To you, to whom the mountain goddesses offered songs, I humbly pray.

Through your identification with yidams you subdued ghosts and demons.
With Tara's prophetic assurance you triumphed over obstacles.
To you, who, in meeting assemblies of buddhas, bodhisattvas,
And holy elders, offered prayers of aspiration, I humbly pray.

*At the age of twenty-five you gave up the affairs of ordinary life,
Content with whatever you had, impartial, free from temporal concerns.
All offerings made out of faith or on behalf of the dead, you used for spiritual purposes.
To you, king of the renunciation of temporal activity, I humbly pray.*

*Friendly with everyone yet without attachment to anyone,
With your compassion you cared equally for the friendly, unfriendly, and indifferent.
Free from attachment, you enjoyed pleasurable experiences as a vajra feast,
To you, the king of contemplatives, I humbly pray.*

*In your external discipline you exercised restraint, avoiding actions which would
harm or lead you to harm others.
In your internal discipline you continuously strove at bodhicitta in order to help others.
In your mystic discipline you put into practice the integration of development
and completion.
To you, who fulfill the three commitments, the vajra holder with the three ordinations,
I humbly pray.*

*Many holy persons have confirmed
Your being a human emanation
Of Lodru Taye, Jamgon Vajra Ratna, and others.
To you, the holy son of the Victorious One, I pray.*

*By reciting profoundly sacred phrases and the names of buddhas
And with materials consecrated by the Spoken and Treasure Traditions,
You set countless millions of fish, insects, and other animals
On the path to freedom. To you I humbly pray.*

*With your wonderful resolve to teach, spread, sustain, and preserve
The Doctrine of the Victorious One and particularly the Shangpa transmission,
You made the Doctrine flourish again and kept its instructions alive.
To you, the incomparable and excellent guide, I humbly pray.*

*You entrusted the teachings of the Shangpa tradition
To Kardorje, Lha-tsun, Tok-me, and noble Mochok,
To many excellent, learned, and attained lamas from all schools,
And to Bokar Tulku and many other notable persons. To you I humbly pray.*



*At the seat of the glorious Jonang school, at Zhang-Zhung and other places,
You restored the Doctrine and carried out great works for the Dharma.
You expressed your faith and aspirations to your heart's satisfaction before shrines in
Central Tibet and Tsang.
To you, who made meaningful your free and well-favored birth, I humbly pray.*

*When irreligious armies conquered the snowy regions of Tibet,
Due to the force of previous aspirations you travelled to the Holy Country.
There you taught and spread the Dharma throughout the land.
To you, the teacher of the noble path to freedom, I humbly pray.*

*You followed closely the guidance of Rangjung Rikpai Dorje,
The Sixteenth Holder of the Black Crown.
He looked after you with great love.
To you, who were entrusted with the teachings of the Practice Lineage, I humbly pray.*

*Of the Father and Son Victors who intentionally take form in the world,
You looked after Shamar, Situ, Jamgon, and Gyaltsab.
To you, who gave them the essential instructions of the traditions of the Four Teachings
As one would pour the contents of one vessel into another, I humbly pray.*

*Tibet's Supreme Guide in every aspect of the Victorious One's Doctrine,
His Holiness Ten-dzin Gyamtso, gave profound and secret instruction to you.
To you, who, in following his commands, gave
Many holy people spiritual instructions with empowerments and explanations,
I humbly pray.*

*In addition, you have offered spiritual instruction in maturation and liberation
To many holy people including lamas, incarnations, and notable individuals.
You carried out these great activities for the teachings of all traditions.
To you, who carry the light of the Victor's Doctrine, I humbly pray.*

*You have given immeasurable service to the Doctrine as spiritual instruction and as
spiritual experience.*

*You have made offerings and prayed to your heart's satisfaction at many great
and holy sites.*

You have set hundreds of Sangha to practice in retreat centers.

To you, the torch of the Doctrine, I humbly pray.

*A throng of fortunate students speaking different languages,
From countries large and small all over the world,
Have gathered like swans coming to a lake with water lilies.
To you, who mature and liberate these worthy beings, I humbly pray.*

*You have travelled through the open sky to great countries all over the world.
Men and women of different nationalities and languages
You have placed in the domain of guidance of the Great Compassionate One.
To you, who teach the sure and noble way, I humbly pray.*

*You have dispersed your students as keepers of the Doctrine.
The great banner of the code of the ten virtuous actions has been raised high.
The practice of gathering and clearing away has spread over the whole world.
To you, who carry the light of the Victorious One's Doctrine, I humbly pray.*

*When you were seventy-eight, you travelled over the ocean
In the appropriate directions to visit different continents and lands all over the world.
You went to more than thirty-five countries.
To you, who travel in the open sky, I humbly pray.*

*You turned the Wheel of Dharma of the three vehicles for those sentient beings
you would train.*

*In particular, you established many major retreat centers
And spread the teachings of the Six Syllables throughout the world.
To you, with whom any relationship is meaningful, I humbly pray.*

*In particular, you rekindled the embers of the teaching of the sutras and tantras
Of all the regions of Tibet and China.
To you, who present a feast of aid and joy
Through your great works for well-being everywhere, I humbly pray.*

*When you were seventy-nine, you conferred the empowerments and teachings
Of The Great Treasury of Precious Treasure Teachings of the inner tantras
On the Kagyupa Father and Son Victors
And many thousands of faithful students from all over the world.
To you, who unbolt the doors of maturation and liberation, I humbly pray.*

*You have learnt that all phenomena, appearances, and sounds are like dreams or
enchantments.
Everything you have done was done with the sole intention of helping others.
Without exception, everything you have received has been directed to religious purposes.
To you, for whom any relationship becomes significant, I humbly pray.*

*In summary, your mind has merged with the minds
Of all the excellent and incomparable lamas.
Your actions fulfill their vision.
You never waver from bodhicitta and development and completion.
To you, holy son of the Victorious One, I humbly pray.*

*By the blessing of this prayer,
May the glorious benefits for others and me be enjoyed,
May I be born miraculously in the Pure Land of Bliss
And become a leader and guide for all sentient beings.*





Kalu Rinpoche, H.H. Karmapa, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche





Vajradhara Buddha

THE CHARIOT FOR TRAVELLING THE PATH TO FREEDOM
the lama's life story which nurtures faith

With constant reverence, I bow and pay homage
At the lotus feet of my glorious lama.
He is Vajradhara*, the lord encompassing the hundred
aspects of enlightenment,
Who in a single form unites all sources of refuge without exception,
The victorious ones of the ten directions and their sons.

In general, one's lot in samsara (1) follows from previous virtuous and evil actions. In particular, the experience of the precious human form endowed with the eighteen kinds of freedom and good fortune (2) arises as the result of completely pure moral conduct—renunciation of the ten non-virtuous actions and cultivation of the ten virtuous ones (3). Even more, to be born the son of religious parents, to be guided by fully capable holy teachers, and to immerse oneself in the Buddha's teachings which are as vast and deep as the ocean—all come from being gloriously filled with oceans of the two accumulations of merit and pristine cognition (4) over the course of countless previous aeons. Such is my praiseworthy karmic heritage.

My practice in this life has been to apply the essential points of the techniques of development and completion (5) of the profound mystic path of mantra and the two kinds of precious bodhicitta (6) of the greater vehicle (7) which develops the seeds of spiritual understanding. The consistent power of coincidence and connections gradually brought about mastery of these practices. The result has been oceans of splendid benefits for both others and me, all of which I now enjoy.

The last line of the verse addresses the prayer to me, Rangjung Kunchab, which means Self-Arisen and All-Pervading.

My father was the noble Mantra-Holder (8) Lekshe Drayang. His history begins with Kagyu Tenzin*, the great master of Tsabtsa Monastery in Kham or Eastern Tibet. The spiritual heir of Kagyu Tenzin was Karma Lhatong*, and he attained natural control of mind and phenomena. His student was Karma Norbu* who was also known as Karma Shenpen Ozer. Through his practice of the orally transmitted instructions, he attained control of mind and phenomena and openly performed such physical miracles as flying and soaring in the sky like a bird. His student was Ratak Palzang Tulku, the twelfth incarnation of the incarnation lineage of Tsona Monastery in the Nyarong district of Kham. He also received the elixir of the key instructions of the glorious Shangpa Kagyu (9). For many years, he stayed sealed in caves and, enduring tremendous hardships, practiced the wonderful Shangpa Kagyu cycle of teachings. In short, he planted the royal banner of practice. With full control of dreams and illusion-like appearances, he could pass without hindrance through the walls of his house and could know clearly and directly past and future events, such was the level of mastery that he had achieved. In accordance with his prophecy that in his next birth he would come as a guardian of the remaining treasure teachings (10) of the great treasure-finder Yong-ge



Dusum Khyenpa

Mingyur Dorje*, he was born in Tre-sho Gangi Rawa*, which is one of the four great provinces of the lower part of Dolkham, to the family of the first Karmapa, Dusum Khyenpa*. Jamgon Lodru Taye (11) identified him as the intentional rebirth of Palzang Tulku. As the thirteenth incarnation, he became a mantra-holder or lay-practitioner of vajrayana (12) and was known by the name Karma Lekshe Drayang.

In Rinpoche's home valley is the great Kubum stupa. This stupa marks the birthplace of the first Karmapa, Dusum Khyenpa.

As a child, Dusum Khyenpa wore a goatskin while he herded sheep and cattle in the hills. Later, when news of his great spiritual attainments filtered back to his homeland, the goatskin became an object of veneration. It was the only possession of Dusum Khyenpa which had been kept by his family. The stupa of Kubum was constructed in his memory and two smaller stupas containing the remains of his parents were built on either side. Subsequently, the family home became known as Rat-tsak Dzong (Goatskin Castle) and the family name became Rat-tsak which was later modified to Ratak, Rinpoche's family name. Rinpoche and his father are descendants of the family of the first Karmapa.

When Rinpoche was in his early twenties, he supervised the restoration of the Kubum stupa which had been severely damaged during border clashes with Chinese troops. At that time, the significance of the name Kubum (one hundred thousand images) had been forgotten, but during the restoration the stupa was found to contain, in fact, one hundred thousand small images.

With the tremendous intellectual capabilities from his training in former lives, Lekshe Drayang became famous even at an early age for his learning in the five traditional sciences (13) and particularly in the science of healing. He studied under the two Jamgon lamas, Jamgon Lodru Taye and Jamgon Khyentse Wangpo*, and also under Mipam Nampar Gyalwa*. From them he received oceans of profound and extensive instructions including *The Five Treasuries* (14). Through his exertion in the path of development and completion, he had visions of many deities. Simply the mention of his lamas' names would cause the hair on his body to rise and tears to come to his eyes, indications of his faith in and devotion to them. He engaged fully in union and destruction (15), profound practices of the secret path of mantra (16). With the promise and prophecy that in his next life he would be born in the country of Mi-nyak to the east where he would work impartially for the benefit of all beings, he left his body at the age of sixty-eight. This man was my father.

As for my mother, she was devoted to the Dharma from an early age. She had the good fortune to be worthy of participating in the Vajra Feast of Noble Dakinis and other ceremonies led by Jamgon Kongtrul. He gave her the name Little

White Tara. In addition to the five one hundred thousands of the preliminary practices (17), she completed one hundred million recitations of the Vajra Guru* mantra, two hundred million Mani's (18), one hundred million Amitabha* mantras, and one hundred million Vajrasattva* mantras. Ever engaged in extensive accumulations of virtue and purification, she left her body at the age of seventy-eight at Bumthang in Bhutan.

Portents and conditions favourable to the union of my parents steadily assembled even from the time that they were young. In due course, they were married according to their wishes. For some years they stayed at a retreat center in the Dzongsho district called the Gathering Place of the Sugatas where they did separate yidam retreats (19). One evening, when they met to celebrate a profound and elaborate tenth-day vajra feast (20), I approached my mother's womb.

On this occasion of celebrating the tenth-day feast of warriors and dakinis (21), my parents dreamt that their noble lama, Jamgon Kongtrul, appeared. He said to them, "I need a place to stay," and then merged with them. They also dreamt that Orgyen Rinpoche* and his consort actually came from the Copper-Colored Mountain* along with a throng of warriors and dakinis. Thus was I conceived amidst all these portents.

During her pregnancy, my mother glowed with joy and good health. Wonderful dreams of good portent came to her continually. She stayed at a hilltop retreat called the Precipice Hermitage. One day while she was out gathering roots, branches, flowers, and fruit from



different medicinal plants, she sensed that birth would soon take place and returned to her home. I was born upright, feet first, amidst wonderful events that were seen by everyone. Above and all around the house brilliant rainbows formed and snow fell gently like a rain of flowers.

My mother and relatives described how, as soon as I was born, I looked around and smiled radiantly, showing no fear or shyness, and how I spoke about the spread of the Kagyu (22) teachings and repeated the Six-Syllable Mantra (23). My parents and everyone in the region were full of joy, and my birth was heralded as the birth of a very wonderful incarnation.

Even as a child, noble virtuous tendencies stirred within me. Naturally and spontaneously, I wished only to dismiss the wealth and enjoyments of an ordinary life and to keep simply to religious practice in some rocky shelter in the solitude of a mountain valley.

I had noble innate propensities for compassion and devotion. My compassion for sentient beings would move me to tears, particularly for all those afflicted and oppressed by suffering. So, too, would I be moved by my faith in and devotion to the lamas with whom I formed a connection by receiving from them empowerments which mature one spiritually and teachings which enable one to attain liberation (24).



Dzokchen Rinpoche, Thubten Chokyi Dorje



Situ XI, Padma Wangchuk



Palþung Khyentse, Shenpen Ozer

When Rinpoche was still a child, the fifth Dzokchen Rinpoche, Thubten Chokyi Dorje, sent an emissary with many gifts to Rinpoche's father, asking him to allow him to bring up his son. Rinpoche's father sent the emissary back with the gifts, saying that he didn't know if his son was an incarnation or not and that, if he was, he would naturally help sentient beings. Besides, he wished to bring up his son himself. Nevertheless, Dzokchen Rinpoche sent the emissary again with the gifts and the reply that these gifts were an offering and that, whatever happened, the child would still help countless sentient beings.

While I was still quite young, my father worked hard to teach and train me to read, to write, and to understand the Dharma. Because my father worked enthusiastically at his own practice of daily recitations, meditations, and retreats, I also had to rise early and retire late, filling

the day with meditation, practice, study, and training. I was endowed with a good intellect and naturally had some facility with speech. White Tara* and Avalokiteshvara* I took as my yidams.

At the age of thirteen, I formally entered the precious Doctrine of the Victorious One. The eleventh Tai-Situ, Padma Wangchuk, gave me ordination and the name Karma Rangjung Kunchab—Self-Arisen and All-Pervading. In later years, everyone said that it was an appropriate name.

My noble father taught me both the short and long treatises of Ngari Panchen* on the three ordinations (25) and instructed me thoroughly in *The Four Tantras* of the science of healing (26). The master scholar Tashi Chopel (student and secretary of Jamgon Kongtrul) gave me the empowerments, scriptural authorizations, and instructions (27) for *The Kagyu*



Zhechen Kongtrul, Pema Trime

Treasury of Mantra (28) and detailed teachings on the three main authoritative texts of the Kagyu school: *The Profound Inner Meaning*, *The Two Chapters of the Hevajra Tantra*, and *The Changeless Nature* (29), and also on the two short authoritative texts (30) of the third Karmapa, the omniscient Rangjung Dorje. He praised me greatly for my keen intellect and my good command of language.

At the age of fifteen, I undertook the summer retreat (31) at Bengen Monastery* in Hor. Before an assembly of hundreds of monks, nuns, and lay people, I spoke on the three ordinations. Because I spoke with no fear at all and with the confidence of a sound understanding, this exposition captured the hearts of everyone. People commented on my clear intellect, good delivery, and accurate presentation.



Khyentse Choki Lodru

At the age of sixteen, I entered the three-year, three-month course (32) of practice in the great retreat center at Tsa-dra Rinchen Drak*. This retreat had been the main seat of Jamgon Kongtrul whose coming had been foretold by the Victorious One in many sutras and tantras (33). In this lama, the learned and attained Khyungpo Naljor* had really returned to the world. Jamgon Kongtrul established the collection of teachings now known as *The Five Great Treasuries*.

At this time, my faith in my lamas and the Dharma and my enthusiasm for practice knew no limit.

Some idea of Rinpoche's enthusiasm for Dharma may be gained from his determination to avoid any waste of time during the three-year retreat. To ensure that he would wake up in the morning, he would go to sleep leaning against the door to his room. When the



H.H. Karmapa XVI

monk kicked open the doors to the rooms to wake up the retreatants in the morning, Rinpoche was sent flying across his room. If he felt sleepy during the day, he sat on his window ledge. In this position he would fall onto the floor as soon as he dozed off.

As for his faith, Rinpoche felt such devotion for his teacher, Lama Norbu, that during his life, he offered everything he owned to him on three separate occasions.

During this time, my lama was the highly venerable Norbu Dun-kun Drubpa. He had reached the peaks of experience and realization. From him I received teaching and instruction in innumerable empowerments, scriptural authorizations, and instructions from the Old, New, and Treasure Traditions (34). In particular, he gave me *The Five Golden Doctrines* (35) and other teachings of the great master



H.H. Dalai Lama XIV



Ling Rinpoche



Trijang Rinpoche

Khyungpo, together with instructions and procedures for their practice. All these teachings were given to me in the way that the contents of a full vessel are poured completely into another.

In addition, I studied with many learned and attained masters: Tashi Chopel (secretary to Jamgon Kongtrul), the eleventh



H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche



H.H. Sakya Trichen



Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche



Pawo Tulku XI

1a
Tai-Situ incarnation, Padma Wangchuk, Palpung Khyentse Shenpen Ozer (the speech emanation of Khyentse Wangpo), Tsabtsa Drubgyu (a senior incarnation at Tsabtsa Monastery in Kham), the fifth Dzokchen Rinpoche (abbot of the major Nyingma monastery in Eastern Tibet), Zhechen Gyaltsab (a senior incarnation at

Zhechen Monastery), Zhechen Kongtrul (the Kongtrul incarnation at Zhechen Monastery), Khyentse Chokyi Lodru (the activity emanation of Khyentse Wangpo), the great and excellent sovereign lord of refuge, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the two tutors of the Dalai Lama (Ling Rinpoche and Trijang Rinpoche), the great and excellent Karmapa in his sixteenth incarnation, the eleventh Pawo, Tsuklak Mawai Wangchuk, Dudjom Rinpoche (present head of the Nyingmapa school), Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche (the mind emanation of Khyentse Wangpo), Kangyur Rinpoche, Chatral Rinpoche Songjay Dorje, Sakya Trichen (head of one of the two principal families of the Sakya School), Dezhung Rinpoche (senior scholar of the Sakya School), and others. 3a
With these holy persons as lamas, I con-



Dezhung Rinpoche



Chatral Rinpoche



Kangyur Rinpoche

tinually worked diligently at studying, contemplating, meditating, and practicing innumerable collections of instructions from both the sutras and tantras of the Old and New Traditions. Through my endeavours I became like a spiritual son for more or less all of them.

Although I really have little to offer in the way of stories of the wonderful abilities which come with experience and realization, people who have faith and a pure view towards me have insisted that something be said. In order to avoid simply refusing these requests, I describe some of the good fantasies I have experienced.

In one dream, I went into the private chamber of the previous Jamgon Kongtrul and found Lama Jamgon sitting there. He conferred the full four empowerments (36) on me and then dissolved into me. On another occasion, I dreamt that I had changed into the form of Padmasambhava* and that I brought many of the gods and demons of the immediate region under control and charged them to protect the Doctrine and not to cause problems. On yet another occasion, the twelve mountain goddesses (37) gathered in front of me and introduced themselves one by

one—Men-tsun, Dorje Zeluma, and so on. Clothed in flowing silk raiment and wearing beautiful jewelry, they sang and danced as an offering to me.

On occasions when I had a lot of physical and mental trouble, my identification with yidams such as Hayagriva* gave rise to dream experiences of my subduing many ghosts and demons (38).



Padmasambhava

When I awoke there was some relief from the actual problems as well. Once when I was seriously ill I dreamt that Tara made a prophecy about me, and consequently I triumphed over the obstacles. Sometimes there were dreams of meeting vast assemblies of supreme beings—buddhas, bodhisattvas, the sixteen holy elders (39), and others. In these dreams, I would repeat over and over such prayers of aspiration as *The Aspiration to Noble Activity*, *Niguma's Prayer of Aspiration*, *The Sealed Dedication*, and *The Aspiration for the Pure Land of Bliss*. In other dreams I offered prayers of far-reaching wishes while flying in the sky in circles around numerous mile-high stupas (40) of all the eight different forms. In short, there were many good dreams.

Rinpoche had many other dreams and visions, some of which he has related to other people. One of these was a dream in which he heard a prophetic song about himself while watching a dance in a celestial realm.

*First, your country of birth
Was the upper region of Hor.
Then, for your practice,
The holy Dharma of maha-ati,
The uncontrived eternal reservoir
Originally pure, the home of awareness.
Finally, the place of your death,
Samye, the sandy mound.
Afterwards, you will be born
Between Do and Kongbu
As a beggar's son,
And establish countless sentient beings
Beyond the scope of intellect
On the path to freedom.
After that, you will be born
In a lotus flower
In the pure domain, the Realm of Bliss.*



Green Tara

At the age of twenty-five I gave up the affairs of ordinary life completely and spent twelve years in intensive retreat practice in caves and other places unfrequented by people. I was content with whatever I had, impartial, and free from temporal concerns. All the offerings which I received from people who had faith in me and all the offerings which people made on behalf of people who had died, I used for spiritual purposes. In view of my way of life, the prayer describes me as being like a king for the way I renounced all worldly activity.

Little is known of Rinpoche's life during these twelve years. He lived in isolated places with little food. Some of these places were completely inaccessible in winter. Gyaltsen, Rinpoche's secretary, visited Rinpoche once when he was young. He remembers Rin-



poche's cave as being little more than a depression in a rock wide open to the north wind which blew constantly. Gyaltzen felt it was a terrible place and was glad to leave after a short time. The idea of staying in such a place for several months was unthinkable.

During these years, Rinpoche would occasionally leave his retreat to visit and consult with his root lama, Norbu Dondrub.

For Rinpoche, this way of life was the most meaningful, and he would gladly have continued to live in the mountains and meditate for the rest of his life. In the end, however, requests from Tai-Situ Padma Wangchuk and Norbu Dondrub forced him to leave the mountains to become the retreat director of Jamgon Kongtrul's retreat center, Kunzang Dechen Osal Ling.

I was friendly with everyone yet had no attachment to anyone. With compassion I cared for all people equally, whether they were friendly, unfriendly, or indifferent to me. All pleasurable experiences I enjoyed without becoming attached to them, regarding them as a vajra feast. For these reasons, I was regarded as a king of contemplatives in this age of turmoil.

One's external discipline is based on the shraṅka* vehicle or hinayana. I refrained from immoral behavior by avoiding any action which would harm other beings, directly or indirectly. Internal discipline is based on the bodhisattva vehicle or mahayana. I continuously strove at bodhicitta in order to help others. Mystic discipline is based on the vajrayana. I put into practice the integration of development and completion. Since my intention has always been to fulfill these three commitments, the prayer refers to me as being a vajra-holder (41) with the three ordinations.

Because many great and holy persons such as Khyentse Chokyi Lodru, Zhechen Kongtrul, the great Sixteenth Karmapa, Dzokchen Rinpoche, and others have confirmed that I am definitely a human incarnation of Lodru Taya, Jamgon Vajra Ratna, and other teachers, the prayer refers to me as a holy bodhisattva, a son of the Victorious One.

Although Dzokchen Rinpoche definitely felt that Kalu Rinpoche was an incarnation, he did not mention any particular incarnation lineage. Darjay Gon, a Gelugpa monastery near Rinpoche's home, regarded him as an incarnation of Vajra Ratna, a Shangpa Kagyu master who lived in the nineteenth century and transmitted the Shangpa teachings to Khyentse Wangpo. Other lamas including Zhechen Kongtrul, Dzongsar Khyentse Chokyi Lodru, and His Holiness the Sixteenth Karmapa, felt that Rinpoche was the activity emanation of Jamgon Lodru Taya.

My love and compassion for all lesser sentient beings have led me to recite the names of buddhas and profoundly sacred phrases (i.e. dharanis and mantras [42]) to all kinds of animals, from larger ones who live on their own down to body parasites such as lice and fleas. From the Spoken and Treasure Traditions have come consecrated medicines which bring about the liberation of any sentient being who tastes them. Also, consecrated sand will bring about the liberation of beings who come into contact with it. By these and other ingenious means, I have set countless millions of birds, fish, insects, and other animals on the path to freedom.

With the wonderful resolve to teach, spread, sustain, and preserve the precious Doctrine of the Victorious One and par-



The Jowo image in Lhasa

ticularly the precious teachings of the Karma Kagyu (43) and Shangpa Kagyu transmissions, I have worked hard in the purest way to make the Doctrine flourish again and to keep the instructions for practice alive in Tibet and its affiliated regions and in India, China, Bhutan, and Sikkim. So the prayer refers to me as an incomparable and excellent guide.

I entrusted the teachings of the Shangpa Kagyu transmission to Kardorje Rinpoche, Lha-tsun Rinpoche and Tok-me Rinpoche, and many other holy persons from Sera Monastery*, and to the noble Mochok Rinpoche of Drepung*, and to many excellent lamas with experience, realization, learning, and attainment from

all the traditions of the Old and New Schools, and to the excellent incarnation Bokar Rinpoche and many other notable people.

At Tak-ten Pun-tsoek Ling, the main seat of the Jonangpa School (44) which was graced with a glorious spiritual and cultural heritage, at the vajra seat of Zhang-Zhung*, the main monastery of Khyung-po Naljor, at Mochokpa's* seats in Lhapu and Nye-Thang, and at many other places, I restored the teachings of the Jonangpa and Shangpa transmissions and carried out great works for the Dharma. Before Jowo and Sakya*, the two great images of Buddha Sakyamuni in Lhasa, before the Great Deity at Tsurpu Monastery* who liberates anyone who sees him, before the Glorious Lord at Rigung*, the Great Maitreya at Tro-pu*, and at Tashi Lhunpo*, Narthang*, and many other great shrines in Central Tibet and Tsang, I expressed my faith and aspirations for the future to my heart's satisfaction. In these ways, I have made my free and well-favored birth meaningful.

When Rinpoche returned to Palpung Monastery, he first resolved a number of administrative problems at the request of Situ Padma Wangchuk. Then he became the retreat director of Kunzang Dechen Osal Ling, the retreat center which Jamgon Kongtrul had founded and where Rinpoche had studied earlier. At that time, the retreat center consisted simply of a number of small houses near a main temple, all in fairly poor condition. Rinpoche reconstructed the retreat center, built proper cells, and expanded the number of units to twenty-five. After several years as the retreat director, Rinpoche left to make a pilgrimage to holy sites in Central



Kalu Rinpoche with H.H. Karmapa

Tibet. During this journey, he visited and restored many sites holy to the Shangpa tradition. In Lhasa he met Situ Padma Wangchuk who asked him to return to direct Jamgon Kongtrul's retreat again and also to take charge of a second retreat facility at Palpung, one which concentrated on the practices of the Karma Kagyu tradition.

When I was fifty, the armies of an irreligious people invaded the frontier and conquered the snowy regions of Tibet. Because of the turmoil of these times and due to the force of my aspirations in previous lives, I travelled to the Holy Country of India. Throughout this land, I taught and spread the Dharma, so the prayer refers to me as a teacher of the noble path to freedom and total knowledge.

I followed closely the guidance of the Sixteenth Holder of the Black Crown, Rangjung Rikpai Dorje, of whom it is difficult to speak (45). His Holiness looked

after me with great love and affection. He gave me the elixir of instructions for maturation and liberation and entrusted me with the care of the precious teachings of the Practice Lineage (46).

In 1955, the political situation in Kham had deteriorated to the point that Rinpoche decided to leave for Central Tibet. In Lhasa, he was received by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and at Tsurpu Monastery by His Holiness the Karmapa. He stayed for approximately one year at Tsurpu where he taught and gave empowerments. Then Karmapa asked him to take charge of Jang-chub-ling, a monastery in eastern Bhutan supported by the Bhutanese royal family. At Jang-chub-ling, he first established two retreat centers and built a large stupa. People in the vicinity felt that these religious activities exerted a noticeable influence in that region, creating an atmosphere of peace and security in what had generally been regarded as a dangerous valley.



*The senior lamas of the Karma Kagyu School: clockwise from Kalu Rinpoche—
Bokar, Pawo, Gyaltsab, Shamar, H.H. Karmapa, Situ, Kongtrul, Bairo Khyentse*

In the Kagyu tradition, there is the well-known and long-established tradition of the Father and Son Victors* who intentionally take form in the world to help beings. Of these great individuals, I looked after Shamar Rinpoche, Situ Rinpoche, Jamgon Rinpoche, and Gyaltsab Rinpoche. I gave them the essential instructions of the Karma Kagyu which come from the traditions of the four teachings (47), heat, illusory-body, dream, and clear light. I instructed them in the path of method, that is, *The Six Teachings of Naropa* and *The Six Teachings of Niguma*, and in the path of liberation, *Mahamudra* (48), as well as in *The Five Golden Teachings*

of the Shangpa tradition and others. In short, I gave them these complete cycles of teachings as one would pour the contents of one vessel into another.

The Excellent Great Guide, Lord of every aspect of the Victor's Doctrine in the snowy regions of Tibet, the Supreme Source of Refuge, His Holiness the Dalai Lama Ten-dzin Gyamtso also took care of me with great love and affection. In his care of me, he gave me the glorious Kalacakra* empowerment and teaching and many other profound and secret instructions. Whatever his wish, I followed it as a command. To many holy people including Dagwab Hortok Thurto Rinpoche, the

abbot of the College of Lower Tantra, Geshe Rabten, the Dalai Lama's chef, valet, and sacristan, the professors of both the College of Lower Tantra and the College of Higher Tantra, the monks of His Holiness' residence and others, I offered empowerments and instructions and taught the procedures for the ritual and practice of the five great tantras, Guhyasamaja, Cakrasamvara, Vajrabhairava, Hevajra, and Mahamaya, and for *The Five Golden Teachings* of the Shangpa tradition,



Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche and Kalu Rinpoche

the thirteen empowerments for the Six-Armed Mahakala, and the empowerments and commentaries for the New Treasure tradition of Vajrakalaya* and others.

In addition, I have offered complete spiritual instructions in maturation and liberation to many holy people, lamas, incarnations, and notable individuals: Jamgon Khyentse Ozer, Khyentse Chokyi Lodru, the sixteenth Karmapa Rangjung Rikpai Dorje, Zhechen Kongtrul Rinpoche, Pawo Rinpoche, Dingo Khyentse, Chatral Songjay Dorje, Dzongsar Khyentse's reincarnation, Sakya Dakchen Rinpoche, Sakya Dezhung Rinpoche, Nyenpa Choktrul, Drongsar Khyentse, Palpung Khyentse, Dsigar Choktrul, Trangu Khenpo, Vajra Master Tenga Rinpoche, Baiyul Rinpoche, Sonam Zangpo, Bokar Rinpoche, Orgyen Tulku's two sons who are both incarnations, and others. These people are all vajra masters, mantra-holders, or spiritual friends of the highest purity and erudition.

Because of these great activities in the teaching, practice, and work of the teachings of all traditions—Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, and Nyingma—the prayer refers to me as one who carries the light of the Victorious One's Doctrine.





Sonada gate and stupa

In 1962, Rinpoche left Bhutan and came to live in Darjeeling, India. The following year, Trijang Rinpoche (junior tutor to the Dalai Lama) was asked to help with the Dalai Lama's work in Dharamsala in western India. Because he had great confidence in Kalu Rinpoche, Trijang Rinpoche gave him his monastery in Sonada, a small town near Darjeeling. There Rinpoche immediately



Sonada under construction



Trijang Rinpoche



Prayerflags and "billboards," Sonada

began to construct a retreat center. He frequently visited Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim to consult with His Holiness the Karmapa and to teach Shamar, Situ, Kongtrul, and Gyaltshab Rinpoche. During this period he also went to western India where he visited His Holiness the Dalai Lama, gave several series of empowerments including The Treasury of Key Instructions, and started two retreat centers.

With both my actions and material support, I have served and honored the precious Doctrine by studying and teaching its instructions for spiritual understanding and by seeking to experience this understanding myself. I have made offer-



Kagyü Ling, Plaise, France



Salt Spring Island, Vancouver, Canada

ings and expressed my wishes in prayer to my heart's satisfaction at many great and holy sites in Sikkim, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, and have set about two hundred members of the Sangha to practice in retreat centers. Hence, the prayer refers to me as the torch of the Doctrine.

A throng of fortunate students speaking different languages and of different nationalities from large and small countries all over the world have gathered around me like swans coming to a lake with water lilies. So the prayer refers to me as one who matures and liberates these many worthy beings.

Travelling through the infinite expanse of the sky, I have journeyed all over the world five times to large and small countries separated by great oceans: Israel, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Britain, the United States of America, Canada, Hawaii, and countries in the Far East including Burma, Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. To all people, men and women of different nationalities and languages, I taught the greater and lesser vehicles, emphasizing the teaching of karma, the relationship

between actions as causes and their consequences or results. In particular, I placed them in the domain of guidance (49) of the Great Compassionate One, Avalokiteshvara. I placed less fortunate sentient beings in domains of guidance by reciting to them the names of buddhas and other sacred phrases. Hence, the prayer refers to me as a teacher of the sure and noble way to complete and total knowledge.

Many of my students have received and maintain the three ordinations, are embodiments of love and compassion, and are keepers of the Doctrine. To help both the Doctrine and sentient beings, I have dispersed all of them in a hundred directions to countries all over the world. The great banner of the moral code of the ten virtuous actions has been raised to far-reaching heights. A hundred doors have been opened to the practice of gathering the accumulations and clearing away obscurations (50), and the accumulations of merit and pristine cognition have been made to grow. The Dharma has spread over the whole world. Hence, the prayer describes me as one who carries the light of the Victorious One's Doctrine to the darkness of foreign countries.



The Great Treasury of Precious Treasure Teachings (Rinchen Terzod) Empowerment Ceremonies, Sonada, 1983.



From left to right: Jamgon Rinpoche, Situ Rinpoche, Kalu Rinpoche, Gyaltsab Rinpoche, Khyentse Rinpoche.



Pope Paul and Kalu Rinpoche, Rome 1971

Rinpoche left India for his first trip to the West in 1971. He visited several countries in Europe including the Vatican where he had an audience with Pope Paul. After visits to Paris and Samyeing in Scotland, he came to North America where he spent about nine months teaching at various centers. In the spring of 1972, he established his first center in the West, Kagyu Kunchab Chuling, in Vancouver, Canada. During his second trip in 1974-5, he founded several centers in France and Scandinavia and later in Canada and the United States. During this trip, Rinpoche journeyed to New York expressly to receive

Opening ceremonies for the first three-year retreat for Westerners, France, 1976



Kalacakra Empowerment, San Francisco, 1982

His Holiness Karmapa on his first trip to the West. In 1976 he made his third trip to build and begin the first three-year retreat for his Western students. This retreat was built at one of Rinpoche's centers in France. Afterwards, he revisited Canada and the United States and later made his first trip to Japan and the Far East. In 1980 he returned to France to end the retreat and to start a second one. He also gave the Kalacakra empowerment in Paris. This was the first time this empowerment had been given in Europe. On his next trip in 1982, he visited several countries in Southeast Asia. He then came to North America and started retreat centers in British Columbia and New Hampshire. On the same journey, he gave the Kalacakra empowerment in San Francisco and New York. He then visited centers in Europe and gave the Kalacakra empowerment in Sweden before returning to India.

When I was seventy-nine, I conferred the empowerments and teachings of *The Great Treasury of Precious Treasure Teachings* (51) which brings together in one collection the essential practices of the three classes of inner tantras (52) of the Old

School. This series of empowerments was given to many thousands of faithful students from India, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, and several Western countries, lamas, incarnations, monks and nuns, and, above all, the crown jewels of the Kagyu Doctrine, the Father and Son Victors: the supreme Lord of Refuge Sharmar Rinpoche, Tai-Situ Rinpoche, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche, Gyalsab Rinpoche, and Bairo Khyentse Rinpoche. Consequently, I was described as the torch of the Doctrine of the Great Mystery and as one who unbolts and opens wide the doors to maturation and liberation.

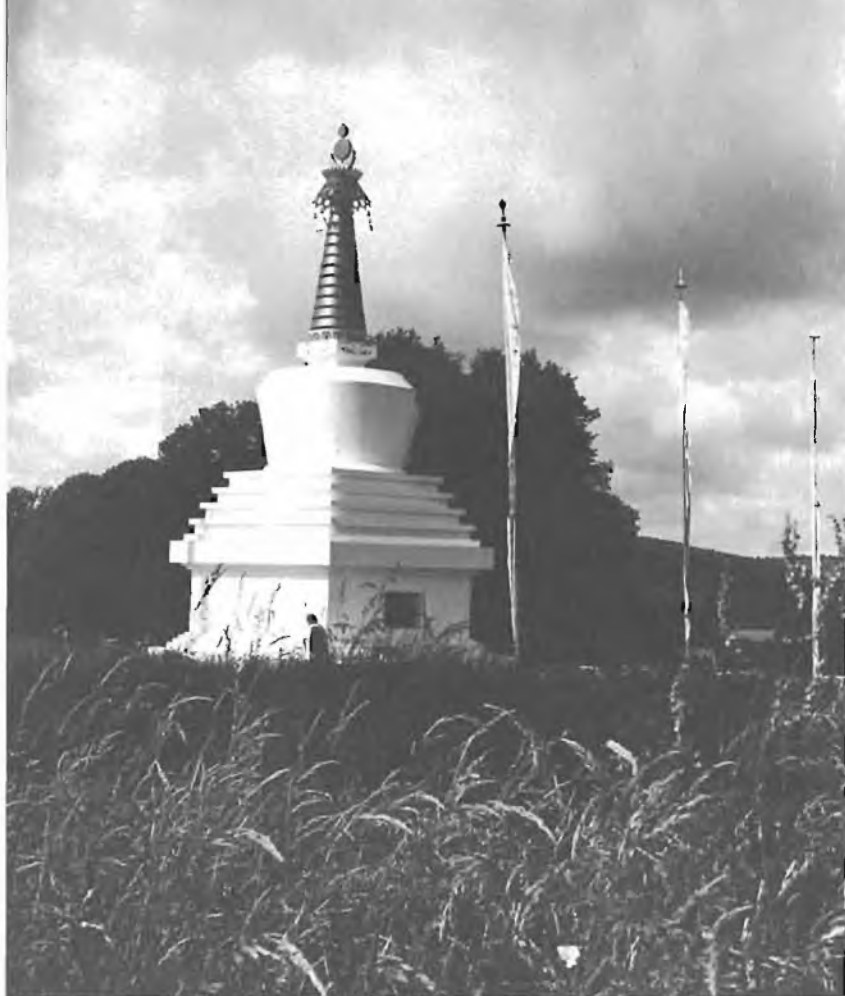
I have come to understand that all phenomena, appearances, sounds, thoughts, and consciousness lack any true existence and are like dreams or enchantments. Everything that I have done in secular or spiritual affairs was done with the sole intention of helping others, and I have sealed my actions with profound prayers of dedication and aspiration to this end. Without exception, the possessions and wealth I have received over the years have been directed to religious purposes. Any relationship I have with someone, whether it be a good, bad, or neutral one, becomes significant since it will be the seed of his or her attainment of higher births and freedom.

In summary, my wish is for my mind to merge with the minds of all my excellent lamas whose kindness is beyond comparison. In my actions I work to fulfill their vision. In my mind, I never waver from the practice of precious bodhicitta and development and completion. Hence, the prayer describes me as a holy son of the Victorious One.



Amitabha's Pure Land of Bliss

We repeat this prayer with the wish that we be one with the holy root and transmission lamas. In the future, through our own wishes and through the blessings of all lamas, may we realize dharmakaya (53) for our own benefit and enjoy the glory of the two form kayas for the benefit of others. At the end of this life, may we immediately be miraculously born in Amitabha's pure land, the Pure Land of Bliss (54), and become great leaders and guides for all sentient beings.



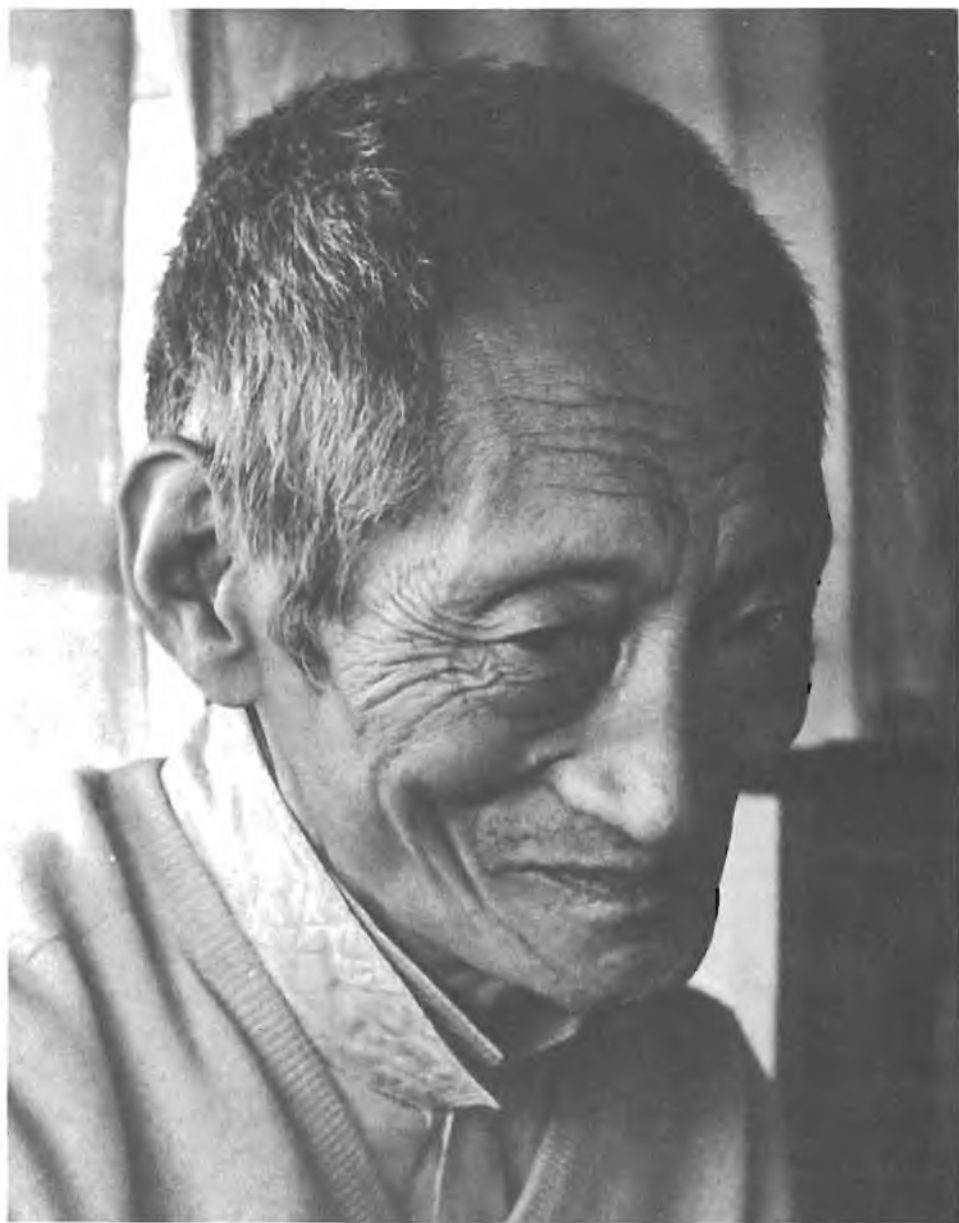
Stupa, Kagyu Ling, France

In summary, with respect to the wheel of reading, listening, and reflecting, I started at an early age and have had more than just an ordinary training in reading, writing, and the comprehension of Dharma. As well, I have completed some two hundred million recitations of various mantras and have participated in and sponsored the practice of the three bases (55) for some sixteen summer retreats in different locations. With respect to the wheel of renunciation and meditation, I planted the banner of practice for some fifteen years. With respect to the wheel of works and activity, I have constructed and restored some fifteen stupas and thirteen

temples. In many different temples, I have offered gifts of brocade and cloth and sponsored the continuous burning of butter lamps. I have offered seven hundred thousand butter lamps in connection with the recitation of *The Aspiration for Noble Conduct*. I have established and led or taught some twenty-one three-year retreat programs and have been the source of encouragement for over three hundred people to do the five hundred thousand preliminary practices. I have organized the construction of two prayer wheels (56), one containing fourteen hundred million Mani's and the other over a hundred million of the hundred-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva. I have made many hundreds of thousands of images of buddhas and bodhisattvas and miniature stupas. During my life, I have given one sixth of whatever possessions I had to sponsor the carving of the Six Syllables and other mantras on stones. I have provided the means of livelihood for hundreds of ordained monks and nuns and led the practice of fasting and prayer (57) many hundreds of times. In Western countries, I have established some seventy Dharma centers. These are the activities which have engaged me during my life.







AFTERWORD

Since the vajrayana is the path of inspiration and blessing, this account will be useful if it leads to an increase in the faith and devotion of those who have formed a spiritual bond with me by taking empowerment, scriptural authorization, and instruction from me. With this hope I have written this simple collection of a few of the better parts of the little there is to say. In writing this, I have not introduced any fictions and have kept the holy ones before me. That it is in a small way fitting for something like this to be written is due to the kindness of many holy individuals and many holy lamas who have each followed a life to freedom without others knowing. In particular, it is due to my own root lama, the holy Norbu Don-kun Drubpa.

This holy person dismissed all concerns with secular affairs and took ordination at an early age. He served the Doctrine immersed simultaneously in spiritual practice and studies. From the age of forty until he passed away, he stayed continuously in restricted seclusion in a mountain retreat called Nyima Kargo. By the age of seventy, he had eradicated all clinging to the characteristics of ordinary appearances. His experience in meditation had combined completely with his experience of the world. His mind melted into the realm of totality when he was seventy-four and his corpse turned into the body of an eight-year-old boy. When the mandala ceremonies of the four great tantras (58) were performed while his body was cremated, rainbows spread in intricate patterns in the sky for the whole day and innumerable bones and relics of different colors were recovered from the fire. Indeed, it



Receiving the Dalai Lama at Sonada, 1972

was clear from these signs that he had realized the great stage of no-meditation of the Mahamudra tradition or, in the Maha-ati tradition, the great stage of the end of the experience of pure being, the transcendence of mind.

I respected my holy teachers, and, hoping and wishing to follow their lives to freedom, I never wanted to take charge of a monastic complex. Rather, I wished to be free of the biases and priorities that come with involvement in temporal matters. Nevertheless, I often pondered the idea of there being a place for practice for the sangha in this period when the Doctrine of the Victorious One is encounter-



H.H. Karmapa and H.H. Dalai Lama

ing so many difficulties. The Lord of the Universe, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice to me for the future came at an opportune time. With an incomparable concern to help the teachings of all schools, the lord of refuge, tutor to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Trijang Rinpoche most graciously gave me the monastery and attached properties at Sonada in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. His Holiness Karmapa gave his consent with great pleasure, and when I was actually taking charge of this property, the lord of refuge, Dudjom Rinpoche, gave it the name the Kagyu Monastery where Merit Flourishes (59), along with a scarf of fine white silk and a sum of money as portents of good fortune. Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche gave encouragement, saying that since the location came in fact from the dance and play of the enlightened activity of Mahakala, the Lord of Pristine Cognition, the Victorious One's Doctrine would flourish there. Out of his warm love, Chatral Rinpoche Sangjay Dorje performed the rituals for taking over and subduing the land. Before I had even arrived in this area,

Khyentse Chokyi Lodru had given a name to this place in a prophecy, calling it Samdrup Tarjeyling (the Monastery of Growth and Fulfillment). Relying on the occurrence of these and other excellent portents of good fortune, I took charge of this monastic complex some sixteen years ago.

During this time, a monastery has been developed in which anyone who wishes to enter as a young or new monk, and any member of the sangha of the Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, or Nyingma schools who wishes to stay here may do so. The full retreat program has been held four times for monks and one time for nuns, and the summer retreat has taken place regularly for sixteen years. In addition, there have come to be many lamas who are able to help beings by teaching, spreading, maintaining, and preserving the Dharma in many countries in the world. I feel that there will still be many more who will train and study in the Dharma and work and meditate on it here.

Throughout India and Tibet there have appeared innumerable masters of great



Sonada Monastery puja, 1972



Sonada Monastery group photo, 1972

learning and attainment, bodhisattvas who have attained high levels of spiritual realization. Thousands of millions of emanations have come through their powers and miracles and have worked in enlightened ways for the benefit of beings, guiding each being in a way suited to him or her. This infinite enlightened activity is beyond the scope of the intellect. How can it be measured?

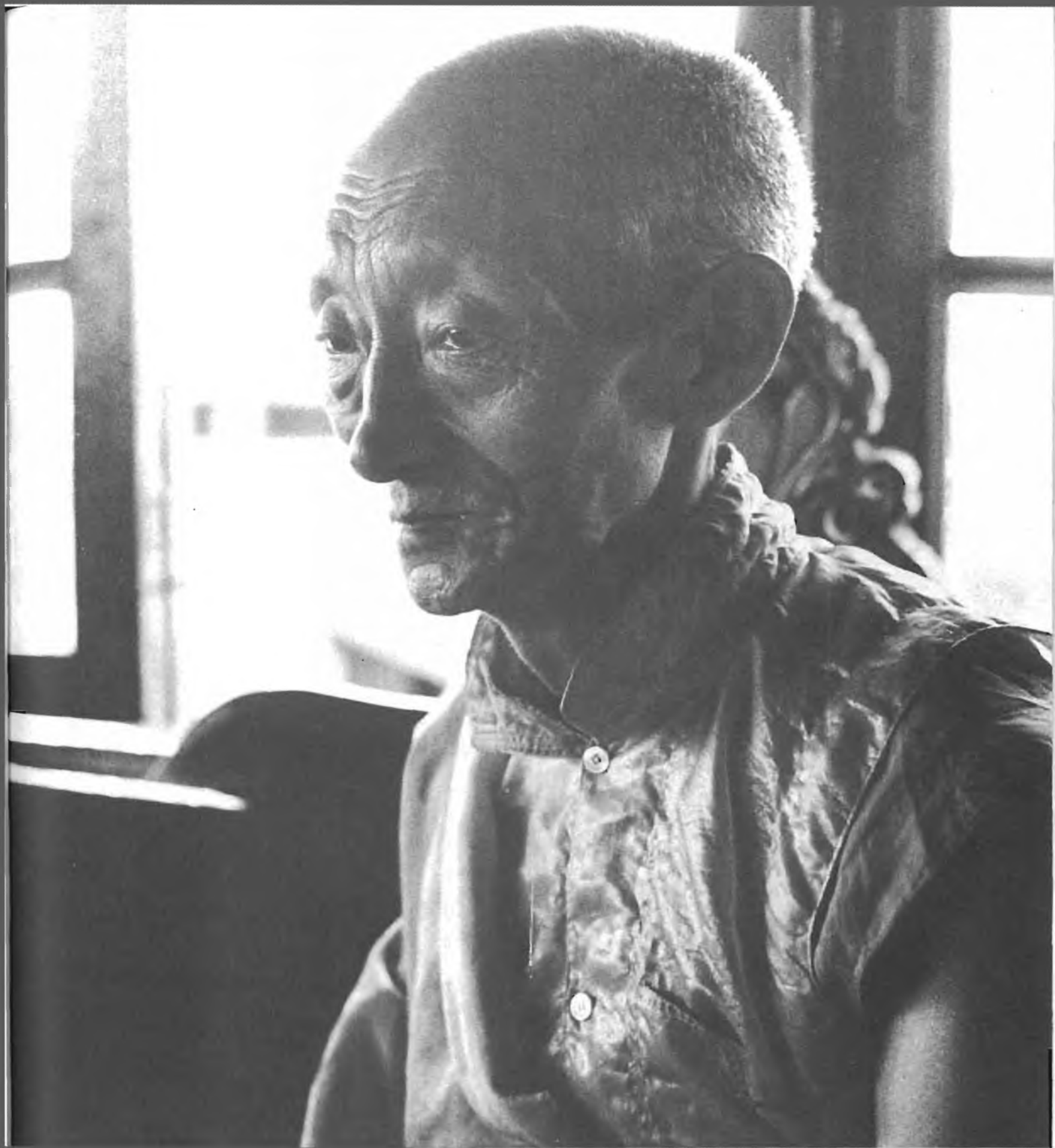
As a teacher, an ordinary person with a good education and ordination, I travelled to many countries lying in the great oceans which cover the world. Some were countries to which the sun's rays of the Holy Dharma had already spread. Others were countries unenlightened owing to the absence of Dharma there. The Wheel of Dharma was turned and places for study and practice were established in many large countries which, separated in-

to different areas of activity by the great oceans, have their own languages and alphabets: India, China, Nepal, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, and other countries in the Eastern Hemisphere, and in the Western Hemisphere from Germany in the east to America in the west and from Greece in the south to Norway and Sweden in the north.

This infinite expansion of enlightening activity has made the sutra and tantra traditions of the Victorious One's Doctrine shine like the sun. This is something extraordinarily magnificent: nothing like it has happened before on the face of the earth. However, all these things have taken place only through the inspiration and blessing of my lamas and the Three Jewels—never has there been the slightest feeling of pride or self-importance on my part.



Supervising construction at Sonada, 1981





ADVICE TO MY STUDENTS

For all those people who, in knowing about me and my life, wish to follow the life to freedom of their lama, I say these few words.

Because all of us are followers of the benevolent Buddha, we should, in our actions, words, and thoughts, refrain from all non-virtuous and unwholesome actions to the best of our ability, and we should work at virtuous activities as much as we can. All beings of the six kinds (60) are our kind parents and have for ages experienced the whole range of suffering and frustration in samsara. For these beings we should cultivate love and compassion and precious bodhicitta. We should constantly meditate on taking and sending (61) and recite enthusiastically prayers of far-reaching aspirations to complete the realization of all facets of buddhahood, to create and refine domains of enlightenment, and to ripen beings spiritually. With the understanding that our kind and holy lama is the actuality of the Three Jewels and the Three Roots, we should pray intensely to him, imagining that he rests on our head or in our heart, and, when we have finished praying, practice merging our mind with his.

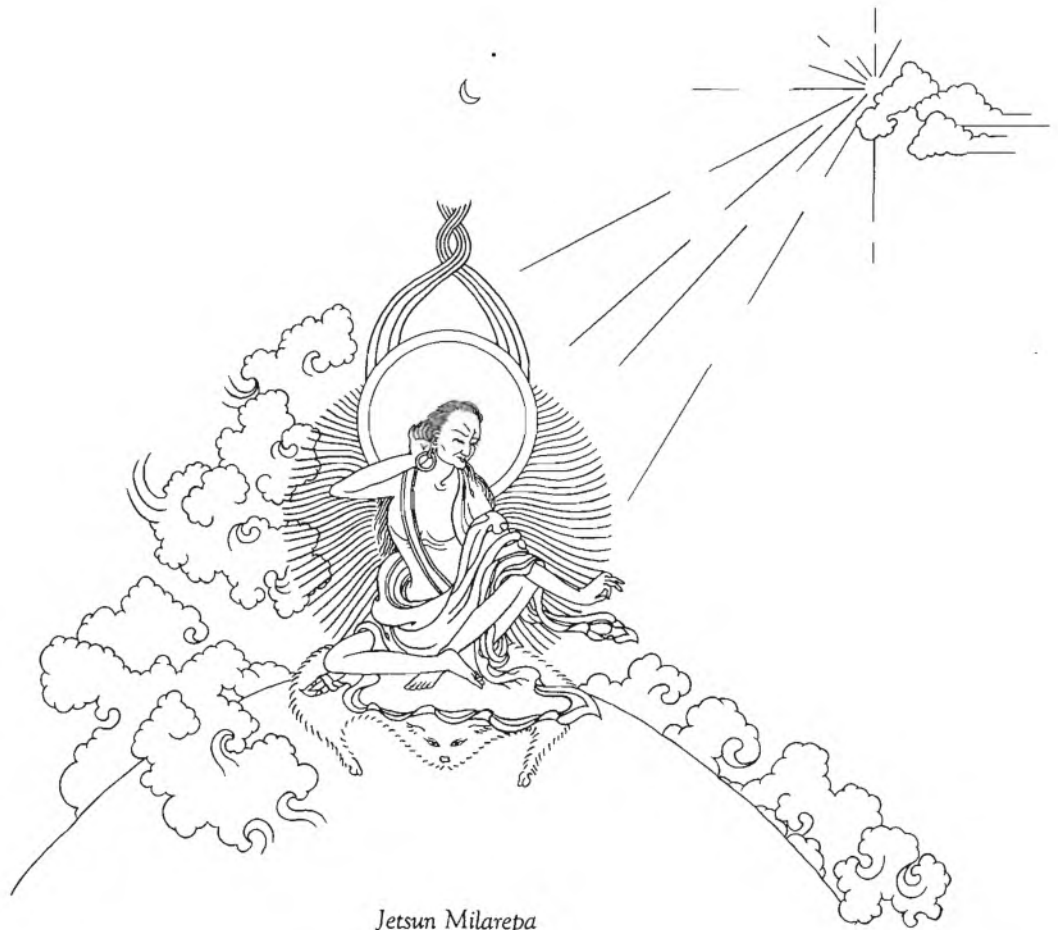
We should take Avalokiteshvara (Chen-razi) as our yidam. This practice was taught by the Buddha in many sutras and tantras. It has been the practice of many learned and attained masters in India and Tibet. It is easy yet very beneficial. We should recite the Six-Syllable Mantra constantly, reciting it with the mind clear, empty, unceasingly aware, free from reference, free from clinging, and free from distraction.



The Six-Syllable Mantra

All phenomena, the appearances of confusion which arise around us, are, in terms of their essential nature, without independent reality. In terms of the way they are perceived, they comprise the different experiences of happiness and suffering. They are, by nature, impermanent. These varied, confused appearances constitute the basis from which the whole range of suffering in samsara develops. From our understanding that all these phenomena are, in the end, like the appearances which arise in a dream or under an enchantment, our clinging and attachment to fixed notions of reality will diminish.

In general, the aim of all spiritual traditions, Buddhist or other, is twofold: immediately, to provide refuge from the lower realms and to set beings on the path to the higher realms (62); and, ultimately, to provide refuge from all the sufferings of samsara and to set beings on the path to freedom. Since all these traditions come from the enlightened activity of buddha



Jetsun Milarepa

manifesting in ways which are suited to the nature of the individuals to be guided, we should have faith in them all.

In particular, all Dharma which came to the snowy land of Tibet—the teachings of the Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, and Nyingma schools—was taught by the Lord Buddha in the sutras and tantras. It is complete and free of errors. In these traditions, the lineage of attained masters is unbroken. Their power and blessings have not diminished and continue to be transmitted. Their instructions on ultimate truth do not miss the essential points. Their philosophical views on the nature of reality pro-

vide a sound basis for practice. Their methods of meditation for liberating one from confusion form a sure path. The elixir of their spiritual instructions has not lost its potency. Emanations of many masters with learning and attainment, great bodhisattvas who have reached various levels of spiritual realization, have appeared in each of these traditions. There have also been countless persons like the great Jetsun Milarepa* who have realized the capabilities which mark the progression of attainment. Each collection of their spiritual instructions consists only of profound teachings which are able to

carry the individual to buddhahood.

Therefore, we should avoid being fanatical, hostile, or cynical about any of these traditions and train ourselves to have respect, reverence, and a sacred regard for them all. We should practice the tradition we feel most drawn to because of the relationships we have formed in former lives. Whichever tradition we follow, the most important point is to bring our practice to completion.

In summary, to follow the lama's life to freedom, we should always foster these qualities: renunciation born from an



Vajradhara

understanding that samsara is suffering; lucid, intentional, and confident faith in the Three Jewels; devotion and respect for our lama as being fully enlightened, a buddha; compassion for all sentient beings from the knowledge that they are all our parents; a way of living in which the two accumulations increase together; the development phase in which appearances and sounds are experienced as deities and mantras; the completion phase in which natural awareness is maintained without manipulation; virtuous action which puts an end to rampant desires and self-importance; comportment which avoids unwholesomeness like poison; faith which avoids sectarian attachment and hostility; and help to beings which places anyone with whom we have some contact on the path to freedom. If we adhere to all these points and follow the lama's life to freedom, the free and well-favored precious human existence which we have obtained becomes meaningful, the intentions of our lamas are fulfilled, the kindness of our parents is repaid, and the benefits for both others and ourselves will be fully realized.





COLOPHON

Because of his sacred appreciation of all traditions, the holy Kardorje Rinpoche of Sera asked me to give him many teachings. He received from me a large number of empowerments, scriptural authorizations, and instructions including the complete cycle of teachings of the Shangpa Kagyu, the complete collection of instructions of the Jonangpa and Shangpa traditions, and many cycles of teachings of the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions. On this occasion he said that he needed a prayer based on my life and earnestly requested me to write one. In response, I composed the first section of this prayer with the feeling of being undifferentiated from the great pristine cognition of the minds of the lamas of former times.

The second part was requested by the excellent incarnation Bokar Rinpoche in the priceless palace which contains *The Five Treasuries*, Shedrup Gatsal Ling, the great meditation center of Samdup Tarjeyling Monastery also called Sonamdar Kagyu Monastery. In the second year of the second of the two three-year retreats which he completed here, he repeatedly requested such an addition, saying: Since the spiritual offspring of you, my lama, have now spread to large and small countries throughout the world, there is need for a prayer with a more complete account of your life so that these students may have a basis for the birth of faith and conviction in their lama and the Dharma. For this reason, I, Karma Rangjung Kunchab, composed this account in prayer form in my eightieth year with the intention of helping the Doctrine.



Khyungpo Naljor

THE SHIP WHICH SETS BEINGS FREE

a wave of wishes based on the cycle of teachings of the Glorious Shangpa Kagyu Tradition

Oh Vajradhara and the two dakinis who embody pristine cognition,
 Khyungpo Naljor and the root and transmission lamas,
 Oh Samvara, Hevajra, Guhya Samaja, and Mahamaya,
 Vajrabhairava, Hayagriva, and the other yidams,
 Oh dakinis of the five families, Fast-Acting Lord Protector and Remati,
 Four obedient attendants and the ocean-like throng of other oathbound protectors,
 All sources of refuge, the Three Jewels and the Three Roots,
 Pray, think of me from the domain of the invisible.

Through the power of truth in your blessing and compassion
 And through the power of whatever virtue I gather in the three times,
 Pray, quickly fulfill whatever wishes I express
 In this life and all my lives to come.

This precious birth, free and well-favored, is so difficult to obtain.
 May I not waste it but make meaningful use of it.
 In reflecting on what is transitory, unsteady, and changing,
 May I dispense with leisure and cut short preoccupations.

*By coming to appreciate the effects of virtuous and unwholesome acts, whatever their importance,
May I be able to keep to the workings of cause and result.
By seeing clearly the suffering in the three realms of samsara,
May I develop the renunciation to leave samsara's domain.*

*In this life, in later lives, and between lives, all the time,
May I and others find shelter in the refuge of the Three Jewels and the Three Roots.
May love and compassion be born from the depths of my heart
For all six kinds of beings, my parents, limitless in number like the sky.*

*In an uninhabited place in the mountains where all favorable conditions are present
May I practice single-mindedly and reach the peaks of experience and realization.
May holy lamas endowed with full capabilities
Look after me in all my lives to come.*

*May uncontrived reverence and devotion be born in my heart
For my root lama, the actual form of Buddha.
The mandala of deities is naturally occurring and has always been present;
Knowing that I am this mandala, may I stabilize its brilliant appearance.
By simply doing the ritual practices of lamas, yidams, dakinis, and protectors,
May I see them clearly face to face.*

*With irresistible bliss and warmth in full blaze in my body
May the absorption of bliss-emptiness be stabilized in my mind.
Through the understanding that all phenomena are like dreams and enchantments
May confusion and clinging to ideas of reality be totally destroyed.
At night may I clearly recognize the dream state without effort
And practice refinement, increase, emanation, transformation, and precision in perceiving
specific objects.*

*In the interior darkness of ignorance, stupidity, and sleep
May I recognize and hold the deep and light states of sheer clarity,
May I master the various kinds of transference,
Dharmakaya, lama, yidam, sky-light, celestial realm, and others.
Through the natural arising of each of the three kayas and by the practice of no deviation
May the three kayas be actualized in the intermediate state of existence.*



*The four faults subside naturally, the four kayas are already fully present:
In this life may I understand directly mahamudra, the nature of being.
By reverence and devotion to my lama, by knowing appearances and sounds as deities
and mantras,
And by knowing appearances and states of mind to be like enchantments and dreams,
May I bring all experiences into the spiritual path.*

*Through the noble queens who dance in the realm of bliss-emptiness
May I master the path of development and completion and travel to their celestial realm.
The body itself is lifeless, the mind knows neither birth nor death:
May I understand directly the deathless and undeviating result.*

*May I see clearly the noble form of the lama and the protector as one
And attain supreme mastery and mastery of the four kinds of activity.*

*By means of calming powers and blessings equal to the buddhas',
May I dispel all the maladies and miseries of beings.
May my life, merit, power, influence, experience, and direct understanding
Swell like rivers in the rainy season.
In order for me to be the utmost help to the Doctrine and to beings
May my power extend over the three realms and the three worlds.*

*In order to be able to destroy the enemies who have broached all ten domains
May my power and energy in wrathful mantras blaze like fire.*

*May I and other beings be completely purified of all the unwholesome acts
Which we have committed, whether unwholesome in nature or because of ordination.*

*May I be able to make many beings happy
By giving them wealth, Dharma, and security.
May I always be able to keep the virtuous codes
Of the vows of individual liberation and bodhisattva ordination and the vajrayana
commitments.*

*Even for the sake of a single being, may I endure patiently
The chopping of my body into ten million pieces for numerous aeons.
In the practice of the supreme path to freedom for all beings
May I have the same enthusiastic perseverance as Sakyamuni Buddha.
May I stabilize unwavering tranquility, insight, and absorption
In dharmakaya, the pure being of mind, sheer clarity without limit.
May I have as full a knowledge as Manjushri
Of all phenomena in samsara and nirvana.*

*May I bring to completion whatever Dharma I practice,
Be it sutra or tantra of the New School or Old.
May I obtain a pleasing appearance, melodious speech, a glorious life,
Power and wealth, a heart of love, and be attractive to all who see me.*

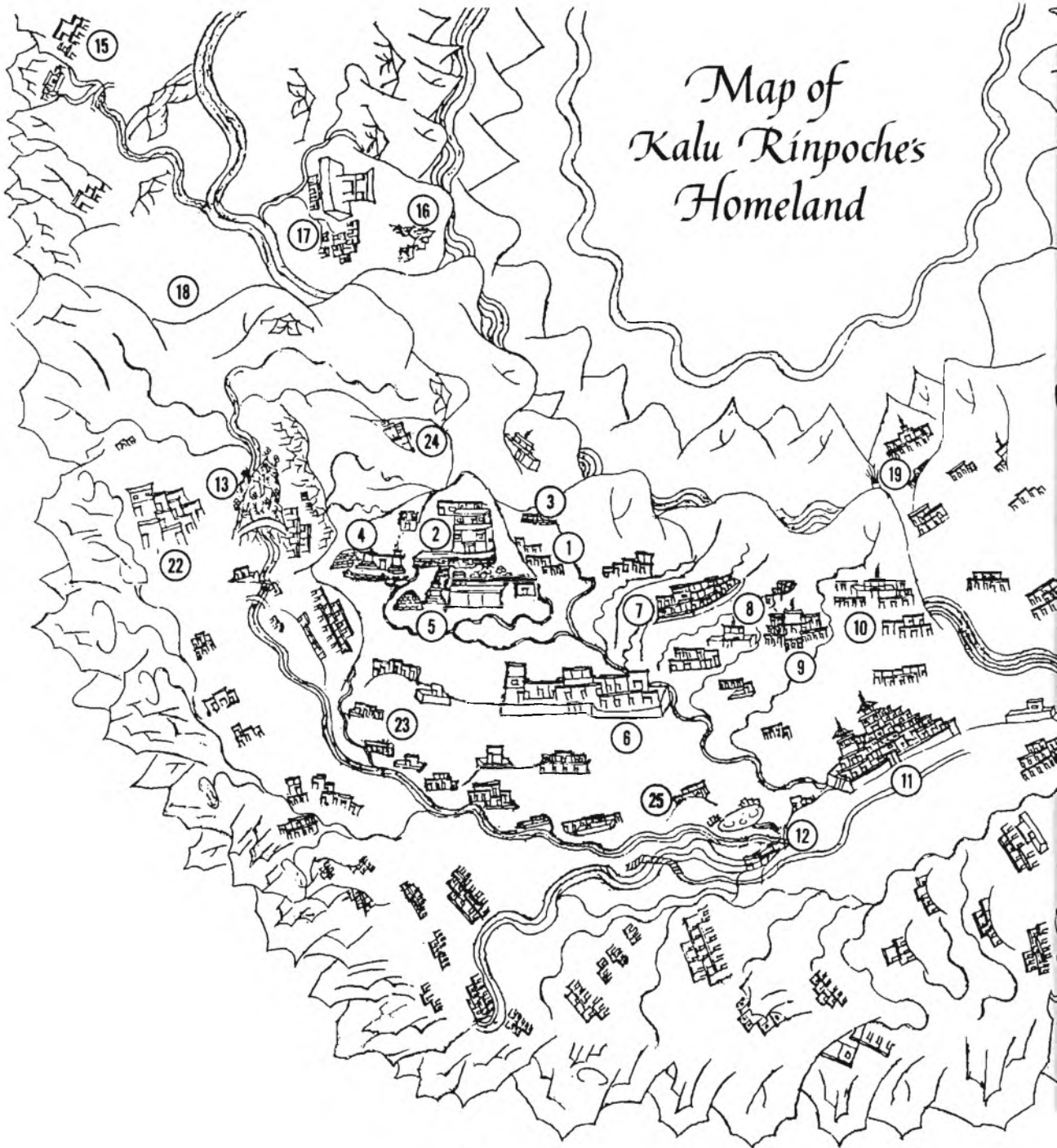
*May I become like the six gems of the world and like the eight charioteers
For the Victorious One's Doctrine and particularly for the Shangpa transmission.*

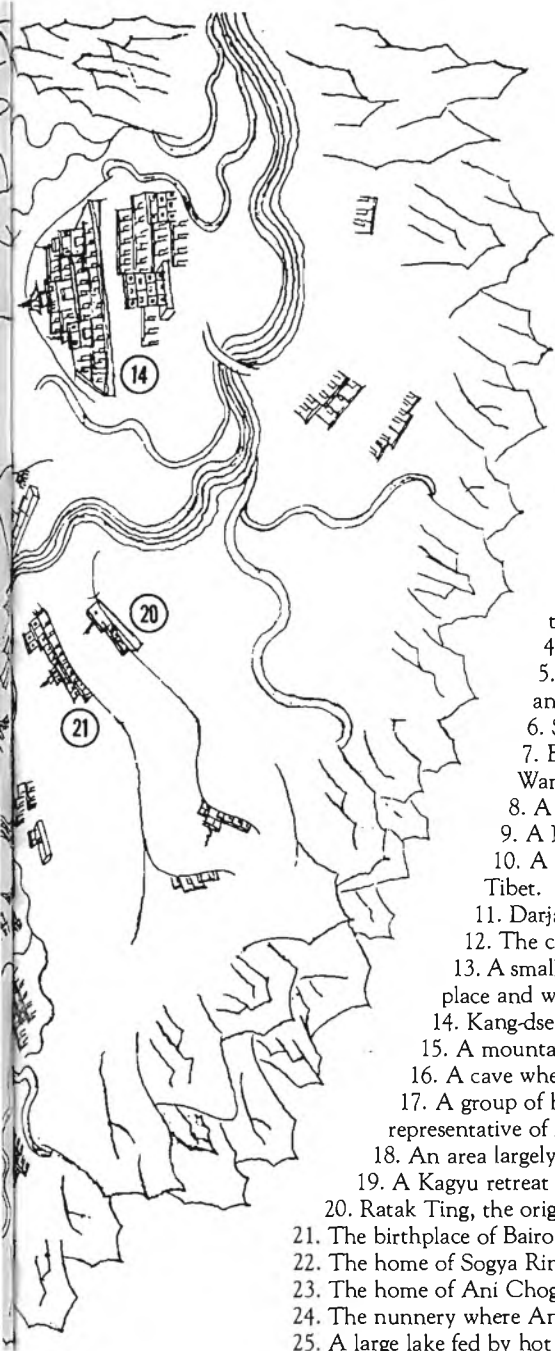
*At the time of death, may there be no agony,
With rainbows and relics appearing, may I be a guide for beings.
As soon as I have passed away, may I be born
In the Realm of Bliss in the presence of Khyungpo and his sons.
As soon as I have been born there, may I attain the tenth stage
And then attain supreme complete enlightenment.*

*Not resting in the end states of existence or peace,
May I be as helpful to all beings as the victorious ones and their sons.*

PART TWO, APPENDICES

Map of Kalu Rinpoche's Homeland





This map was drawn by Kalu Rinpoche and depicts his homeland, the region of Eastern Tibet known as Tre-sho Gangi Rawa.

The outer range of mountains forms the limit of this province. Inside these mountains, there is a range of high hills, steep and full of cliffs. Behind them is a river valley containing forests and bordered by cliffs. This is Horko, the area in which Rinpoche was born and raised. The river in this valley is called the Dsa-chu. Later on in its course, it is known as the Nyachu, and still later Rinpoche says it is called the Tsangpo. However, it seems that this river is the Mekong which flows into the China Sea near Saigon.

This region is divided into two parts, Rompa Tsa which is mainly a plateau or broad valley, and Kang-dse, the neighboring area. Rinpoche describes various places on this map according to the following key.

1. A small group of buildings where people lived and practiced the Dharma.
2. The main home of Rinpoche's family, Ratak La-trang.
3. A small house located about five hours away by foot where Rinpoche sometimes lived.
4. A stupa and a pile of stones on which the Six-Syllable Mantra has been carved.
5. Another stupa, about twice as large as the first, containing miniature stupas and images.
6. Shi-tse Drongpa, a large house belonging to an influential family.
7. Bengen Monastery where Rinpoche received ordination from Tai-Situ Padma Wangchuk.
8. A Bon monastery.
9. A Nyingma monastery.
10. A Kagyu monastery called Gesar Gon after Gesar of Ling, a legendary hero of Tibet.
11. Darjay Gon, a Gelug monastery.
12. The confluence of three major rivers.
13. A small region of cliffs and crags covered with woods. This area was regarded as a holy place and was known as the Realm of Space.
14. Kang-dse Monastery.
15. A mountainous region where Rinpoche stayed during his twelve years of retreat.
16. A cave where Rinpoche stayed in retreat.
17. A group of houses forming a kind of meditation center. The large building belonged to a representative of Palpung Monastery.
18. An area largely inhabited by nomads.
19. A Kagyu retreat called Ri-trak Gon where Rinpoche's mother stayed during her pregnancy.
20. Ratak Ting, the original home of the Ratak family.
21. The birthplace of Bairo Khyentse, the Khyentse incarnation at Palpung Monastery.
22. The home of Sogya Rinpoche.
23. The home of Ani Choga (Rinpoche's half-sister).
24. The nunnery where Ani Choga stayed.
25. A large lake fed by hot springs and renowned for its curative powers.



I. THE THREE VEHICLES AND THE THREE ORDINATIONS

The three vehicles are simultaneously three approaches to the practice of Dharma and three stages in the spiritual maturation of an individual.

The first vehicle is the hinayana or lesser vehicle. It is called the lesser vehicle since the primary focus at this point is the attainment of freedom for the individual practitioner himself. The basic philosophical view is that individual self or ego does not exist, that the feeling I am, I exist, is a false perception. It arises from a lack of awareness of the nature of the ordinary processes of mind. Instead of being seen as flashes or a simple flow of events, these processes are seen as constituting an entity, a self or ego. Out of this misperception develop emotions, actions, and suffering and frustration. Meditation in this vehicle means to see and experience the ordinary processes of the mind for what they are—a simple flow of thoughts and feelings which do not constitute an individual self. This insight comes through calming the mind and looking directly into its nature. In this way, the root of frustration and suffering is destroyed.

Associated with this approach is the first level of ordination, the ordination of individual liberation. There are seven types of ordination: full monk or nun, apprentice nun, novice monk or nun, and lay ordination for men or women. All of them are based on the four root vows: not to kill, not to steal, not to lie, and not to engage in sexual immorality. The last vow means to refrain from adultery in lay ordination and to be celibate in monastic ordination. With its emphasis on a simple, non-violent way of life, the ordination of

individual liberation provides a suitable discipline for the practice of calming the mind and seeing its nature.

As the student gains experience in calming his mind and becomes used to the possibility of ego not existing, his attitude toward himself softens and he is able to feel a genuine warmth or love for others. His interest in his own liberation broadens to include the wish to help others. This shift in perspective and motivation is the beginning of bodhicitta (see note 6) and marks the transition from the lesser vehicle to the greater vehicle or mahayana. At the mahayana level, one gives up simple self-interest and undertakes to reach enlightenment in order to be able to help all sentient beings. The basic philosophical view broadens considerably. Not only does the individual self have no independent existence, but all phenomena, too, have no independent reality. While meditation techniques include training the mind in love, compassion, and bodhicitta using such methods as taking and sending (see note 61), the essential meditation is to end all discursive tendencies in the mind and recognize the nature of reality. Conduct is based on the six perfections (generosity, morality, patience, energy, meditation, and wisdom) and the four means of attracting others (giving what is needed, speaking pleasantly, observing social customs, and helping others meaningfully).

In this approach, the basic commitment concerns the welfare of others, a commitment which is made in the bodhisattva ordination. Whereas the ordination of individual liberation is basically concerned with physical and verbal actions, the

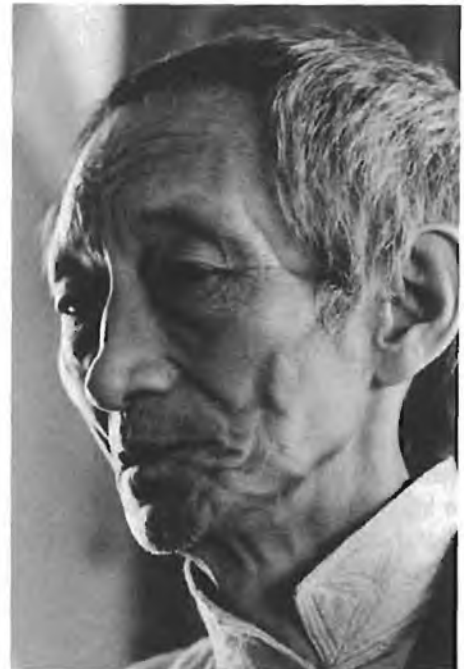
bodhisattva vow is more a commitment to maintain a certain attitude or frame of mind—to help others by attaining enlightenment.

Hence, the main features of the mahayana are the development of love and compassion and the cultivation of the insight or awareness which cuts through the process of conceptualization and allows the nature of reality to be seen.

The third approach is vajrayana. Vajra means indestructible and refers to the indestructible nature of mind itself: sheer clarity and emptiness. All experience arises out of this clarity and emptiness—samsaric experience when ignorance of this fundamental nature is present, and enlightenment when this ignorance is removed. Hence, enlightenment is, in one sense, very ordinary and is potentially present in every experience, even our experience of samsara. Meditation techniques consist of development and completion (see note 5) culminating in the experience of bliss which unfolds into the realization of mahamudra (see note 48). Conduct is based on deliberately chosen forms of behavior, elaborate or simple, which enhance the experience developed in meditation.

Since this level of practice demands the full commitment of the individual to recognize, appreciate, and bring out enlightenment in every facet of his life, the corresponding ordination is far deeper and far more difficult to observe than the preceding ones. It is basically a commitment to see and experience the world as the unfolding of enlightenment and, in particular, to regard one's lama as the Buddha himself.

Although both the mahayana and the vajrayana lead to full enlightenment, there is a fundamental difference in their methods. In the mahayana, the practice of virtue and meditation on compassion and emptiness are the seeds which develop into full enlightenment through the workings of karma. This approach is termed the cause vehicle, since the seeds or causes of enlightenment are developed. Vajrayana, on the other hand, is called the result vehicle because the result, full enlightenment, is used as the path. In this approach, the student is not concerned simply with the development of the causes of enlightenment, but rather with the recognition of enlightenment in each and every moment of his life.





II THE SHANGPA KAGYU TRADITION

The Shangpa tradition originates in the eleventh century with the great Tibetan scholar and spiritual master Khyungpo Naljor. Although he had studied the Bon, Maha-Ati, and Mahamudra traditions in Tibet, he was not satisfied with his understanding and, at the age of fifty-seven, journeyed to Nepal and India to seek further instruction.

His search for teachings culminated in his meeting with Niguma, a female mystic who had seen Buddha Vajradhara himself. From her, he received many teachings, in particular, the teachings of a special tradition of mahamudra and *The Six Teachings of Niguma*. He also met and studied with Sukhasiddhi, another female mystic and student of Virupa, as well as

Vajra-asana, Maitripa, Rahula, and others.

On his return to Tibet, he established a monastery at Shang-Shung in Central Tibet. This became his main seat and he became known as the lama of Shang. Khyungpo Naljor had thousands of students and established hundreds of monasteries but transmitted the special teachings he had received from Niguma to only one of his students, Mochok Rinchen Tsondru. These teachings were in turn transmitted to Kyergang Chokyi Senge, Nyen-ton Ri-gung Chokyi Sherab, and Songjay Tenpa Tsondru Senge. These first seven teachers (including Vajradhara and Niguma) are known as the Seven Great Jewels of the Shangpa tradition. As Niguma had instructed Khyungpo Naljor,



Sukhasiddhi

the special teachings were given to only one student in each of seven generations of students. Songjay Tenpa was the first teacher who gave these instructions to more than one of his disciples, and from this point on, several different lines of transmission develop.

There are many special teachings in the Shangpa tradition, but the most important are *The Five Golden Teachings*. *The Five Golden Teachings* are likened to parts of a tree. The roots are *The Six Teachings of Niguma*, the teachings on heat, illusory-body, the dream state, sheer clarity, transference, and bardo (the intermediary state between death and birth). The trunk is *The Locket Tradition of Mahamudra* which combines the mahamudra teachings of Niguma, Maitripa, and Sukhasiddhi. The branches are the three methods of carrying one's understanding in meditation

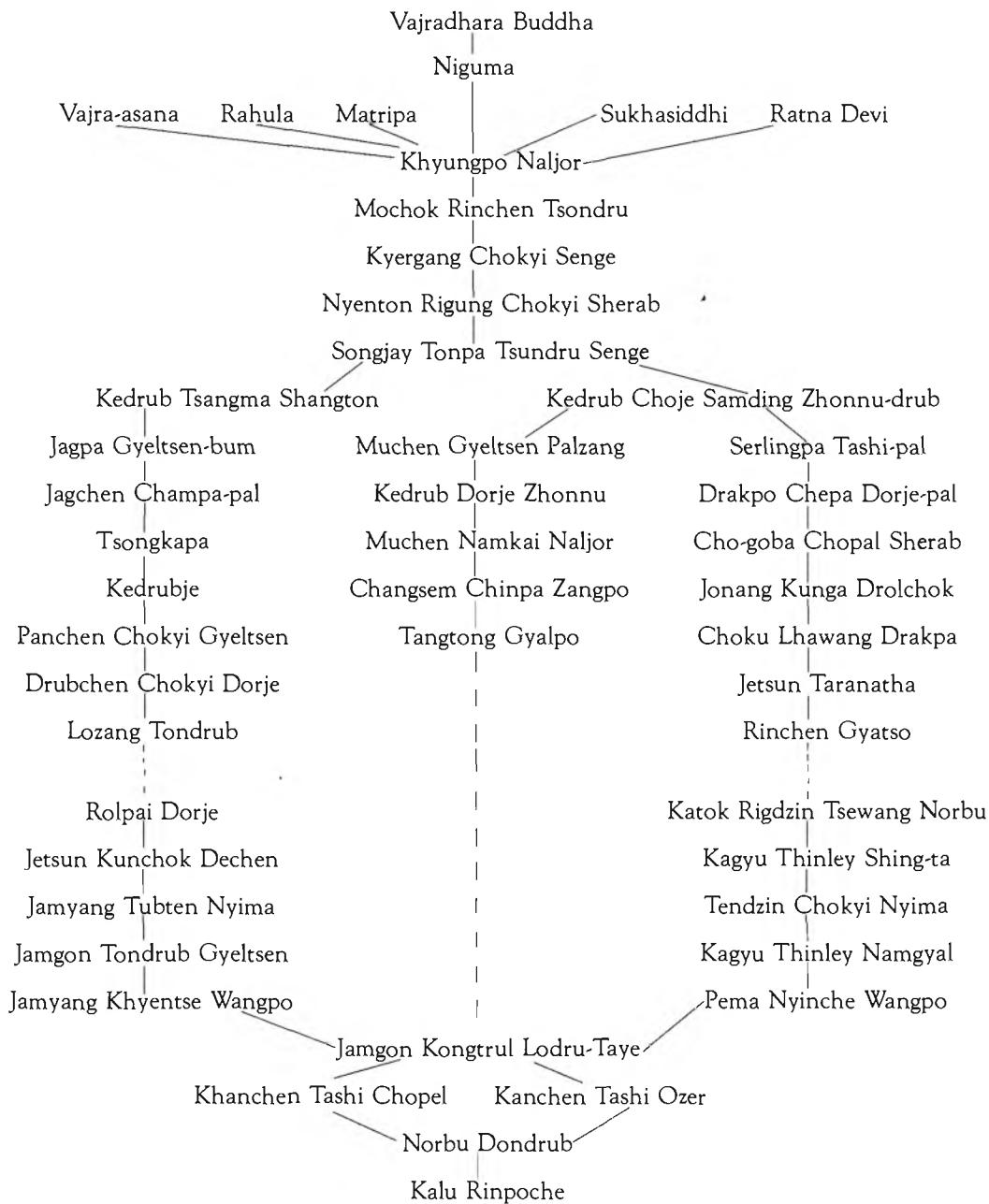
into daily activities. The flowers are the practice of development and completion with the white and red dakinis. The fruit is the teaching of the deathless nature of mind and body.

The principal Shangpa protector is the Six-Armed Mahakala, and it was from this transmission that the practices of this deity spread to other schools.

Although the Shangpa teachings were highly regarded and were assimilated by many schools, the tradition itself ceased to exist as an independent school with the dissolution of the Jonangpas in the seventeenth century. However, its teachings were still practiced and transmitted, and in the nineteenth century Jamgon Kongtrul gathered together the surviving transmissions and ensured their continued survival by including them in his *Treasury of Key Instructions*.

THE SHANGPA KAGYU LINEAGE

(According to the Six-Armed Mahakala transmission)





The Karma Kagyu Refuge Tree



THE KARMA KAGYU LINEAGE

Vajradhara Buddha	Karmapa' VIII, Mikyo Dorje
Tilopa Sherab Zangpo	Sharmapa V, Konchok Yenlak
Naropa Jnana Siddhi	Karmapa IX, Wangchuk Dorje
Marpa Chokyi Lodru	Sharmapa VI, Chokyi Wangchuk
Milarepa Shepa Dorje	Karmapa X, Choying Dorje
Gampopa Dakpo Da-od Zhonnu	Sharmapa VII, Yeshe Nyingpo
Karmapa I, Dusum Khyenpa	Karmapa XI, Yeshe Dorje
Drogon Rechenpa	Sharmapa VIII, Chokyi Dondrub
Pomdrakpa Sonam Dorje	Karmapa XII, Changchub Dorje
Karmapa II, Karma Pakshi	Situ VIII, Chokyi Jungnye
Mahasiddha Ugyenpa	Karmapa XIII, Dudul Dorje
Karmapa III, Rangjung Dorje	Sharmapa X, Chodrub Gyatso
Gyalwa Yungton Shikpo	Situ IX, Padma Nyinche
Karmapa IV, Rolpe Dorje	Karmapa XIV, Thekchok Dorje
Shamarpa II, Khacho Wangpo	Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye
Karmapa V, Deshin Shekpa	Karmapa XV, Khakhyab Dorje
Ratnabhadra, Rikpai Raltri	Situ XI, Padma Wangchok
Karmapa VI, Tongwa Donden	Palpung Khyentse Shenpen Ozer
Jampal Zangpo	Karmapa XVI, Rikpai Dorje
Paljor Dondrub	Norbu Dondrub
Karmapa VII, Chodrak Gyatso	Kalu Rinpoche
Tashi Paljor	



Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye

III JAMGON KONGTRU LODRU TAYE (1818-1899)

Born in Der-ge in Do-kham or Eastern Tibet, Jamgon Kongtrul was raised in the Bon tradition. In his childhood, he had numerous visions and dream experiences and yearned for teachings on the nature of mind, but no one around him fully understood what he sought.

Kongtrul's father was caught up in the political unrest of the period, and through his successful efforts to help him, Kongtrul found himself in the Nyingma monastery of Zhechen in his late teens. Attracting attention because of his considerable intellectual and spiritual abilities, Kongtrul was taken to Palpung, the main Kagyu monastery of Eastern Tibet and seat of the Tai-Situ incarnations. There he made rapid progress, and by his mid-twenties he was a teacher of note and a language tutor to Karmapa Tekchok Dorje during the latter's tour of Kham. When he was thirty, Kongtrul gained permission from Situ Padma Nyinje to practice for three years in solitary retreat. Together they rediscovered the location of an old retreat center, and Kongtrul stayed there to meditate. Kongtrul always regarded these three years as the most fruitful period of his life and deeply wished that he had been able to continue. However, he had to resume his responsibilities at Palpung and spent the rest of his life writing, practicing, and teaching. His achievements in any one of these areas are truly remarkable, let alone all three.

The precision, clarity, and conciseness of Kongtrul's writings make his work accessible, authoritative, and useful. His collected works came to be known as *The Five Treasuries*, a name given by his close

friend, student, and lama Khyentse Wangpo when Kongtrul showed him the first draft of his first major work, *The Treasury of All Knowledge*.

The Treasury of All Knowledge is effectively a complete summary of Tibetan scholastic learning. Although it started as a treatise on the three ordinations, it came to include all aspects of Tibet's religious and cultural history and contains concise and beautiful presentations of the major systems of meditation practiced in Tibet.

The Kagyu Treasury of Mantra is a collection of the key teachings of the Kagyu schools which originated with Marpa the Translator. When Khyentse Wangpo was in Central Tibet, he visited a contemplative who transmitted to him many rare teachings of the Marpa transmission. The contemplative said that he himself had no student capable of editing the material but that one of Khyentse Wangpo's students would be able to. On his return, Khyentse gave the teachings to Kongtrul and insisted that he write such a work. With the transmissions that he had already received from Tai-Situ Padma Nyinje and other teachers, Kongtrul compiled *The Kagyu Treasury of Mantra*.

The Treasury of Key Instructions is the most eloquent expression of Kongtrul's feeling that all traditions should be respected since they all provide sure means to liberation. This treasury contains the key empowerments and instructions for the eight great traditions of Buddhism in Tibet.

The Treasury of Precious Treasure Teachings is the largest of *The Five Treasuries*. It contains the empowerments, instructions, and rituals for the practice of the most



Sakya Pandita

important cycles of treasure teachings. The compilation and writing of the more than sixty volumes of this collection occupied Kongtrul for much of his life.

Finally, *The Special Treasury of Advice* contains all of Kongtrul's miscellaneous writings—prayers and rituals for special occasions, letters, advice to his students, his own songs, and treatises on philosophy, astrology, grammar, Sanskrit, and other subjects.

From his autobiography, it is clear that Kongtrul desired greatly to have more time for intensive practice and less involvement with temporal affairs and administration. Despite the demands made on him, he was able to gain experience in the practice of a vast range of yidams and many methods of the phase of completion. However, Kongtrul himself says that he found taking and sending (see note 61) and mahamudra the best practices to do when one was very busy.

As for teaching and other religious activities, Kongtrul was forever travelling

from one monastery to another, giving empowerments and instructions, consecrating sites, and leading rituals and retreats for specific purposes. He established two retreat centers and discovered many treasure teachings. Among his students are the greatest teachers of the age: Karmapa Kachab Dorje, Tai-Situ Padma Wangchuk, Chokjur Dechen Lingpa, Khyentse Wangpo, and others.

With Khyentse and Dechen Lingpa, Kongtrul shaped the development of the Rimay or All-Traditions movement. This movement sought to break down the prevalent sectarian tendencies and to re-establish personal practice as the basis of Dharma. According to these teachers, one should practice the tradition to which one feels closest and have faith and respect for the teachings of all traditions.

During his life, Kongtrul came to be regarded as an incarnation of three different mind-streams. The most important begins with Buddha Sakyamuni's cousin and student, Ananda, and includes Nagabodhi, Khyungpo Naljor, Sakya Pandita, Jonang Taranatha, and other teachers. Many scholars and masters felt that Kongtrul fulfilled prophecies which occurred in various sutras and treasure teachings. One example, from the *Lankavatara Sutra*, says:

In a later age

There will come a great hero

Called Lodru the Guide,

A teacher of the five sciences.

After Kongtrul's death, five incarnations were recognized, incarnations embodying enlightened form, speech, mind, capabilities, and activity. Kalu Rinpoche is regarded as the activity incarnation.



IV TRADITIONS OF BUDDHISM IN TIBET

The history of Buddhism begins with the enlightenment of Buddha Sakyamuni in India some two thousand, five hundred years ago. That experience and the means to attain it have been transmitted from teacher to student down to the present day. Over the course of time, different teachers have found some approaches more suitable for some students and other methods more suitable for others. Thus, while the various schools of Buddhism share a common root and a vast body of teaching, each school exhibits a particular emphasis or strength which has grown out of the manner of teaching of its founding master or later lineage holders.

The Old School or Nyingmapa traces its origin to the advent of Buddhism in Tibet and, in particular, to the coming of the Indian master Guru Padmasambhava in the eighth century. In the ninth century, Buddhism was ruthlessly suppressed by Langdarma, but this tradition survived sufficiently to re-establish itself.

The New School refers to all the traditions which came from India after this period of persecution. The Kadampa tradition originated with the Indian master Atisha who came to Tibet in 1042 and his Tibetan student Dromton Rinpoche. It stressed adherence to the fundamental principles of refuge, bodhicitta, and ordination, the diligent practice of devotional



Marpa the Translator

exercises, and expertise in logic and philosophy. The Kagyu tradition was brought to Tibet by the eleventh-century Tibetan master Marpa the Translator, the spiritual heir of the Indian master Naropa, and practiced and spread by Milarepa and Gampopa. This tradition places special emphasis on personal practice and the student's devotion to his teacher, as is clearly shown in the lives of Marpa and Milarepa. The Sakya tradition traces its origin to the teaching of the Indian master Virupa and was established in Tibet by Kunga Nyingpo in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Due to the inspiration of the brilliant scholarship of many of its early masters, this tradition has consistently produced excellent explanations and commentaries on the practice and philosophy of the Buddha's teachings. In the fifteenth century, the great Tsong-ka-pa established the monastery of Gaden from which developed the Gelugpa school. Tsong-ka-pa placed great emphasis on pure morality and precise scholarship, qualities which have been preserved in the Gelugpa tradition.

In addition to these, there were four other main transmissions. Although they no longer exist independently, their teachings are largely preserved within one or more of the major traditions. The Zhi-je and Cho traditions come from Padampa Songjay and the female contemplative Machik Labdron. The Shangpa Kagyu is a separate transmission brought to Tibet by Khyungpo Naljor and not directly related to the Marpa transmission. Finally, there are the Nyengyu tradition of Orgyenpa and the Kalacakra tradition of Dolpo Songjay.

Notes:

1. Samsara: the cycle of existence. Although the experience of existence is groundless, lack of awareness of this groundless nature leads to the development of ego or self. This sense of self leads to a sense of separation from the world and a sense of personal territory. Although these perceptions are false, they nevertheless act as a basis for emotional confusion which in turn leads to unskillful actions. Those actions mature into the experience of suffering which in turn reinforces the sense of self and alienation from the world. This vicious circle is samsara.

2. The eighteen kinds of freedom and good fortune are conditions which make it possible to practice the Dharma. Freedom signifies the freedom from situations which make it impossible to practice Dharma—being an animal or living in an irreligious society, for example. Good fortune refers to those conditions which are needed to practice Dharma, such as having faith in the Dharma or living in a country and age in which Buddhism is practiced.

3. The ten non-virtuous actions are: to take life, to steal, and sexual immorality; to lie, to create division, offensive speech, and gossip; and envy, enmity, and invalid beliefs. The ten virtuous actions are the opposite of these and constitute the basic moral code of Buddhism.

4. The two accumulations: the accumulation of merit refers to the development of wholesomeness through virtuous actions and the practice of Dharma. The accumulation of pristine cognition is the experience of direct understanding of the nature of being.

5. Development and completion: in the

vajrayana, the enlightened mind is used as the basis of practice. The phase of development refers to the development of the experience of oneself and the world as being sacred, as being expressions of enlightenment. To do this, the student identifies himself with a deity or yidam whose form symbolizes enlightenment. The phase of completion refers to the completion of this experience with the direct understanding that all experience has no intrinsic reality, that mind and phenomena are empty. In this phase, the student dissolves the experience of the phase of development to break any fixations which may have arisen in its practice.

6. Bodhicitta: the intention to achieve buddhahood in order to help others. It begins with the discovery of the possibility of gentleness within oneself and matures into the fusion of compassion and emptiness.

7. The greater vehicle or mahayana: see Appendix I, The Three Vehicles and the Three Ordinations.

8. Mantra-holder: a lay person who has achieved realization through his practice and is qualified to transmit vajrayana teaching.

9. Shangpa Kagyu: see Appendix II, The Shangpa Kagyu Tradition.

10. Treasure teachings: teachings which have been concealed (generally by Guru Padmasambhava) and are discovered at a later date by specially endowed people (treasure finders) when the time and circumstances are suitable.

11. Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye: see Appendix III, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye.

12. Vajrayana: see Appendix I, The Three

Vehicles and the Three Ordinations.

13. The five traditional sciences: crafts, language, logic, healing, and Dharma.

14. *The Five Treasuries*: see Appendix III, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye.

15. Union and destruction: union is a vajrayana practice in which skillful means and wisdom are united to bring about the direct experience of pristine cognition. Destruction is another practice in which the practitioner destroys the samsaric existence of a sentient being whose karma is so powerfully negative that he would have no other possibility for enlightenment.

16. The secret path of mantra: another term for vajrayana. Vajrayana is termed secret for two reasons. First, since vajrayana is principally a way of experiencing oneself and the world as enlightenment, it can be and is practiced without other people being aware. Secondly, the understanding or realization to which one comes transcends conceptual or intellectual formulations, so it is secret in the sense that it cannot be expressed or understood from the standpoint of ego. Mantra, in this context, means that which protects the mind. It refers to the methods which are used to protect the mind from conceptual distractions.

17. The preliminary practices: a set of five practices which prepare a student for vajrayana meditations. The five practices, which are each done one hundred thousand times, are: prostrations, refuge prayer, Vajrasattva meditation, mandala offering, and union with the lama's mind.

18. Mani: the name given to the famous six-syllable mantra of Avalokiteshvara: Om Mani Padme Hum.

19. Yidam retreat: a period of intense

practice on a yidam (see note 5).

20. Vajra feast: a ritual in which pleasurable (and sometimes unpleasurable) experiences are deliberately engaged in order to enhance understanding of the nature of mind. Since the moon is an important symbol in vajrayana, the lunar calendar is used to determine suitable dates for important occasions. In particular, the tenth days following the full and new moons are traditionally days for celebrating a vajra feast.

21. Warriors and dakinis: deities used in meditation which express the activity of the enlightened mind. Warriors are usually depicted as semi-wrathful male figures, dakinis as peaceful or semi-wrathful female figures.

22. Kagyu teachings: One of the four principal schools in Tibet, the Kagyu school traces its origins to the Indian masters Tilopa and Naropa.

23. The Six-Syllable Mantra: the mantra Om Mani Padme Hum.

24. Maturation and liberation: in vajrayana, there are two stages in the student's development. Maturation means the maturing of the student's experience so that he has some basis for vajrayana practice. The process of maturation takes place during empowerment. When the lama confers empowerment, he plants the seeds of spiritual understanding in the course of experience of the student. This transmission usually (but not necessarily) takes place in the course of an empowerment ceremony in which the lama formally introduces the student to his yidam. The student then receives instruction from his teacher in meditation on his yidam and on the nature of mind. Through the practice

of these instructions, the student can attain liberation. Thus, maturation refers to the ripening of the student and liberation to the instructions for meditation.

25. The three ordinations: see Appendix I, The Three Vehicles and the Three Ordinations.

26. *The Four Tantras* of the science of healing are the root tantra, the explanatory tantra, the tantra of the oral tradition, and the additional tantra. All these are associated with the basic text for Tibetan medicine, *The Ambrosia Heart Tantra*.

27. Empowerment, authorization, and instruction: empowerment is the process by which the vajra master or lama matures the student so that he will be able to practice fruitfully. Scriptural authorization consists of a reading of the texts connected with a given practice which authorizes the student to study them. Instruction refers to the actual instructions on practice and meditation which the lama gives to the student. These three elements of transmission are also described as maturation, support, and liberation: empowerment matures the student, scriptural authorization provides him with the support of texts and commentaries on practice and meditation, and instruction gives him the means to attain liberation.

28. *The Kagyu Treasury of Mantra*: see Appendix III, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye.

29. Three main texts of the Kagyu school: these three texts and their commentaries are the primary sources for the Kagyu approach to vajrayana practice and philosophy. *The Profound Inner Meaning* was written by the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, and gives a detailed treatment of

the process by which vajrayana practice unties the knots of emotions and obscurations and brings the meditator to a direct understanding of his own nature. *The Two Chapters of the Hevajra Tantra* with commentaries provides a detailed discussion of development and completion with Hevajra as the yidam. *The Changeless Nature* (Skt. *Ratnovibhangottaratana*) is a mahayana work which describes the qualities of buddha nature (tathagatagarba) and its unfolding. Although many teachers have written commentaries on these three texts, those of Jamgon Kongtrul are generally used today because of their clarity and completeness.

30. The two short texts of the third Karmapa are *Consciousness and Pristine Cognition*, a discussion of the difference between discursive consciousness and pristine cognition, and *Buddha Nature*, a discussion of the potential for buddhahood in sentient beings.

31. The summer retreat is held during the monsoon period in India. During this time, monks and nuns do not leave their monasteries and devote all their time to the practice of Dharma.

32. The three-year, three-month retreat: this course of practice is a principal part of the training for those who intend to lead a contemplative life and for those who will become teachers of vajrayana. The length of the retreat is based on the length of time it would take for the mind and body to purify themselves completely when held in a particular state of meditation.

The actual program of the retreat depends on the tradition, the monastery, and the teacher. When Jamgon Kongtrul started his retreat center, the program



consisted of full exposure to the Shangpa Kagyu, Kalacakra, and Maha-ati traditions. In Kalu Rinpoche's time this program was still being followed, but there was also a second retreat center which concentrated on the practices of the Karma Kagyu tradition. At present, most of Rinpoche's retreat centers have a program which includes the key practices of both the Shangpa Kagyu and Karma Kagyu.

The main purpose of the retreat is to provide the student with a sound knowledge and practical experience in the principal methods of meditation used in mahayana and vajrayana practice. With this basis he is able to continue practice largely on his own.

33. Sutras and tantras: sutras are the texts which record Buddha Sakyamuni's teachings on the lesser and greater vehicles. Tantras are the texts which record Buddha's teachings on vajrayana.

34. Old, New, and Treasure Traditions: the Old Tradition refers to the teachings of Buddhism which came originally to Tibet and survived Langdarma's persecution in the ninth century. The New Tradition refers to the teachings which came to Tibet to revitalize the Dharma after this period of suppression. The Treasure Tradition refers to the treasure teachings (see note 10) which have been discovered over the years up to the present day.

35. *The Five Golden Doctrines*: see Appendix II, The Shangpa Kagyu Tradition.

36. The four empowerments: a series of empowerments associated with each yidam which plant the seeds of progressively deeper levels of experience in the mind of the student. The first one is the vase empowerment which plants the seed of experiencing form as emptiness. The

second is the secret empowerment which leads to the experience of sound and communication as empty. The third is the empowerment of wisdom and pristine cognition which leads to the experience of mind as empty. The fourth empowerment transcends all duality and introduces the student directly to the nature of mind and phenomena.

37. The twelve mountain goddesses: mountain spirits associated with the Himalayas who have undertaken to protect the Dharma and those who follow it.

38. Ghosts and demons: when a person who has violated his vajrayana commitments dies, he becomes a ghost and may haunt or otherwise cause trouble in areas where he lived. When the person was someone who had developed some power in meditation, he becomes a far more powerful ghost or demon and can cause a great deal of trouble for people living in the world.

39. The sixteen holy elders: a group of sixteen ordained teachers, students of Buddha Sakyamuni, who travelled separately to different countries to teach and spread the Dharma. Prayers of respect and praise for their work are regularly recited before ceremonies of monastic ordination or purification and renewal of vows.

40. Stupa: a religious reliquary, a structure with a prescribed form containing sacred and consecrated objects. There are eight different forms of stupas, each associated with an event in the life of Buddha Sakyamuni: his enlightenment, his return from the god realms, his death, and so on. Stupas may range in size from small clay ones a few centimeters high to large monuments towering twenty or thirty meters or more.

41. Vajra-holder with the three ordinations: the term used for a teacher of vajrayana who has achieved realization and holds full monastic ordination.

42. Dharanis and mantras: dharanis are usually short Sanskrit prayers or praises addressed to particular buddhas or bodhisattvas. They are repeated as a source of inspiration and blessing. Mantras are generally more symbolic phrases which are recited in meditation to protect the mind from distractions and to develop particular kinds of understanding or capabilities.

43. Karma Kagyu: one of the major schools of the Kagyu tradition. This school originated with Dusum Khyenpa, the first Karmapa.

44. Jonangpa: a school of Buddhism in Tibet which carried principally the Kalacakra and Shangpa Kagyu transmissions. At one time widespread and powerful, it was largely absorbed by other schools in the seventeenth century and ceased to exist independently. Its last lineage holder was Taranatha.

45. The spoken Tibetan language enjoys several levels of honorifics. The Dalai Lama, the Karmapa, and other such teachers are so highly regarded that it is inappropriate to use any but the highest honorific when speaking about or to them. This custom presents some difficulty even to well-educated Tibetans. This very fact is used as a formal mode of praise of such teachers.

46. Practice Lineage: an epithet for the Kagyu school, since it emphasizes the importance of personal practice.

47. The four teachings: these teachings were originally associated with separate yidams—heat, for instance, with Hevajra and the dream state with Mahamaya. In

India, however, such teachers as Tilopa integrated these four practices, and such collections as *The Six Teachings of Naropa* evolved. In these collections, the techniques and experiences of each of the four teachings are used to enhance and deepen the others.

48. Mahamudra: literally, the great seal. The seal is emptiness, great because it marks all phenomena. According to its Tibetan etymology, the term indicates the fact that the pristine cognition of emptiness occurs simultaneously with freedom from samsara. Although mahamudra is a term for what is ultimately true, it is also applied to the meditative techniques which bring about this realization.

49. Domain of guidance: as a bodhisattva's realization matures, his influence spreads. People and other sentient beings who come into contact with him are affected by his wisdom and compassion. He creates an environment or domain of enlightenment about him in which others find instruction and guidance in the ways to become free of suffering. For example, anyone who hears the Six-Syllable Mantra will, in time, be inspired by Avalokiteshvara's compassion.

50. Obscurations: the clouding effect of karma, emotions, ego-clinging, and ignorance.

51. *The Great Treasury of Precious Treasure Teachings*: see Appendix III, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye.

52. Inner tantras: the three higher tantras of the Nyingma school—maha-yoga, anu-yoga, and maha-ati.

53. Dharmakaya and the two form kayas: dharmakaya is the realization of what is, completely free of conceptual formulations, sheer clarity without limitation.

Out of this realization flows the communication of enlightenment, the richness and energy of enlightened experience. This is the samboghakaya. Most yidams are associated with this level of experience. Nirmanakaya is the form of enlightenment in the world—in particular, the physical manifestation of enlightenment, Buddha Sakyamuni. The nirmanakaya and samboghakaya are together called the two form kayas, and it is through them that enlightenment or buddha works to help sentient beings become free of samsara. These three kayas, however, are not separate entities. They occur simultaneously, just as heat and light come from a candle flame.

54. Amitabha's Pure Land: Sukhavati, the Realm of Bliss, is the name of Amitabha's buddha domain. Of all buddha domains, Amitabha's is regarded as the most accessible, due to his vow that anyone who has complete faith in him would be born there.

55. The three bases: the purification and renewal of monastic vows at the beginning of the summer retreat, the summer retreat itself, and the ceremony ending the summer retreat.

56. Prayer wheel: a cylindrical structure which contains large numbers of mantras. Each rotation of the cylinder is equivalent to the recitation of its contents. Prayer wheels range in size from hand-held instruments to large cylinders weighing a ton or more and turned by water or electrical power.

57. Fasting and prayer: a two-day practice of prayer and meditation during which specific vows are observed: the four root vows of monastic ordination and such restrictions as refraining from intoxi-

cants, the use of jewelry, and participation in entertainment. During the first day, only liquids are taken after the noon meal. On the second day, no food or liquids are consumed and silence is observed. This practice is often done at the full moon in conjunction with meditation on the Thousand-Armed Avalokiteshvara.

58. The four orders of tantra: tantra as action, tantra as behaviour, tantra as contemplation, and tantra as supreme contemplation. Various yidams are associated with each order. On occasions such as the cremation of a high lama, four major ceremonies, one for a yidam of each order of tantra, would be performed simultaneously around the cremation fire.

59. In this name there is an intentional play on sound in the Tibetan. The town nearest Rinpoche's monastery is called Sonada. Dudjom Rinpoche gave the monastery the name Sonamdar which means "merit flourishes."

60. The six kinds of beings: gods, anti-gods, humans, animals, ghosts tormented by hunger and thirst, and hell beings. These six kinds of beings represent the range of possible experiences in samsaric existence.

61. Taking and sending: a mahayana meditation based on the principle of the exchange of one's own interests and happiness for the suffering and misfortune of others. The meditation uses the breath as a symbol of this exchange.

62. The higher and lower realms: the higher realms are the gods, anti-gods, and human existences, since there is the possibility of some happiness in these states. The lower realms are the animal, ghost, and hell being existences where suffering is ever present.



Dusum Khyenpa

Glossary

Amitabha, Buddha of Boundless

Light: Amitabha is the head of the lotus family of buddhas. He is red in color and sits in meditation holding an alms-bowl. (See note 54.)

Avalokiteshvara, The All-Seeing One:

this bodhisattva is the expression of the compassion of all buddhas, hence his epithet, the Great Compassionate One. In his manifestation as one who helps and teaches sentient beings, he appears with a white body and four arms in which he holds a crystal rosary and a white lotus.

Bengen Monastery: a Kagyu monastery in Horko where Rinpoche took ordination and to which he returned after completing the three-year retreat program.

Copper-Colored Mountain: Guru Padmasambhava's buddha realm.

Drepung Monastery: one of the largest monasteries of the Gelug tradition. Situated outside Lhasa, it used to house over seven thousand monks.

Dusum Khyenpa, the first Karmapa (1110-1193): The chief disciple of Gampopa, he established the Karma Kagyu tradition and its seat, the monastery of Tsurpu. His reincarnation, Karma Pakshi, was the first incarnate lama to be recognized in Tibet.

Father and Son Victors: a term for the senior incarnations of the Karma Kagyu tradition. The Karmapa, Sharmarpa, Tai-Situ, Pawo, and Tre-u incarnation lineages formed the original five father and son victors. In recent times, the Palpung Kongtrul and Palpung Khyentse lineages have also been included.

Hayagriva: a wrathful yidam of the lotus family particularly important for the subjugation and control of ghosts, demons,

and other negative forces. There are several different forms and traditions of meditation on this deity. The Shangpa transmission of Hayagriva is a treasure teaching which begins with Kyergangpa.

Jowo and Sakya: the two principal images of Buddha Sakyamuni in Lhasa. Both came to Lhasa in the eighth century as wedding presents of the Chinese and Nepalese wives of the Tibetan king Song-Tsen Gampo.

Jamgon Khyentse Wangpo (1820-1892): a close friend, student, and teacher of Jamgon Kongtrul and one of the principal figures of the All-Traditions movement. After his death, several incarnations were recognized: Khyentse Chokyi Lodru, Dingo Khyentse, Bairo Khyentse, and others.

Kalacakra: a semi-wrathful yidam of the highest order of tantra who is associated with astrology and the kingdom of Shambhala. This tantra was the last major transmission to come to Tibet from India.

Kagyu Tenzin: an eighteenth-century Shangpa Kagyu master and lineage holder.

Karma Lhatong: the spiritual heir of Kagyu Tenzin and lineage holder after him.

Karma Norbu: the Shangpa lineage holder after Karma Lhatong and a teacher of Jamgon Kongtrul.

Khyungpo Naljor: an eleventh-century Tibetan scholar and religious master. He established the Shangpa Kagyu tradition on the basis of the teachings he had received in India from Niguma, Sukhasiddhi, and other teachers. (See Appendix III, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodru Taye.)

Milarepa (1040-1123): the spiritual

heir of Marpa the Translator and the teacher of Gampopa. This well-known contemplative of the Kagyu tradition is one of the most remarkable and inspiring figures in Buddhism in Tibet, due to his total dedication to rigorous practice in mountain solitudes and to his gift of conveying teachings in songs.

Mipam Nampar Gyalwa (1846-1912): a Nyingma teacher famed for his extensive scholarship and dedication to the All-Traditions movement.

Mochokpa: the spiritual heir of Khyungpo Naljor and a contemporary of Milarepa. As the next lineage holder of the Shangpa tradition, he founded several centers of which his two principal seats were at Lhapu and Nye-Thang near Lhasa. He spent much of his life in retreat and transmitted the special teachings of Niguma only to Kyergangpa. There is an incarnation lineage of this teacher in the Gelug tradition.

Narthang: the location of the largest print works in Tibet. It was here that the first edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon (the Kangyur) was published.

Ngari Panchen: a fourteenth-century Nyingma master. He was an emanation of the Tibetan king Tri-Song De-u Tsen and a treasure-finder. His commentaries on the three ordinations are regarded as definitive works on that subject.

Orgyen Rinpoche: a name of Padmasambhava.

Padmasambhava: an Indian Buddhist master who was invited to come to Tibet in the eighth century to overcome the obstacles which were preventing the spread of Buddhism there. He is also known as Guru Rinpoche, Guru Padmasambhava,

and Vajra Guru.

Palpung Monastery: the major Karma Kagyu monastery in Kham and seat of the Tai-Situ incarnations.

Rigung: the seat of the sixth Shangpa lineage holder, Nyen-Tonpa. Here he constructed an important image of the principal Shangpa protector, the Six-Armed Mahakala.

Sera: a major monastery of the Gelug school located near Lhasa.

Shravaka: a person who has come to the realization of the lack of individual self from listening to and practicing the teachings of the lesser vehicle. However, he remains concerned only with his own freedom and thus does not develop the compassion and wisdom which leads to full buddhahood.

Tashi-Lhunpo: the seat of the Panchen Lamas and the location of a large image of Maitreya, the future buddha.

Tre-Sho Gangi Rawa: the region of Kham in which the first Karmapa was born.

Tro-pu: the location of a large image of Maitreya, the future buddha. This image was built by Tropu Lotsawa, an early translator of the New School, in the eleventh or twelfth century.

Tsa-dra Rinchen Drak: a mountainous region in the vicinity of Palpung Monastery. Jamgon Kongtrul's retreat center was located here.

Tsurpu: the monastic seat of the Karmapas. Here, the second Karmapa constructed a large image of Buddha Sakyamuni.

Vajradhara: the vajrayana manifestation of Buddha Sakyamuni. He is blue in color and holds a vajra and bell crossed over his

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heart, symbolizing the union of skillful means and wisdom. In the Kagyu and Shangpa Kagyu traditions, the student identifies his lama with this manifestation of the enlightened mind.

Vajrakalaya: a wrathful yidam of the maha-yoga order of tantra of the Nyingma tradition. He belongs to the karma family and is associated with the removal of obstacles to the practice of Dharma.

Vajra Guru: a name of Padmasambhava and also the name of the mantra associated with him, Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hum.

Vajrasattva: a buddha and peaceful yidam associated with purification.

White Tara: Tara is the embodiment of the activity of compassion. The two principal forms are the Green Tara, who is associated with protection from illness and misfortune, and the White Tara, who is associated with good health and longevity.

Yong-ge Mingyur Dorje: an eighteenth-century Nyingma master and treasure-finder from the Nangchen district of Kham. One of his principal treasure discoveries was a cycle of teaching and meditation on Dorje Trolo, the wrathful form of Padmasambhava. He was closely connected to the Karma Kagyu school and transmitted many of his treasure teachings to this tradition.

Zhang-Zhung, sometimes spelt Shang-Shung: the location of Khyungpo Naljor's main monastery. Because it was his principal seat, it was called the Vajra Seat after the Vajra Seat in Bodhgaya, India, where Buddha Sakyamuni attained enlightenment.

Karmapa, The History of the Sixteen Karmapas of Tibet: Karma Tinley, Prajna Press (The Great Eastern Book Company), 1980.

In addition to the history of the sixteen Karmapas, this book contains a good introduction to the basic tenets of Buddhism as it is practiced in the Tibetan tradition. There is also an extensive discussion of incarnation and incarnate teachers.

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Again, the preface to this book is a good introduction in non-technical language to the basic ideas of Buddhism.

Kongtrul's Encyclopedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture: Lokesh Chandra, Vol. 80 in the Sata-Pikaka Series published by the International Academy of Indian Culture, 1970.

Gene Smith's introduction to this edition of Kongtrul's *Treasury of All Knowledge* contains an excellent synopsis of the political and cultural developments which led to the Rimay movement, and a good account of the life of Jamgon Kongtrul.

Writings of Kalu Rinpoche: translated by K. McLeod, Kagyu Kunchab Chuling, Vancouver, 1976.

Kalu Rinpoche wrote this text for his Western students as an introduction to the fundamental reasons for practicing Buddhism and the basic moral tenets on which this practice is based.





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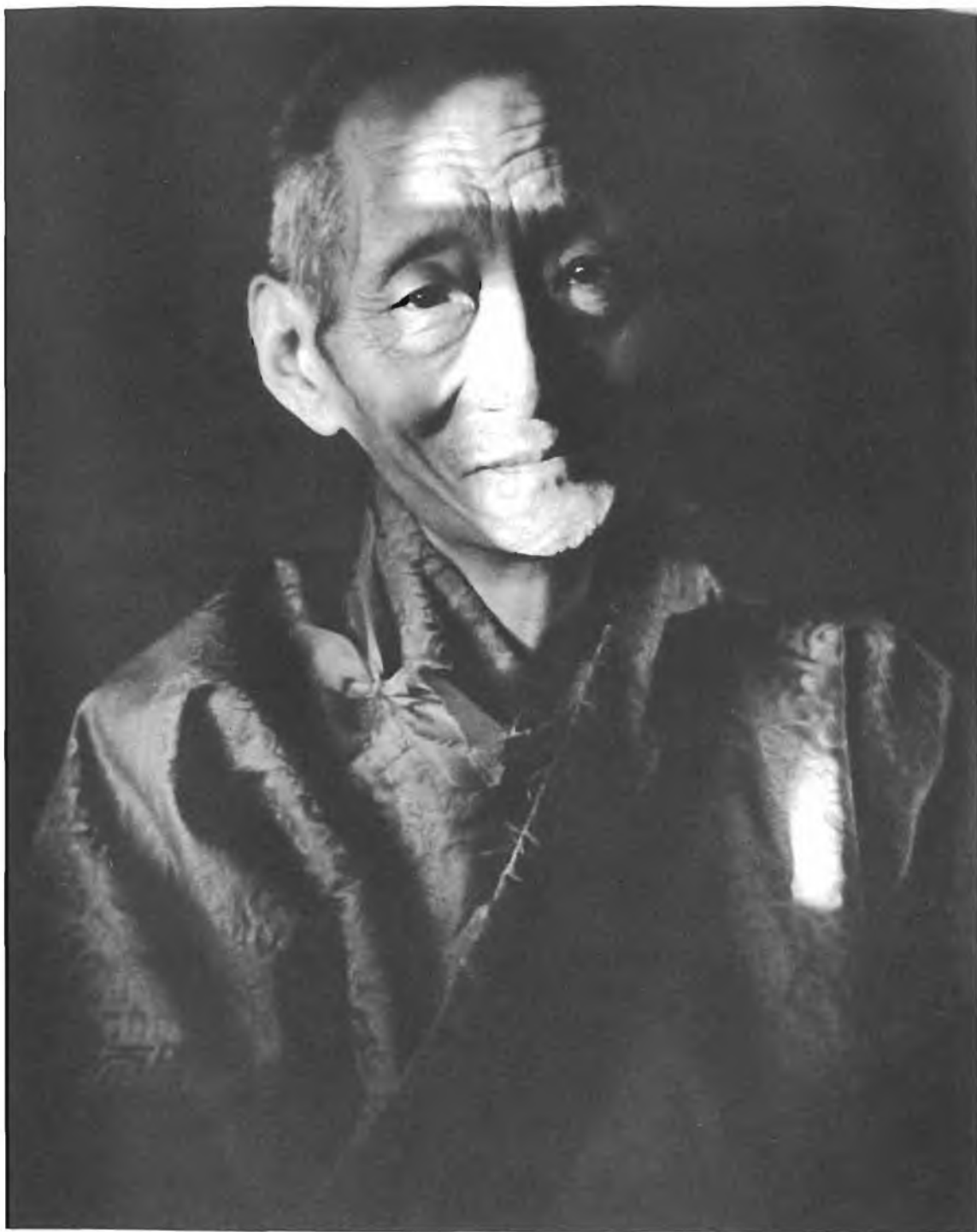
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OM S O T I

*May the deities and protectors of long life
Sustain the Self-Arisen All-Pervading Mind of Enlightenment,
Guide of beings on the path to freedom.*







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