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# COPENHAGEN'S BUDDHAS

**Tibetan Buddhism and the Precious Painting Art  
of the Copenhagen Buddhist Center**

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# COPENHAGEN'S BUDDHAS

Tibetan Buddhism  
and the Precious Painting Art  
of the Copenhagen Buddhist Center

SUNGRAPH

➤ Buddhism is not  
only a way of life.  
We understand it more  
as a science,  
a very helpful knowledge  
which allows to  
determine, search,  
learn and bring out  
the truth and the nature  
of everything, of whatever  
we want to know. ⬅

H.H. 17<sup>th</sup> Gyalwa Karmapa  
Trinley Thaye Dorje

In the garden of the  
Buddhist Center Copenhagen





The meditation hall  
or »Gompa« in Tibetan

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Ornamental paintings on the  
ceiling of the meditation hall



LETTER BY H.H. THE 17<sup>TH</sup> KARMAPA TRINLEY THAYE DORJE



Dear dharma friends,

On the occasion of the publication of this book on Tibetan Buddhist art, I would like to offer my wishes, so that many beings may be inspired by it.

May the timeless teachings of Lord Buddha continue to benefit countless beings!

With prayers



The 17<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje



Main entrance of the  
Buddhist Center Copenhagen



# HISTORY OF THE CENTER







Front view of the  
Buddhist Center  
on Svanemøllevej

## ❧ COPENHAGEN: BRINGING BUDDHISM TO THE WEST

By now it is more than 40 years ago that living Buddhism settled on Danish soil, and normally this is no time at all, especially when considering the historical perspective: Buddhism is already several thousand years old. Nevertheless, a lot has happened for Buddhism in the West during the past few decades.

It may be somewhat disingenuous to say that Buddhism arrived in Denmark for the first time in the 1970s. Some intellectuals and artists had learned about Buddhism in the 1800s. Christian Melbye, a doctor from Jutland, established the first Buddhist society in 1921. The organization, called Buddhistisk Samfund i Danmark («The Danish Buddhist Society»), was mostly a study group for basic Buddhism (Theravada teachings) rather than an actual Buddhist community (Sanskrit: sangha). It only attracted ten members and was disbanded in 1953.

Later, in the 1960s, more foreigners and refugees arrived in Denmark from Asia and they brought with them their version of Buddhism. Most notable was the Tibetan Lama Tarab Tulku,

## THE ART AND MEANING OF THANGKA PAINTING

The purpose of painting a Buddhist mural or Tibetan scroll-painting, a thangka, is first and foremost that of a meditation object expressing Buddhist ideals. The Buddha forms are a depiction of certain enlightened qualities of mind, leaving deep imprints in the subconscious of the meditator and helping him or her to discover and realize these inherent, timeless qualities of an enlightened mind. A thangka is also said to be helpful for good health, a long life, protection in difficult periods in a person's life or assisting in the rebirth of a recently deceased.

The basic principal schools of Thangka painting derive from Western Central India around the 8th century. Later on painting traditions developed further in Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet.

Thangka painting is at large defined by iconographic rules and guidelines. The different styles are therefore sometimes difficult to tell apart. Therefore, it is possibly easiest to characterize the Nepalese and Tibetan schools by looking at the backdrop of the paintings. Regarding the style of the background of the paintings, three styles can be identified:

- The Tibetan painting style of the 15<sup>th</sup> century style as painted in Copenhagen is called Menri style. Typical are floating clouds as well as rippled, surging water. The mountains are low and rounded, and there is less detail than in the other styles.

- In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the second major school called Karma Gadri of the Kagyu school appeared. It combined several influences, including the tight proportions by the Indian painting schools and thangkas from the Ming dynasty in China. The standard forms were taken from India, colors and background structures from China, but the composition and the Buddha figures followed traditional Tibetan style. The Karma Guen Buddhist Center in Spain is painted in the Karma Gadri style (please see page 108 for book info).
- A style from the mid-1600s is called Mensar or New Menri style. The works feature more details, with thick and round or long and thin clouds. The mountains are well defined with steep peaks, giving them an almost exaggerated look.

The training of a thangka painting artist takes a long time. Once an aspiring thangka painting artist has found the fitting teacher, the training starts with the drawing of sacred symbols, heads, hands and feet. Then the drawing of the most important figure types with correct proportions is taught. This is often practiced with 1,000 versions of the same figure drawing to reach perfection – a true practice of diligence and patience!

Later on during the apprenticeship, the student is taught to paint or »open« the eyes of the respective Buddha forms, paying great

attention to the right expression created this way. The details of the paintings are then enhanced with gold, bringing the painting to life through the reflection of light effects.

The drawing of a figure starts with a precise grid. Within this grid, the ink outline drawing of the naked figure is created, the proportions precisely aligned according to detailed painting requirements passed on from generation to generation. Afterwards, attire and ornaments are added to the sketch. All surfaces are then painted in matte distempers. After drying, shades and shadows are added with many layers of thin, almost transparent colors in order to give depth to the scene.

During as well as after the training artists are often following special personal guidelines of conduct. This may, for example, be strict cleanliness and/or abstinence from meat, onions, garlic

and alcohol. Additionally, there are some features which a thangka painter should by tradition possess. All of his senses need to be intact. The painter should be modest and devoted to Buddhism, diligent and conscientious in his work. He should be of good character, friendly and sociable. He must also possess great knowledge of handicraft and he should be indifferent to flattery, praise from others, wages and the quality of meals he receives.

Before the actual painting work begins, preliminary rituals are carried out. The artist recites mantras, sacrifices and distributes offerings to the poor. Next, a realized Buddhist teacher blesses the artist's work, his tools and materials. The artist should strive to maintain a good relationship with the sponsor of the painting. The work should be carried out in a quiet environment without distractions. Therefore, only people directly involved are granted access to the painter's place of work – until the masterpiece is finished!





# THE HOUSE'S PAINTINGS





THE RIGHT WALL: KARMAPA, BUDDHA AND THE SIXTEEN ARHATS



## ❧ THE HISTORICAL BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI

Of the three, four or six objects of refuge in Tibetan Buddhism, all traditions first take refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the *Three Jewels*. The term Buddha actually refers more to what Buddha represents than to him as a person: the realization of the true nature of mind, the awakened state one wants to reach.

Buddha was born around 2560 years ago in Lumbini, in today's Nepal. After a long spiritual search, he recognized the nature of mind while in deep meditation and reached enlightenment. Buddha taught for 45 years in the highly developed Indian culture of his time.

Buddha taught about the true nature of all phenomena in both profound and practical terms. This understanding makes lasting happiness possible. Buddhism does not proclaim dogmas; rather, it encourages critical questioning. Through meditation, intellectual understanding becomes personal experience, and this level of awareness is solidified. The goal of Buddha's teachings is the full development of the innate potential of body, speech and mind.

Buddha gave instructions for three different kinds of people. Those who wanted to avoid suffering received instructions on cause and effect (the main teaching in the "School of the Elders," or Theravada in Pali). Those who also had surplus for others were given the teachings on wisdom and compassion ("Great Way",

skt. Mahayana). Buddha taught the Diamond Way (skt. Vajrayana) to those who had strong confidence in their own and others' buddha nature. He manifested as forms of energy and light or directly transmitted his enlightened view as a flow of awareness. On this highest level, the aim is the complete development of mind, the spontaneous effortlessness of the Great Seal (skt. Mahamudra). In Diamond Way Buddhism one learns to experience the world from a rich and self-liberating viewpoint. Applying its methods develops deep inner richness and leads to a nonartificial and unshakeable mind, where all enlightened activity can unfold.

So Buddha showed the path to liberation and enlightenment – the way out of suffering and out of the samsaric existence of death and rebirth.

Liberation is the realization that our bodies, thoughts and feelings are in a state of constant change. Therefore, there is no basis for a real existing ego or "self". Realizing this, one no longer feels like a target, which is the cause of all suffering. Enlightenment is the second and ultimate step. Here, the clear light of mind radiates through every experience. There is no separation between the one experiencing, the object experienced and the experience itself. In every moment, mind enjoys its self-arisen abilities, and everything becomes spontaneous and effortless.

# KARMA KAGYU LINEAGE



- 1 Diamond Holder (skt. Vajradhara, tib. Dorje Chang)
- 2 Tilopa, 988-1069
- 3 Naropa, 1016-1100
- 4 Marpa, 1012-1097
- 5 Milarepa, 1052-1135
- 6 Gampopa, 1079-1153
- 7 1<sup>st</sup> Karmapa Düsum Khyenpa 1110 – 1193
- 8 Drogön Rechen 1148 – 1218
- 9 Pomdragpa Sönam Dorje 1179 – 1249
- 10 2<sup>nd</sup> Karmapa Karma Pakshi 1204 – 1283
- 11 Drubtop Urgyenpa 1230 – 1312
- 12 3<sup>rd</sup> Karmapa Rangjung Dorje 1284 – 1339
- 13 Gyalwa Jungtönpa 1296 – 1376
- 14 4<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Rölpe Dorje 1340 – 1383
- 15 2<sup>nd</sup> Shamarpa Kachyo Wangpo 1350 – 1405
- 16 5<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Deshin Shegpa 1384 – 1415
- 17 Rinchen Zangpo/Ratnabhadra 15<sup>th</sup> century
- 18 6<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Tongwa Dönden 1416 – 1453
- 19 Bengar Jampal Zangpo 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century
- 20 1<sup>st</sup> Gyaltsab Paljor Döndrup 1427 – 1489
- 21 7<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Chödrag Gyamtso 1454 – 1506
- 22 Sangye Nyenpa Tashi Paljor 1457 – 1525
- 23 8<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Mikyö Dorje 1507 – 1554
- 24 5<sup>th</sup> Shamarpa Konchog Yenlag 1526– 1583
- 25 9<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Wangchug Dorje 1556 – 1603
- 26 6<sup>th</sup> Shamarpa Chökyi Wangchuk 1584 – 1629
- 27 10<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Chöying Dorje 1604 – 1674
- 28 7<sup>th</sup> Shamarpa Yeshe Nyingpo 1631 – 1694
- 29 11<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Yeshe Dorje 1676 – 1702
- 30 8<sup>th</sup> Shamarpa Chökyi Döndrub 1695 – 1735
- 31 12<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Changchub Dorje 1703 – 1732
- 32 8<sup>th</sup> Situpa Chökyi Jungne 1700 – 1774
- 33 13<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Dödül Dorje 1733 – 1797
- 34 10<sup>th</sup> Shamarpa Chödrub Gyamtso 1741 – 1792
- 35 9<sup>th</sup> Situpa Pema Nyindye Wangpo 1774 – 1853
- 36 14<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Thegchog Dorje 1798 – 1868
- 37 1<sup>st</sup> Jamgon Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye 1813 – 1901
- 38 15<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Khakyab Dorje 1871 – 1922
- 39 11<sup>th</sup> Situpa Pema Wangchog 1886 – 1952
- 40 2<sup>nd</sup> Jamgön Kongtrul Khyentse Öser 1904 – 1953
- 41 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje 1924 – 1981



Guru Rinpoche  
(skt. Padmasambhava)  
8-9<sup>th</sup> century

## ❧ GURU RINPOCHE: BRINGING BUDDHISM TO THE HIMALAYAS

According to legend, Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava, »The Lotus-born«, was not born from a mother's womb, but appeared as a boy sitting on a lotus flower in the middle of a lake in the land of Oddiyana, which is generally considered to be the area known today as Gandhara.

Padmasambhava's arrival in the 8<sup>th</sup> century was predicted by Buddha Shakyamuni himself centuries before. Until today, he is often referred to as the second Buddha of our time and is credited with bringing the tantric teachings to Tibet, Bhutan and the neighboring countries at the request of the Dharma King *Trisong Detsen* (759–797). With his supernatural tantric powers gained through meditation, he is said to have subdued the demons who created obstacles and tried to stop the Dharma from spreading in the Himalayas. After subduing them, he bound many of them by oath. This way, they became protectors of the teachings.

Together with King Trisong Detsen, he erected the important monastery of Samye in Tibet. This was the beginning of the first wave of translating Buddhist scriptures, the sutras and tantras, from Sanskrit to Tibetan. Many of them were later transmitted through text treasures hidden by Guru Rinpoche and his main consort in Tibet, the highly realized Yeshe Tsogyal, princess of Karchen. She

wrote down the teachings and life story of her master and hid the so-called »termas«. Those were, when the right time would come, to be discovered by »tertöns«, the realized finders and decoders of these secret teachings. The Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism is based on those teachings and therefore referred to as the old school, being based on the teachings from the first rising of Buddhism in Tibet, in contrast to the schools of the Kagyu, Sakya and Gelug traditions, which were founded in the second period.

Guru Rinpoche is said to have appeared in different forms in order to carry out his powerful activity. The most important forms are known as the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava. In the Copenhagen gompa, he is depicted within the mandala of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Karmapa, Karma Pakshi.

Padmasambhava probably spent around 55 years in the Himalayas, leading countless beings to liberation and enlightenment with his teachings and by the power of his tantric practice. When the Lotus-born returned to India, the Bön religion and black magic practices gained strength again. Buddhism did not spread further until Marpa, the Translator, brought the teachings from India to Tibet for the second time. But it was Guru Rinpoche who many centuries earlier had cleared the way for this to happen.





# LOVING EYES AND THE BUDDHA FAMILIES

**A**lmighty Ocean or Gyalwa Gyamtso is the red and united form of Loving Eyes, the love and compassion of all Buddhas. He was the yidam of the 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje. He holds a dorje in his right outer hand and a lotus flower in the left. The inner pair of arms embraces his partner, Red Wisdom, who holds a skull cup with nectar in the left hand. The right arm around his neck holds a chopping knife (skt. Karthrika) over the skull cup, cutting through the illusion of an ego and the veils of mind caused by it.

No character trait is finer than compassion, and the Buddha was very conscious of this. He frequently advised people to specifically develop this quality. The different forms of Loving Eyes (skt. Avalokiteshvara, tib. Chenrezig) manifest to help beings everywhere and represent the widest expression of kindness on the beyond-personal level.

The mantra of the single form of Loving Eyes is the one spread most widely across Tibet. It is recited countless times by everyone who knows the teachings about its immeasurable benefit for oneself and all beings: OM MANI PEME HUNG is written on countless rocks, prayer wheels or flags. Each syllable transforms one of the disturbing emotions into wisdom: OM removes pride, MA transforms jealousy, NI purifies impressions caused by desire and attachment, PE transforms ignorance, ME removes greed and HUNG removes impressions caused by anger and hatred.

Gyalwa Gyamtso's manala of five aspects shows the consorts in union holding ritual items that represent the five buddha families. Each family stands for the transformation of a disturbing emotion – ignorance, desire, jealousy, pride and anger – into a certain kind of Buddha wisdom. Please see the table below for more characteristics of each buddha family.

1 **Almighty Ocean/  
Red Loving Eyes & Red Wisdom**  
(skt. Jinasāgara & Vajravaraḥi,  
tib. Gyalwa Gyamtso &  
Dorje Naljorma)

The 5 Buddha families:

2 **Vajra or Diamond Family**  
Main Buddha: Akshobhya  
His partner: Mamaki  
Direction: East  
Color: blue  
Mudra: earth-touching gesture,  
enlightenment  
Element: water  
He transforms anger into  
mirror-like wisdom.

3 **Ratna or Jewel family**  
Main Buddha: Ratnasambhava  
His partner: Vajradhatvishvari  
Direction: South  
Color: yellow  
Mudra: giving  
Element: earth  
He transforms pride into  
equalizing wisdom.

4 **Padma or Lotus family**  
Main Buddha: Amitabha  
His partner: Pandaravasin  
Direction: West  
Color: red  
Mudra: meditation  
Element: fire  
He transforms desire into  
discriminating wisdom.

5 **Karma or Sword family**  
Main Buddha: Amoghasiddhi  
His partner: Tara  
Direction: North  
Color: green  
Mudra: protective, fearless  
Element: wind  
He transforms jealousy into the  
wisdom of experience.

Not depicted:  
Buddha family  
Main Buddha: Vairochana  
His partner: Lochana  
Direction: middle  
Color: white  
Mudra: teaching  
Element: space  
He transforms ignorance into  
all-pervading wisdom.



Diamond Mind  
(skt. Vajrasattva, tib. Dorje Sempa)

## ❖ DIAMOND MIND – PURIFYING KARMIC IMPRINTS IN MIND

The meditation on Diamond Mind (skt. Vajrasattva, tib. Dorje Sempa) is one of the most powerful methods for purifying imprints in the subconscious that were caused by harmful actions in this and former lives. Through this method, karmic seeds can be purified before they ripen in the form of negative experiences.

Karma means cause and effect, not fate. Everyone is responsible for his or her own life and shapes it through thoughts, words and actions. This understanding makes it possible to consciously generate positive impressions in mind, which lead to happiness and help avoid future suffering.

This meditation practice is part of the four preliminary practices in Vajrayana Buddhism. It is said that a practitioner can achieve enlightenment solely by practicing and completing these meditations. They are the preparation for the following Mahamudra or Guru Yoga practices.

Diamond Mind is of a white form of energy and light. Sitting on a transparent, rainbow-colored lotus flower, he holds a golden dorje or vajra vertically at heart level and a silver bell with its mouth upwards at his hip, showing the inseparability of compassion and wisdom. His ornaments denote the joy state of the Bodhisattvas.





① The King of the Western direction, Virupaksha (tib. Chenmizang)

② The King of the Northern direction, Vaishravana (tib. Namthose)

③ The King of the Eastern direction, Dhritarashtra (tib. Yulthor Sung)

④ The King of the Southern direction, Virudhaka (tib. Pakhyepo)

## THE FOUR GUARDIAN KINGS

Lopapalas, translated as »protectors of places«, protect the Dharma as well as specific places or countries. In a previous life Dhritarashtra and Virudhaka were *nagas*, and Virupaksha and Vaishravana were *garudas*, their enemies. The two garudas had attacked the two nagas, who lived on the ocean surface, but were unable to harm them. The nagas explained that they had taken refuge in the Buddha of the past, Buddha Kashyapa, and were therefore protected by their virtue. Hearing this, the two garudas also took refuge. The two nagas and two garudas all made wishes to be reborn in the time of Buddha Shakyamuni in order to support him, which they did – as the Four Guardian Kings.

Often they are depicted at the entrance of monasteries in Asia, standing on snakes or riding on the back of animals, armed, carrying e.g. banners or lassos, and wearing armaments and helmets with feathers, hats made of elephant skin or crowns and precious jewelry. The kings are sometimes painted with wisdom flames around.

They protect the four directions and horizons at Mount Meru, the central mountain of the universe according to traditional Buddhist cosmology and were already represented in early Buddhist art, protecting relics and *stupas*.

Dhritarashtra is the King of the East and chief of the gandharvas, the musicians of the heavens. Every sound he hears is returned, causing harm to whoever produced the sound. In order to avoid this, his ears are covered by his helmet and he plays a sitar-like instrument to avoid hearing other sounds.

The King of the South Virudhaka is the leader of the kumbhandas. He protects beings who have led a virtuous life from Yama, the Lord of Death, and uses his power to defend the Dharma against anything that could be of harm. He carries a sword to prevent beings from approaching him, because his touch would do harm.

Virupaksha is the Guardian King of the West and leader of the nagas. He protects beings in the western direction, and keeps disturbing influences and hindrances away from the practitioners of Dharma. He avoids looking at beings with his harmful glance by gazing at the stupa he carries along.

The King of the North Vaishravana is the leader of the yakshas. He protected the gods from the half-gods. He especially protects the Vinaya teachings and keeps his mouth closed because his breath is harmful. The jewel-producing mongoose in his left hand shows that he gives inner and outer wealth to Dharma practitioners.



# THE SIXTEEN ARHATS

## 16 ARHATS

The 16 Arhats were all direct disciples of Buddha Shakyamuni, who asked them to remain in the world in order to protect his teachings for as long as beings would be able to benefit from them. Everywhere they came, they gave their blessing to open minded people. They are realized masters and it is said that until today they support practitioners in many schools of Buddhism.

In the painting tradition of Menri, the Arhats are usually depicted in the water: some sitting on flowers growing in the water, some riding on dragons, some on fish. This refers to the occasion when all of them traveled to China. They were reputedly traveling across the water in a mysterious way. Looking at a depiction of Buddha surrounded by the 16 Arhats is said to generate great merit, giving the chance to quickly develop insight into Buddha's teachings.

As in the Copenhagen gompa, the Sixteen Arhats are usually shown in thangkas accompanied by their two attendants, Hva Shang and Upasaka Dharmatala, and by the Four Great Kings, who are depicted in the halls of the Copenhagen Buddhist Center.

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 Angaja (tib. Yenlag Chung)     | 10 Rahula (tib. Drachendzin)                                |
| 2 Ajita (tib. Maphampa)          | 11 Chulapanthaka (tib. Lamtrenen)                           |
| 3 Vanavasin (tib. Nagnane)       | 12 Pindola Bharadvaja (tib. Tsa Sönyom Len)                 |
| 4 Mahakalika (tib. Düden Chenpo) | 13 Panthaka (tib. Lamten)                                   |
| 5 Vajriputra (tib. Dorje Möbu)   | 14 Nagasena (tib. Lüde)                                     |
| 6 Shribhadra (tib. Pal Zangpo)   | 15 Gopaka (tib. Bechepa)                                    |
| 7 Kanakavatsa (tib. Sergye Beu)  | 16 Abhedya (tib. Michepa)                                   |
| 8 Kanaka (tib. Serchen)          | 17 Buddha's two main disciples Shariputra and Maudgalyayana |
| 9 Bakula (tib. Bakula)           |   |

# GLOSSARY OF BUDDHIST TERMS

**Abidharma** 1 of the Three Baskets, explanations on the nature of all phenomena, Buddha's wisdom teachings.

**16 Arhats** Realized practitioners of the Theravada tradition, direct disciples of Buddha.

**Eight Auspicious signs** Symbols of episodes of Buddha's life believed to bring good fortune: banner of victory, fish, treasure vase, lotus flower, conch shell, endless knot, umbrella, dharma wheel.

**Three Baskets** (skt. **Tripitaka**, tib. **Denösum**) Collection of Buddha's sutra teachings, divided into Vinaya, Abidharma, and Sutra.

**Bodhgaya** Buddha's birth place in India, pilgrimage town both for Buddhists and Hindus, with the Mahabodhi temple and the Bodhi tree. All Buddhas of this age are predicted to appear from here.

**Bodhi tree** The tree under which Buddha reputedly reached enlightenment. The old tree in present day Bodhgaya is said to be offspring of the original tree more than 2500 years ago.

**Bodhisattva** (1) Someone who has promised to reach enlightenment for the benefit of all. (2) Practitioner of the Mahayana tradition. (3) A realized being free from suffering, helping others on the path.

**Brahma** God in Hinduism, creator of the universe.

**Buddha** »The Awakened/Enlightened One«; someone who has completely purified all veils from mind and has therefore fully unveiled all qualities of mind, in particular omniscience.

**Buddha Shakyamuni** (ca. 560-478 B.C.E.) also known as Gautama Buddha, born as Siddhartha Gautama; Founder of Buddhism. He is said to be the fourth Buddha of 1,000 that will appear in this age. After his enlightenment in Bodhgaya, he mainly taught in today's northeastern India.

**Three of Four Buddha States** States of a Buddha: (1) Truth state (skt. Dharmakaya, tib. Chöku), (2) Joy state (skt. Sambhogakaya, tib. Longku), (3) Emanation state (skt. Nirmanakaya, tib. Tulku), (4) The first 3 in 1: Essence state (skt. Svabhavikakaya, tib. Ngowonyigiku)

**Buddha Wisdoms** > Emotions

**Buddhist Refuge** Entering the Buddhist path by focusing on the expressions of enlightenment: In general the Three Jewels, in Tibetan Buddhism additionally the Three Roots. Refuge is deepened by meditation practice.

**Cause and effect** > Karma

**Chopping knife** (skt. Karthrika) powerfully-protective attribute of the Dakinis cutting through ego-illusion and veils of mind caused by it.

**Dakini** (tib. Khandroma, »The One Dancing in Space«) Enlightened female wisdom aspect, gives protection and inspiration and expresses the Buddha activity.

**Dharma** translated directly »The Way Things Are« or »Phenomena«; The Buddhist teachings, consisting of the Dharma of texts > Three Baskets and the Dharma of realization.

**Dharmakaya** > Buddha states

**Dharma Wheel** Cycle of Buddha's teachings available for this age; he turned the Wheel of Dharma 3 times, adapting each turn to the abilities of his disciples.

**Diamond Way** > Vajrayana

**Ego** The illusion that our body, emotions, thoughts etc. define a »self« or an »I«. This basic ignorance of not seeing that everything is dependent and impermanent causes all the emotions and wrong views, leading inevitably to suffering. Removing this illusion is enlightenment.

**Emotions** (tib. Klesha) The 5 (disturbing) emotions of ignorance, attachment, aversion, jealousy and pride can be transformed into the 5 Buddha wisdoms: all-pervading wisdom, discriminating wisdom, mirror-like wisdom, wisdom of experience, and equalizing wisdom, which are facets of Buddha wisdom.

**Enlightenment** The state of mind of a Buddha: even the finest veils of ignorance have been removed and omniscience is realized. The enlightened, original qualities inherent in mind are fearlessness, self-arisen joy and loving kindness.

**Garuda** (tib. Khyung) Mythical bird who removes obstacles.

**Golden Kagyu Garland** Masters who are holders of the Karma Kagyu Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism.

**Great Seal** > Mahamudra

**Ignorance, attachment, aversion** > Emotions

**Indra** God of the gods in Hinduism

**Three Jewels** (skt. Tiratna, tib. Könchogsum) Generally, Buddhists take refuge in: (1) Buddha, the enlightened state of mind, (2) Dharma, the teachings bringing one there, (3) Sangha/Bodhisattvas, the friends and helpers on the path to enlightenment.

**Joy state** > Buddha states

**Kagyu Lineage, Karma Kagyu Lineage, Kagyupas** One of the 4 main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, founded on the teachings Marpa brought to Tibet, with the focus on meditation and the Six Yogas of Naropa and Mahamudra.

**Kalachakra** (tib. Dükyi Khorlo, »Wheel of Time«) A vast independent class of universal tantric teachings.

**Karma** The principle of cause and effect: physical, verbal and mental actions leave imprints in mind, which will lead to positive or negative experiences in this or next lives. Understanding Karma means the self-responsible ability to influence one's karma instead of constantly being influenced by it.

**Lama** (skt. Guru, »Highest principle«) Meditation master in Tibetan Buddhism. First of the Three Roots; mirroring the student's mind on a beyond personal level, he is the key to the profound teachings and to fast realization.

**Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche** Highly realized Bhutanese meditation master (1918 – 2003) who spread Buddhism in the West, giving his blessing, teaching, and supervising the building of stupas in the West.

**Lotus family** One of the five Buddha families, related to Buddha Amitabha. The five families are: Diamond, Jewel, Lotus, Action and Buddha family.

**Lotus flower** (1) one of the 8 Auspicious symbols (2) Throne of the Buddhas, symbolizing absolute purity above the muddy waters of Samsara.

**Maitreya** (skt. Buddha Maitreya, tib. Phagpa Djampa, »The Loving One«) The Buddha of the Future, fifth Buddha of 1,000 predicted to appear in this age.

**Madhyamaka** The Great Middle Way; highest Buddhist philosophical school, based on Buddha's wisdom teachings and founded by Nagarjuna.

**Mahamudra** (tib. Chagchen, »The Great Seal«) Expression for the highest form of view and meditation in Vajrayana Buddhism and in particular in the Karma Kagyu Lineage. It includes basis, way and goal and can be regarded as the essence of the teachings.

**84 Mahasiddhas** Great realized masters of Vajrayana Buddhism in ancient India from all castes.

**Mahayana** or Northern Buddhism: Practitioners strive to reach enlightenment for the benefit of all beings by developing beyond personal compassion and all-encompassing wisdom.

**Mala** Buddhist »rosary« to count mantras, mostly with 108 or 27 beads, one guru pearl and one stupa-shaped pearl; often made of Bodhi tree seeds.

**Mandala** Energy field (mostly around a Buddha) consisting of the central aspect and its surrounding; painted or arranged in sand, later often consciously destroyed to symbolize impermanence.

**Mantra** Protective sounds or vibrations of a certain aspect, mostly syllables or words in Sanskrit building a bridge between outer and inner truth. Repeating mantras brings out enlightened qualities.

**Middle Way** > Madhyamaka

**Nagas** (tib. Lu) snake or fish-like, unenlightened beings in Buddhist mythology who can control the weather and are the guardians of waters and treasures in the waters.

**Nirmanakaya** > 3 Buddha states

**Nirvana** (1) Liberation from suffering and samsara. (2) Mahayana: the state of enlightenment.

**Nyingma, Nyingmapas** Oldest of the 4 main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, teachings based on the discovered text treasures of Padmasambhava.

**Noble eightfold path** Basic part of Buddha's teachings on how to reach enlightenment: developing wisdom

and improving one's karma with: right view and intention, meaningful speech, action and livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and meditative concentration.

**4 Noble truths** Core of Buddha's teachings: (1) There is suffering. (2) There is a cause of suffering. (3) There is and end to suffering. (4) There is a way to this end of suffering. > Noble eightfold path

**Ornaments** Attributes like jewelry or armament of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, expressing e.g. the joy state or powerfully-protective activity.

**Padmasambhava** (tib. Guru Rinpoche) > p. 66-67

**Pure land** (1) The energy field of a Buddha or Bodhisattva (2) a joyful, radiant state of mind close to enlightenment.

**Refuge** > Buddhist refuge

**Three Roots** 3 additional objects of refuge: (1) Lama, root of blessing, (2) Yidams, roots of the ultimate and ordinary accomplishments, (3) Protectors, roots for the perfect activity for the benefit of all beings.

**Sambhogakaya** > 3 Buddha states

**Samsara** (tib. Sipe Khorwa) The cycle of existence, of getting born, dying and getting reborn in different realms time and again. The cause of this is basic ignorance. S. is characterized by all kinds of suffering.

**Sangha** (tib. Gendün) (1) The worldly community of Buddhist practitioners (2) The realized Bodhisattvas, one of the objects of refuge and the *Three Jewels*.

**Siddhis** Special (ordinary and ultimate) abilities which are signs of meditative realization.

**Skull cup** (skt. Kapala, tib. Thopa) Primary attribute of the yidams, symbolizing the overcoming of all concepts and often containing the blood of ego.

**Songtsen Gampo** King of Tibet, who spread the Dharma in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. His two wives from China and Nepal greatly inspired and spread Tibetan art.

**Sutra** (1) Buddha's teachings can be divided into sutra (advice and meditation instructions, again categorized in the Three Baskets) and tantra. (2) One of the *Three Baskets*.

**Stupa** (tib. Chörten) Monument for peace and joy in the world. Symbolizes the mind of a Buddha and the Sangha. Often a container of relics.

**Tantric teachings, tantra** (»woven in«) Very efficient meditation methods and teachings pointing directly to mind, used in Vajrayana Buddhism. They work with identification and focus on the fruit, mind's inherent enlightened qualities.

**Thangka** Tibetan scroll painting of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, mandalas or stupas.

**Theravada** or Southern Buddhism, one of the three main traditions of Buddhism; focus on the teachings about the 4 Noble truths and Karma.

**Tibetan art** The colorful thangka paintings and Buddha statues are used as objects of meditation, which is why the art is very precise and a practice in itself, passed on from generation to generation. More information: [www.buddhist-art.org](http://www.buddhist-art.org)

**Tibetan Buddhism** One of the 3 main Buddhist traditions along with Theravada and Zen. Founded by Padmasambhava 750 C.E., contains the only complete presentation of Buddha's teachings with focus on the Vajrayana teachings.

**Trison Detsen** King of Tibet in the 8<sup>th</sup> century; invited Padmasambhava to spread the Dharma in Tibet. He gave his wife, the Princess of Karchen, to him as his consort: Yeshe Tsogyal, who later spread his teachings and hid them for posterity.

**Vajrayana** or Diamond Way Buddhism, Tantrayana, Mantrayana (tib. DorjeThegpa); Way of identification with mind's inherent enlightened qualities using highly efficient meditation methods.

**2 Veils** Caused by basic ignorance and the illusion of an ego; Therefore, emotions and wrong views veil mind. Removing the veils completely is enlightenment.

**Vinaya** One of the Three Baskets; guidelines for proper conduct and advice for life within the Sangha.

**Wrong views** > 2 Veils

**Yidam** A Buddha aspect one meditates on, creating a connection between the practitioner and specific enlightened qualities of mind.

**Yogi** Traditional term for a practitioner or accomplisher of Vajrayana, often meditating reclusively, e.g. in mountain or forest retreats.

**6 Yogas of Naropa** The 6 meditations transmitted from Tilopa: (1) Inner heat (2) Illusory body (3) Dream state (4) Clear light (5) Bardo (the intermediate state between death and rebirth) and (6) Phowa (the transference of consciousness at the moment of death).





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