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The Secret Life and Songs  
of the Lady Yeshe Tsogyel

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Illustrated by Eva van Dam

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HOMAGE TO THE GURU DAKINI!

This book is dedicated to the enlightenment of all sentient beings.

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# FOREWORD

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## TRINLEY NORBU RIMPOCHE

In the profound sutra system, the Dakini is called the Great Mother.

Indescribable, unimaginable Perfection of Wisdom, Unborn, unobstructed essence of sky, She is sustained by self-awareness alone: I bow down before the Great Mother of the Victorious Ones, past, present and future.

Thus it is written in the Great Paramita Sutra. In the precious tantric tradition, 'desireless, blissful wisdom is the essence of all desirable qualities, unobstructedly going and coming in endless space'. This wisdom is called 'the Sky Dancer', feminine wisdom, the Dakini.

In the tantra system, the Three Jewels of the sutras are contained in the Three Roots - Guru, Deva, Dakini. One in essence, these three aspects are the three objects of refuge. Guru is the aspect that bestows blessing; Deva is the aspect that transmits siddhi; and Dakini is the aspect that accomplishes the Buddha's karma.

In the tantra, countless objects of refuge appear spontaneously out of the one essential wisdom. Arising from wisdom as its reflection, all these forms are nirmanakaya. These forms can appear pure or impure according to the pattern of belief of the individual perceiving them.

Sambhogakaya differs from nirmanakaya in that it is a pure, nondual mandala that cannot be known by limited, individual perception. It can only be attained through pure, sublime, nondual being.

Dharmakaya is the stainless space constantly pervading the sublime awareness of the sambhogakaya and the ordinary, individual perceptions of the nirmanakaya. In the dharmakaya's stainless space Yeshe Tsogyel is Kuntuzangmo, infinite and noble femininity itself. These names and qualities are no more than indications of the nature

of the dharmakaya which can never be contained in, or identified by, concepts. Sambhogakaya is the glowing awareness of the dharmakaya, where the Five Buddhas and their Consorts appear as unobstructed luminous space-form. As the feminine aspect in the sambhogakaya, Yeshe Tsogyel is the Five Wisdom-Consorts.

Yeshe Tsogyel is the nirmanakaya's multitude of forms; she appears as a Tara, Sarasvati, princess, ordinary girl, business woman, prostitute and so on. Also, she was born in Tibet as the daughter of the Prince of Kharchen, as her life story tells.

Tibet's Great Guru, Padma Sambhava, possessed countless Dakinis. Appearing like gathering clouds, they accomplished his wisdom action. Among those countless Dakinis five were prominent: Monmo Tashi Khyeudren, Belwong Kalasiddhi, Belmo ~akya Devi and the two supreme consorts, Mandarava and Yeshe Tsogyel. 'Yeshe Tsogyel is the perfect vessel to contain the essence of the precious tantric teaching,' Padma Sambhava declared. And when Trisong Detsen, the King of Tibet, received initiation, he offered Yeshe Tsogyel, his Queen, together with the measureless universal mandala to the Great Guru. After that she accompanied him unswervingly, serving him continuously, giving her Body, Speech and Mind completely.

The Guru gave Tsogyel the teaching for the suffering people of this coming degenerate kaliyuga. Tsogyel gathered all his speech carefully together, and after systematising it she hid it as secret treasure-troves. She hid it externally in different elements, and internally she hid it in the depths of mind. Each separate treasure included a prediction of the time of its discovery and the person who would find it. Thanks to Padma Sambhava and Yeshe Tsogyel we are using Yeshe Tsogyel's treasures today.

Precious tantric teaching that has the quality of wisdom is naturally, unintentionally concealed - it lies beyond the ordinary, impure and concrete concepts of mind. Tantric teaching is also hidden intentionally to prevent misuse, the misuse that occurs if these precious treasures are used for selfish gain and fame, neglecting appropriate dedication to sentient beings. This creates obstacles to enlightenment. For one man to exploit the teaching is like one person

using the electric current intended for an entire city to light his own small bulb - the one bulb is destroyed and perhaps others on the circuit are damaged.

Secrecy is important, but it is especially important for Dzokchen, the Great Perfection teaching, which uses intangible luminous elements to transform the tangible body into a magic rainbow body.

Those who read the biography of the supreme tantric master, Padma Sambhava, and his Consort, Yeshe Tsogyel, have the chance to identify with them, and those who cultivate the inner wisdom Dakini, the root Dakini, progress towards becoming the supreme Sky Dancer, incomprehensible feminine wisdom, the lover without motive.

Keith Dowman has translated The Life of Yeshe Tsogyel for the benefit of all sentient beings. For this I remain thankful.

May this wonderful history bring the turbulent river of frustrated and neurotic men and women to the attainment of the Ocean of Enriching Wisdom that is Stillness and Bliss.

Trinley Norbu

Mahankal

Kathmandu

Nepal

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# TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

For twentyfive hundred years the Buddhist's goal has not altered - the perfection of man as the Buddha. However, down the centuries, as the faith expanded to include all sections of Indian society, besides other cultures, different schools redefined the nature of the Buddha, and new methods, or vehicles, were developed to traverse the path to Buddhahood. These vehicles differed as much as a tortoise from a hare or a deer from a lion. In the golden age of ~akyamuni Buddha an ascetic path of exalted yet simple self-discipline led through many lifetimes to a nirvana of cessation. Later the lay devotee entered the path to strive for the compassionate Bodhisattva ideal, perfecting personal and social virtue, but postponing his final nirvana until all beings could accompany him. Then in the mature efflorescence of Indian spiritual genius Buddhism assimilated the cult of the Mother Goddess; in the Buddhist Tantra mysticism and magic, ritual and incantation, characterise the path of the yogin who does not abandon the senses and emotions but uses them as the means to attain Buddhahood during his lifetime. The Bodhisattvas acquired consorts, pairs of deities represented every conceivable mode of being; and the mystery of Buddhahood was expressed in terms of the union of sexual duality.

It was tantric Buddhism that the Second Buddha, Padma Sambhava, who we shall call Guru Perna, first taught in eighthcentury Tibet. The Guru's favourite consort was a Tibetan princess given to him by the Emperor Trisong Detsen. Her name was Yeshe Tsogyel, and in the cult that grew up around her and her Guru, she became the Guru Dakini, the Sky Dancer, the embodiment of the female Buddha. The name of the school that practises Guru Pema and Yeshe Tsogyel's instruction on their path of personal evolution is called the Old School, the Nyingmapa (rNying-ma-pa), and in the Old School's innumerable legendary biographies of Guru Pema is contained much of Yeshe Tsogyel's life story. But it was not until the eighteenth century that an inspired tantric yogin called Taksham Nuden Dorje revealed a separate biography of Tsogyel, a work that was to become renowned as a

masterpiece of this genre of Tibetan literature.

The Secret Life and Songs of the Tibetan Lady Yeshe Tsogyel (Bodkyi jo-mo ye-shes mtsho-rgyal-gyi mdzad-tshul rnam-par-thar-pa gabpa mngon-byung rgyud-mangs dri-za'i glu-'phreng) is styled 'secret' (gab-pa) because its essential meaning lies on the 'secret' level of tantric analysis. The work reveals Tsogyel's total being as a sphere of nonduality in which Guru and Dakini in union inhabit a pureland of gods and goddesses; it describes the secret empowerments and vows which accompany initiation into the tantric mysteries; and it elucidates the precepts of the Inner Tantra (anuttarayogatantra), practical precepts as relevant now as for Tsogyel's own disciples. But in order to give narrative flow to the work, Taksham wove the secret life of Tsogyel into the pageantry of great events that were revolutionising Tibet, events in which Tsogyel herself played a significant role. Thus in recounting the public life of Tsogyel, Taksham relates the history of the Emperor Trisong Detsen's reign, and although his account accords with the legends of the early revealed histories, the inclusion of certain episodes and details makes this a valuable source for historians.

To express his vision of the secret life of Yeshe Tsogyel Taksham employed the conventional literary devices of Tibetan tantric biography (rnam-thar): mandalas, metaphysics, tantric symbology, twilight language and poetry. With these tools he describes an ideal path of practice that the tantric neophyte can emulate. In her final instruction to her disciples Tsogyel refers them to her biography for direction on the path of Tantra. Although the exigencies of the English language tend to reduce the divine Dakini to human size, it is still evident that a Buddha's reality is being described from the moment of the Dakini's birth; in the Tibetan text honorific pronominals and verb-forms and the highly specific epithets of the heroine constantly evoke a supra-human reality. Thus the reader will be disappointed if he is looking for humanistic biography. But as an introduction to the Tibetan Tantra this biography is second to none; only The Life of Milarepa can compare with it in its power to evoke the spirit of the Tantra and reflect the nature of the path.

Although this secret biography is aimed primarily at practitioners of the Inner Tantra, on an exoteric level it also presents Tsogyel as a

subject for deification. Her story provides all the ingredients necessary for devotees of the Outer Tantra (kriyayoga-tantra in particular) to worship her as a goddess. A miraculous birth, flight from persecution and to self-exile, untold ascetic sacrifice to a selfless end, miraculous Christ-like deeds such as resurrecting the dead, healing the sick, feeding the multitude and making a gift of her body to the needy, a profound, ideal relationship with her Lama, and finally the attainment of Buddhahood in a body of light: such material stirs the religious spirit and induces a mind so disposed to take refuge in a goddess who can assuage all life's suffering and offer all life's joys. But Tsogyel warns her disciples on the path of the Inner Tantra against conceiving her as an external entity, a 'person' separate from the perceiver; their aim should not be to propitiate a god or goddess 'out there' capable of bestowing boons upon his or her devotees, whether such favours are the man or woman of their choice or the power (siddhi) of flying in the sky. Tsogyel asks these disciples to take her as their consort, either incarnate or metaphysical, so that she can give them the pure pleasure of gnostic awareness; and attaining the ultimate power, every man and woman is a Guru and Dakini - a Sky Dancer.

A fact that further enhances the work's extraordinary reputation is that *The Life and Songs of Yeshe Tsogyel* is one of the few texts in the immense Tibetan scriptural literature that treats woman on the tantric path, or indeed, represents woman at all. Perhaps only a dozen women have risen to eminence in Tibetan Buddhism, and of these many were influenced by Tsogyel's crucial metaphysical role in the Old School tradition. The wonderful Machik Labdron, for example, the Dakini Guru of the lineage of 'Severance' (gcod), was an incarnation of Tsogyel. But although *The Life* is a veritable treasury of precepts and advice for yoginis on the path, most of the theory and practice is equally relevant to male practitioners; apart from the initiation rites, the third initiation yogas described in the text, and certain other special cases, the instruction is applicable to all.

Taksham himself was the kind of man who breathes new life into the traditional rites and doctrines that lineages unthinkingly transmit from generation to generation. Extracting the essential message such an adept can reformulate the teaching and express it in a manner that conveys his existential realisation. Taksham was no doctrinaire

scholar; he was in fact seen by his contemporaries as a divine madman (zhig-po), a wrathful, though compassionate, crazy saint (dpa'-bo). In *The Life*, though he reveals the secrets of Tantra discreetly, endangering neither Guru nor disciple, his existential analysis cuts close to the bone, his vision is always uncompromising and fearlessly honest, and his humour is clever and sharp. His colophon to *The Life* is written in an obscure allusive style as if written by a man halfcrazed by a terrible environment and the woes of existence.

Taksham was born in one of Kham's valleys (Lhorong Kham) in S.E. Tibet, 'in a land of impassable narrow defiles', a land of ravines cut by the great rivers of Kham - the Mekhong, Irrawaddy and Salween. Khetsun Sangpo in his *Biographical Dictionary* (Vol. III, p. 804) quotes Pawo Tsuklak's *History of the Dharma* where an unnamed Thang-yig is cited: 'a yogin called Nuden Dorje will take out the Kham caches of Guru Rimpoche's treasures.' He was prolific in discovery, revealing cycles of treasure-texts for each of the 'three roots' (Guru, Deva and Dakini) and the Dharma Protectors, and much more. His principal cycle concerned a form of Guru Pema called Lama Yishi Norbu (bLa-ma yid-bzhin nor-bu), and the Yidam Gongdu (Yi-dam dgongs-'dus), a part of Tsogyel's sadhana (her personal endeavour), was the chief means of accomplishing this form of the Guru. He also discovered images, stupas and mantras. He held the lineage of revealed teaching (gter-chos) of the great Knowledge Holder Dudul Dorje, like Longsel Nyingpo, Yolmo Tulku Tenzin Norbu and Katok Tsewong Norbu. Further, he had a strong karmic bond with the Master Choje Lingpa, and it appears that Choje, either reincarnate, or appearing in vision, was his Guru. But it was as a reincarnation of Atsara Sale, Gyelwa Jangchub, who was Tsogyel's consort, that he gained access to the secrets of Tsogyel's *Life*. Taksham's colophon recounts that he copied out the text of *The Life* 'on a black day, the 29th' in a forest hermitage, but no month or year is mentioned. In fact we know only that he lived in the eighteenth century. His name means Tiger-skin Dynamic Vajra; and he is also known as Samten Lingpa (bSamgtan-gling-pa).

*The Life* is a revealed scripture, a terma. The nature of termas and the profound doctrine underlying the tradition of revealed texts is discussed in the commentary under the head 'The Nyingma Lineages'.

Here suffice it to say that legend records that Guru Perna and Tsogyel hid many treasures of different kinds in innumerable caches throughout Tibet, treasures that were to be revealed by tertons (treasure finders) when the moment was ripe. Further, some treasures were hidden internally, in inner space; this category of terma is called mindtreasure (dgongs-gter) and may be considered as direct revelation of Guru and Dakini. The original colophon of *The Life* informs us that Gyelwa Jangchub and Namkhai Nyingpo of Lhodrak wrote down Tsogyel's memoirs verbatim on yellow parchment, concealing the completed text in Lhorong in Kham. In the catalogue of prophets (lung-byang) in the text, 'a dpa'-bo of Lhorong in Kham called Dorje' is mentioned amongst the nine possible tertons who might discover the text. Taksham's colophon tells how he received the text from its protector, Lord of the Black Water (Chu-bdag-nag-po), who in the text's prefatory Protection is called Black Nyong-kha (sNyong-kha?) Blazing Lord of Devils (bDud-rje 'bar-ba). Gyelwa Jangchub's colophon informs us that Lord of the Black Water, Thousand Beings (?) (sTong-rgyug), was instructed to deliver it into the hand of the terton. Although an actual manuscript treasure is indicated here, a study of the manuscript reveals significant variations in style, conflicting historical facts, material relevant to Taksham's era, prophecy up to the seventeenth century, *etc.* Undoubtedly Taksham had access to ancient material, *e.g.* the Bon worship of the king, and, perhaps, a biography of Tsogyel written by Gyelwa Jangchub, but the text translated herein was written by Taksham Nuden Dorje. However, since *The Life* is an inspired work that can be said to have its spiritual genesis in the milieu of 'the Guru and Dakini's union in lotus light', certainly it can be classified as a 'mindtreasure'. For the yogin such discussion of the authenticity and category of *The Life* is irrelevant; either the power of the Guru's Word illuminates every page, or it does not, and the efficacy of its precepts are proven experientially.

In various passages in the text relating Tsogyel's own experiences the first person singular is employed, and some historical episodes are described from Tsogyel's point of view. Since such passages accord with the colophon's claim that Tsogyel dictated the text herself, and because the use of the first person is effective in creating a more intimate relationship between Tsogyel and the reader as well as maintaining continuity of style, I have taken poetic licence to use the



first person throughout. The introductory and concluding sentences of each chapter have been excluded from this.

In translating *The Life* my principal concern has been to convey the precise meaning and feeling-tone of the original in fluent English, rather than to reproduce the peculiarities of the Tibetan style and diction. In order to achieve this aim occasionally I have employed paraphrase. I have solved part of the problem of translating technical tantric terminology by the use of 'symbol words'. Thus words with an initial capital letter contain deeper significance than their face value implies; Awareness (jnana, ye-shes), Knowledge (rig-pa), Emptiness (stong-pa-nyid), and Body, Speech and Mind (sku, gsung, thugs) are attributes or qualities of the Buddha. Where I have used an adjective to describe the nature of these attributes as in 'gnostic awareness' or 'nonreferential awareness', the qualifier limits an essentially inexpressible idea.

Although I tried to avoid all foreign words and phrases, I failed. The words mantra, mandala and nirvana are already included in the Oxford Dictionary, albeit with non-technical definitions, and surely mudra (gesture or posture), samadhi (nirvanic state of mind), siddhi (success or power), samaya (vow or union) and of course Dakini (female Buddha-Guru and goddess) will soon join them. Further, there is no meaningful succinct equivalent for the Tibetan word Yidam (personal deity) or terma (literally 'treasure' or 'cache'). Some English poets would translate 'terma' as 'poetry', 'terton' (treasure-finder) as 'poet' and 'Dakini' as 'the Muse'; some would say that the treasures Tsogyel hid in England are English poetry. Perhaps the most problematic terms for translation are the names of the Buddha's three modes of being (trikaya). Rather than employ the Sanskrit terms throughout, I have used admittedly inadequate interpretive translations: 'absolute, or essential, empty being' for dharmakaya, 'being of consummate visionary enjoyment', or 'instructive visionary being', for sambhogakaya, and 'apparitional being' for nirmanakaya. The Tibetan word gyud (rgyud, Sanskrit: tantra), has many meanings. In this translation 'Tantra' denotes the practical system of yoga and the continuum of enlightened being that results from its practice, while tantra, or tantras, denotes a single text, or a corpus of scripture, that treats tantric yoga. Another problem in the translation of *The Life* has

been to maintain the ambiguity of twilight language (sandhyabhasa). For instance, when sexual union and mystical union are implied by the same words the translation must not stress one level at the expense of the other; it must contain the same potential for multi-levelled interpretation as the original. Sometimes this proved impossible.

In the text I have rendered Tibetan names in simple phonetic forms approximating the Lhasa dialect, as transliteration is misleading and tongue-tying for the reader with no knowledge of Tibetan. The index gives the transliterated forms. In general, in the notes and commentary I have retained the phonetic forms of proper names used in the text while transliterating other names and technical terms. Another cause of apology to scholars is the inconsistent use of Tibetan and Sanskrit for both names and technical terms. Believing that most students of Tibetan dharma acquire a mixed vocabulary I have used whatever form I thought most familiar, or most useful, to them. In the notes I have given the Tibetan equivalents except when the Sanskrit form should be familiar, although sometimes I have given both Tibetan and Sanskrit. Consistency has, therefore, received short shrift, and although some readers will be offended I hope to have helped the student of dharma.

This translation and commentary have been several years in preparation. Authorisation to read, study and publish the translation of *The Life* was given by His Holiness Dunjom Rimpoche, the principal hierarch of the Nyingma School; the Tibetan wood-blocks of the text were printed at Dunjom Rimpoche's Zangdokperi Monastery in Kalimpong. The first stage of the translation was to listen to a Nyingma lay scholar, Se Kusho Chomphel Namgyel, rendering the text into English. Then studying the passages on initiation, meditation instruction and the secret precepts in Chapter 8, etc., I was assisted by Khetsun Sangpo, probably the most eminent Nyingma scholar alive. But exegesis of the Dzokchen philosophical view, from which standpoint the text is written, and a detailed commentary upon the difficult passages of tantric precept, I received from Namkhai Norbu, an unorthodox Dzokchenpa with a profound experiential knowledge of the Inner Tantra. I felt his transmission (lung) of a vision of the Sky Dancer, the Dakini, to be an informal initiation into the yogini-tantra. Namkhai Norbu, a tulku of Azom Drukpa, is professor of Tibetan Studies at Naples University, Italy; he also teaches practical Dzokchen

meditation as a self-contained system of yoga in various European and American cities.

When the translation was finished it became evident that the general reader would require commentary to provide metaphysical and historical background to this popular, but abstruse, Tibetan classic. A short foreword couched in the traditional imagery of the Dakini in a metaphysical framework has been written by Trinley Norbu Rimpoche, one of the few remaining Tibetan recipients of Dzokchen precepts possessing both theoretical and experiential understanding who can express Dzokchen for a western audience. The text was annotated with the purpose of elucidating tantric terminology and practices. Concepts and practices and also historical allusions in the text that required greater amplification I have elucidated in the commentarial essays in the second half of the book, although I omitted references to the appropriate page to keep annotation to a minimum. In so short a space it was impossible to treat the tradition comprehensively and no doubt important aspects were overlooked. 'The Path of the Inner Tantra' is a personal view based upon my own experience, observation and the oral transmission. The first part of 'Woman and the Dakini' is a tentative exploration of the means of expression of a crucial aspect of Tantra and a verbal attempt to resolve paradoxes that can only be fully resolved experientially. 'The Nyingma Lineages' deals with Dzokchen's origins, the nature of kama (bka'-ma) and terma (gter-ma), the relationship between Bon and the Nyingmapa and other fascinating topics relating to the genesis of the Old School. It may increase appreciation of the text if these essays are read first.

In general the historical events described in *The Life* agree with the legends related in the early termas; but several episodes are expanded, particularly the great debate with the Bon, which is not described in other histories. My primary sources for the 'Historical Background' and 'The Nyingma Lineages' (I have reduced references to them to a minimum) are Orgyen Lingpa's *Padma bka'-thang Shel-brag-ma*, Nyima Wozer's *Guru nam-thar Zangs-gling-ma*, the *Genealogy of Kings* (rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i-me- long), *The Red Annals* (sDeb-ther dmar-po), *The Blue Annals* (sDeb-ther sngon-po) of 'Gos Lotsawa, *The Ladakhi Chronicles* (La-dvags rgyal-rabs), Buton's *History of the Dharma* and Dunjom Rimpoche's *History of the Dharma* (Chos-

'byung). I relied on Professor Tucci's works (Tibetan Painted Scrolls and Minor Buddhist Texts), and Hugh Richardson's articles, for knowledge of other early sources such as the Tun Huang chronicles and The Samye Chronicles (sBa-shad). Eva Dargyay's Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet must also be mentioned. I have accepted much of the Nyingma legend as historical fact, but with discrimination, while rejecting the revisionists who follow Sumpa Khempo, a biased adversary of the Old School. One major history remains ignored; Longchen Rabjampa's History of the Dharma (Chos-'byung) must one day be accorded its rightful place as the most reliable and authoritative text of the Chos-'byung genre, superseding Buton's later work.

It remains for me to thank all those who have helped me in the creation of this book: my Tibetan teachers, His Holiness Dunjom Rimpoche, Khetsun Sangpo, Namkhai Norbu Rimpoche, Trinley Norbu Rimpoche and Chomphel Namgyel, I credit with whatever here is true and consistent with Dzokchen doctrine, and for the understanding they have given me I am infinitely grateful. To Leonard van der Kuijp and Tadeuz Skorupski my thanks for reading the commentary and offering much useful advice. I am indebted to many others who have helped me in many ways during the course of the work, particularly to my wife Meryl for unfailing support and to Mimi Church, Cass Bardwell, Bill Gye and Vikki Floyd for their time and energy. Lastly, my thanks to Eva van Dam for the fine illustrations done out of pure devotion.

Keith Dowman, Kathmandu, Nepal.

**THE SECRET LIFE  
AND SONGS OF  
THE LADY  
YESHE TSOGYEL**

# HOMAGE

## NAMO GURU DEVA DAKINI JHYA

Obeissance to the hosts of Guru Ḍākinīs!  
Homage to Amitābha and Lord Avalokiteśvara,  
And to their compassionate emanation Pema Jungne,  
Threefold Buddha Exemplar, the Three Jewels, Lord of All  
Beings,  
And homage to the Lamas of the Lineage.  
Homage to Dechen Karmo, Mother of the Conquerors past,  
present and future,  
To the Ḍākinī of her absolute empty being, Pure Pleasure  
Kuntuzangmo,  
To the Ḍākinī of her instructive visionary being, Vajra Yoginī,  
And to the Ḍākinī of her apparitional being, Yeshe Tsogyelma.<sup>1</sup>

## PROTECTION

She who delights the Buddhas past, present and future with  
her metamorphic dance

She to whom the great Orgyen entrusted his divine authority,  
She of infallible memory, matrix of profound hidden treasure,  
She who attained supreme power, a rainbow body, a *vajra*  
body,<sup>2</sup>

Her name is Yeshe Tsogyelma, the *Dākinī* Guru,  
Whose cycle of spiritual evolution, activities and legends,  
Complete and fragmentary utterances and her *Dākinīs* heart-  
blood,

Are written here for the benefit of future beings, and concealed.  
You Protectors, Black Nyongkha Blazing Lord of Devils,  
And Lion-headed Devil Lord, guard this treasure well!

## SAMAYA GYA GYA GYA!

### GYELWA JANGCHUB'S INTRODUCTION

EHMAHO! The essence of all the Buddhas of the past, present and future, the Mantra-holder, Guru Perna Skull-Garland Skills (Guru Rimpoche), the Great Adept, was miraculously born on the pollen bed of a lotus, uncontaminated by a womb. His deeds were of more significance than those of *~akyamuni* Buddha himself, for he was endowed with the power of action of all the Buddhas past, present and future. Specifically, he spread and sustained for a long time the teaching that is most difficult to propagate - the tantric teaching. He converted those who were most difficult to convert - Tibetan barbarians and the demon savages of the SouthWest; he subdued gods, demons, devils and fanatical extremists merely by entertaining the thought of their subjection. He taught in the most difficult way - showing contrary supernatural forces simultaneously in magical display. And he attained the most elusive of all powers - the power of immortality.

It was this Buddha, then, who served as a skilful means to spread the Tantra. He had a greater number of accomplished mystic consorts than the number of sesame seeds it takes to fill a room supported by four pillars, and all of them came from the Highest Paradise;<sup>4</sup> they inhabited cremation grounds, the heavens, the human world, the great power places, the naga realms and the realm of the celestial musicians. In this world of Jambudvīpa alone - in China, India, Tibet, Gen, Jang, Hor and Mongolia - he had not less than seventy thousand accomplished girls, and among them were the five emanations of Vajra Varahi from whom he was never separated. The emanation of Varahi's Body, Mandarava; the emanation of her Speech, Yeshe Tsogyel; the emanation of her Mind, Sakya Dema; the emanation of her Quality, Kalasiddhi; the emanation of her Activity, Tashi Chidren; and the emanation of her essential indefinable individuality, Khandro Wongchang: these six were the aspects of his apparitional being. Of these six, the Indian girl Mandarava and the Tibetan girl Yeshe Tsogyel were preeminent. The biography of Mandarava can be found elsewhere. Herein, the stories and activities of Yeshe Tsogyel are recorded in brief.



# CHAPTER ONE

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## **TSOGYEL'S CONCEPTION**

The Mother of the Conquering Buddhas past, present and future, the apparitional being Yeshe Tsogyel, whose name is known to all, having accumulated vast resources of virtue and awareness in previous aeons, finite and infinite, the veil of ignorance torn away she made this great wave of compassion for the sake of all sentient beings.

During the lifetime of the great saint Takngu, I when I was the daughter of a merchant, together with five hundred other girls I went for the saint's audience. Introduced to the Buddha's teaching I expressed the supreme, irreversible wishfulfilling prayer of commitment to Buddhahood. After the transition at the end of that lifetime, I travelled through many Buddhafields of visionary pleasure, and then I took apparitional form as the Goddess Ganga Devi, and at the feet of the Lord Buddha ~akyamuni I absorbed and compiled his sacred word. Returning to the fields of visionary pleasure I was known as the Goddess Sarasvati,<sup>2</sup> serving all manner of beings.

At that time the Emperor of Tibet was Trisong Detsen, who was in truth an emanation of the Bodhisattva Manjusri. Trisong Detsen invited the Great Master Pema Jungne to come to Tibet to establish the tradition of the Buddha's teaching. This Great Master's being was unborn and undying, because in reality he was the Buddha Amitabha, Boundless Light, come to this world of men. Pema Jungne came to Tibet, and after the Emperor had fulfilled his commitment to build the great monastery of Samye Ling and innumerable other major and minor temples in the provinces and border areas, the light of the Buddha's teaching shone forth like the rising sun.

## **Tsogyel's Conception**

Then Pema Jungne thought to himself, 'The time has come for the Goddess Sarasvati to project an emanation so that I can spread the teaching of the Tantra.' Instantaneously, like the planet Mercury falling into the immensity of the sun, Pema Jungne returned to Orgyen,<sup>3</sup> the seat of all his emanation. When it was discovered that the Master had disappeared, the ministers of Tibet whispered abroad that he had been punished, banished to a savage land, Turkhara; the King said that the Master had gone to Senge Dzong Sum in Bhutan, where he was sitting in meditation; and the common people said that he had reconciled the King and Queen and had returned to India.

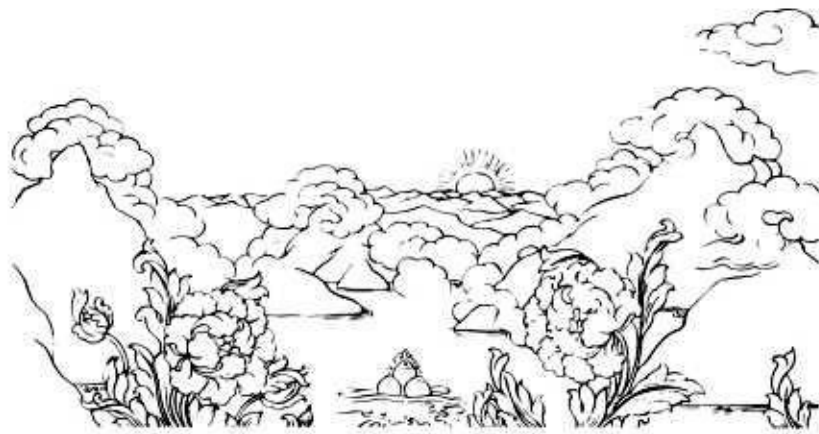
Meanwhile, in reality, the Guru was coursing through hundreds of Buddhafields of the sphere of apparitional being, and he continued his travelling for the duration of seven human years. Finally, he gathered together Vajra Dakini, the Goddess Sarasvati, Tara Bhrkuti, the Dakinis of the Four Families, the Dakinis of the Power Places and many other Dakinis, and revelling with us all in pleasure, he exhorted us to ultimate pleasure with this song of pleasure:<sup>4</sup>

**HRI! Through the light-rays of the supreme outflow that is no  
outflow,  
From the Guru's *vajra*, the pleasure of desireless desire,  
Into the secret sky of the *Dākinī*, the supreme desire of no  
desire,  
Now is the time to enjoy the profound secret of pure pleasure.**

**Then from the very centre of the assembled goddesses, I, the  
Goddess Sarasvatī, arose and answered the Guru:**

**HO! Buddha Hero, Heruka, Pleasure God!  
When you, great dancer, dance the nine dances of life,  
The pure pleasure of the sacred lotus is everywhere discovered,  
And in the vastness of the *bhaga* there is no anxiety;  
It is time to project an emanation into the savage world.**

'SAMAYA HO!' exclaimed the Guru. 'The bond is formed.'  
'SAMAYASTVAM!' I replied. 'You are the bond!'



## **Tsogyel's Conception**

'SAMAYA HRI!' exclaimed the Guru. 'The bond is all!' 'SAMAYA TISHTHA!' I replied. 'The bond is strong!' 'RAMO HAM!' exclaimed the Guru. 'Let the fire burn!' 'RAGAYAMI!' I concluded. 'We are burning together!'

Thus the Guru's vajra and the Dakini's lotus were joined, and we entered a trance of union.<sup>5</sup> The Five Goddesses of the Five Buddha Families, Locana and her sisters, gave us worship and adoration; their Heruka Consorts expelled malevolent spirits; the Bodhisattvas gave their benediction; the great Takritas defended us from all intruding obstructive influences; the Four Door Keepers kept the mystic circle intact; the Four Vajra Goddesses danced; and the Guardians of the Teaching, the Fierce Lords of the Ten Directions, and the Mamo Dakinis, vowed to defend the teaching. At the same time the great pleasure of we mystic partners caused the elements of the mundane worlds of the ten directions to tremble and quake repeatedly. It was then that from the junction of Guru and Dakini beams of light in the form of a red syllable A surrounded by a circle of white vowels, and the white syllable BAM surrounded by a circle of red consonants, shot like the flight of a shooting star towards Tibet, to Seulung in Drak.

Thus ends the first chapter which describes how Tsogyel, having recognised the propitious time for the conversion of all beings, projected an apparitional form.

SAMAYA GYA GYA GYA!

# CHAPTER TWO

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# AUSPICIOUS OMENS AND BIRTH

At the time of the King Namri Songtsen, the last of the royal line of succession from the first Tibetan king, Nyatri Tsenpo, Tibet was ruled as seven independent kingdoms. The heir to Namri Songtsen, The Emperor Songtsen Gampo, and his descendants ruled as emperors of all Tibet. The Emperor Songtsen, whose immortal deeds will be forever remembered, appointed the kings of the seven kingdoms by imperial decree, and those kings were called Kharchenpa, Zurkharpa, Kharchupa, Gongthangpa, Tsepa, Drakpa and Rongpa. Kharchenpa, who established a great coven of Bonpo priests, had a son called Kharchen Zhonnupa, whose son was called Kharchen Dorje Gon; his son was Kharchen Pelgyi Wongchuk. When Pelgyi Wongchuk was fifteen years old he took a wife of the Nub clan called Getso. Shortly afterwards his father died, and he was entrusted the onerous duties of government. To conform to the Emperor Trisong Detsen's desire, and out of his own devotion to the Buddha's teaching, he induced all his subjects to take refuge in the Three Jewels.

One day, when the Prince, my father, was twentyfive years old, while he and his queen, my mother, were enjoying the pleasures of love-making, my mother had a vision. Coming out of the west she saw a golden bee, its hum sounding like a sweet stream of lute music, and it vanished into her husband's fontanelle. The Prince himself saw a vision of his wife with three eyes, and of an eightyyear-old girl who appeared holding a lute and singing, 'A AIIUU RI RI LI LIEEOO AM A' and 'HRI HRI HRI HRI HRI!' She came very close to him

## **Auspicious Omens and Birth**

and then vanished. Immediately the earth quaked, light shone brilliantly around him, thunder rolled, and a long whining hum was heard. A spring beside the castle turned into a lake at this time, and many other portents appeared.

That night the Prince dreamed that an eight-petalled lotus which he held in his hand poured out light in every direction, irradiating every corner of the microcosmic universes.<sup>2</sup> Then, further, he dreamed that a coral stupa emerged from the crown of his head, and that multitudes of people gathered from China, Jang, Hor, Kham, Tibet, Mongolia, Bhutan and Nepal. Some said that they had come on pilgrimage to give respect to the stupa, some to beg for it as a gift, some to carry it off by stealth, and others to take it by force. Then he dreamed that he held a lute in his hand that began to play spontaneously, and the sound reverberated through the millions of microcosmic universes, drawing an inconceivably vast crowd of people from all of these worlds, all of whom listened insatiably. Meanwhile, my mother had a dream, and she dreamed that she received a rosary of coral and conch shell beads. When blood began to pour from the coral and milk from the conch, an inestimable crowd of people came and drank to satiety, but still the blood and milk were not exhausted. All the realms of the earth were flooded with this red and white ambrosia,<sup>3</sup> and it was declared that this source of ambrosia would not dry up until the aeon's end.

The next morning, when the sun shone, a white woman, a god's daughter, the like of whom had never been seen before, appeared. She announced the miraculous event of the Three Jewels in the Prince's house, and then she vanished.

Nine months later the clear sound of the vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet, the mantra HRI GURU PADMA VAJRA AH and the continual recitation of the tantras in the Sanskrit language were heard in the castle. At sunrise of the tenth day of the monkey month of the year of the bird,<sup>4</sup> Getso, my mother, gave birth painlessly. The earth shook, thunder rolled, and a rain of flowers fell from the sky. The lake increased in size, and on its banks a vast number of different species of



flowers bloomed, all flecked with red and white. The palace was covered by a net of rainbow light, a tent of light rays, a miracle to which all present bore witness. Then the sound of music filled the sky, the haunting notes of the lute sounding loud and long, and between the clouds in the sky a host of goddesses appeared who uncovered the upper parts of their bodies and sang these auspicious verses:

**HRI! Your empty being is the expanse of Pure Pleasure  
Kuntuzangmo;  
Your visionary being is the Ḍākinī Vajra Yoginī;  
Your apparitional being is the Conquerors' Mother: may you  
be happy!  
Your empty being is the empty sphere of Vajra Ḍākinī;  
Your visionary being is Sarasvatī, Mother of the Conquerors  
past, present and future;  
Your apparitional being is supremely qualified: may you be  
victorious!  
Your empty being is the nature of the plane of Awareness;  
Your visionary being is Seven-eyed White Tārā, Mother of  
Compassion,  
Your apparitional being is supreme intelligence: homage to you!**

Then sending down a shower of flowers the goddesses vanished into the firmament.

As soon as this apparitional body was born, I recited the alphabet and chanted 'ORGYEN CHEMPO KHYENO!' - 'Homage to the great sage of Orgyen!' Sitting in half-lotus posture with my knees planted on the floor I opened my eyes wide and raised my pupils in adoration. My body was free of the womb's impurities, and my complexion was red and white. In particular, I had a complete set of teeth that were conch shell white in colour, and my hair fell down to my waist. When my mother offered me the customary knob of melted female yak butter, I sang:

I am an apparitional being, a *yoginī*,  
And after eating immaterial essences for so long  
The memory of coarse food has vanished,  
But I will eat to complete my mother's happiness.  
I will eat this food as the food of secret precepts,  
Swallowing it whole like the whole of *samsāra*,  
To become replete with Awareness and Knowledge.<sup>5</sup>  
Aiyé!



And I swallowed it. Then my father, the Prince, declared, 'Surely this child is superior to others. Either she will become a mahasiddha of the Bonpo or Buddhists, or she will be a queen of the Emperor. We will call her Tsogyel (Dakini of the Ocean), because the lake increased in size at her birth.'

After one month I had attained the appearance of an eighty-year-old,

and my parents, thinking that it would be harmful to allow others to see me, kept me hidden away for ten years. When I was ten, my body was fully rounded and beautifully formed, and repute of my exquisite loveliness reaching the bounds of the empire, crowds of people, like throngs at a carnival, arrived from Tibet, China, Hor, Jang, Gen and Nepal to catch sight of me.

Thus ends the second chapter in which is described how Tsogyel descended into Tibet, the land that she was to transform.

SAMAYA ITHI!

# CHAPTER THREE

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## **DISILLUSIONMENT AND MEETING THE MASTER**

When the hordes of suitors descended upon Kharchen, my parents and their officials held council upon the question of my marriage. It was unanimously decided that excepting a claim from the Emperor I should be given to no one, because the disappointment of the unlucky suitors would surely be the cause of strife. This decision was made public, and the suitors dispersed each to his own home.

Soon after, Prince Pelgyi Zhonnu of Kharchu arrived to beg for my hand, bringing three hundred horses and mule loads of gifts. At the same time Prince Dorje Wongchuk of Zurkhar appeared with a similar load of treasure. For my parents to give me to one would leave the other dissatisfied, so I was asked to make my own choice.

'I will go with neither of them,' I insisted. 'If I was to go I would be guilty of incarcerating myself within the dungeon of worldly existence. Freedom is so very hard to obtain. I beg you, my parents, to consider this.'

Although I begged them earnestly, my parents were adamant. 'There are no finer palaces in the known world than the residences of these two princes,' my father told me. 'You are totally lacking in filial affection. I would be unable to give away such a savage as you in either China or Hor. I will give you to one of these princes.'

'My daughter tells me that she is not inclined to go with either of you,' he told the rival suitors. 'So if I give her to one of you and the other disputes it she will stay with me. You are both familiar with competition; when I send her outside whoever lays hands on her first can have her. But the loser must not quarrel. If either of you fight over her, I will petition the Emperor to punish you.'

Then he decked me in fine brocades and gave me one hundred horse loads of chattels and provisions to take with me, and I was involuntarily led out of the house. The instant I stepped outside the rivals rushed towards me, and Kharchupa's official, Santipa, reaching

me first, caught me by the breast and attempted to lead me away. However, I braced my legs against a boulder so that my feet sank into it like mud. To move me was like trying to move a mountain, and no one succeeded. Then those fiendish officials took a lash of iron thorns, and stripping me naked they began to whip me. I explained to them:

**This body is the result of ten thousand years of effort;  
If I cannot use it to gain enlightenment  
I will not abuse it with the pain of samsaric existence.  
You may be the noblest and most powerful in Kharchu  
But you lack the equipment to gain a day of wisdom.  
So kill me; I care not.**

The official called ~antipa answered me:

**Girl, you have a beautiful body that is rotten within;  
Your fair skin creates turbulence within the Prince's heart;  
Like a dry bean you are smooth on the outside but hard within;  
Give up this foolishness and become Princess of Kharchu.**

I replied:

**This precious human body is hard to obtain  
But to gain a body like yours is easy –  
Your sinful body is not even human.  
Why should I go with you to become Princess of Kharchu?**

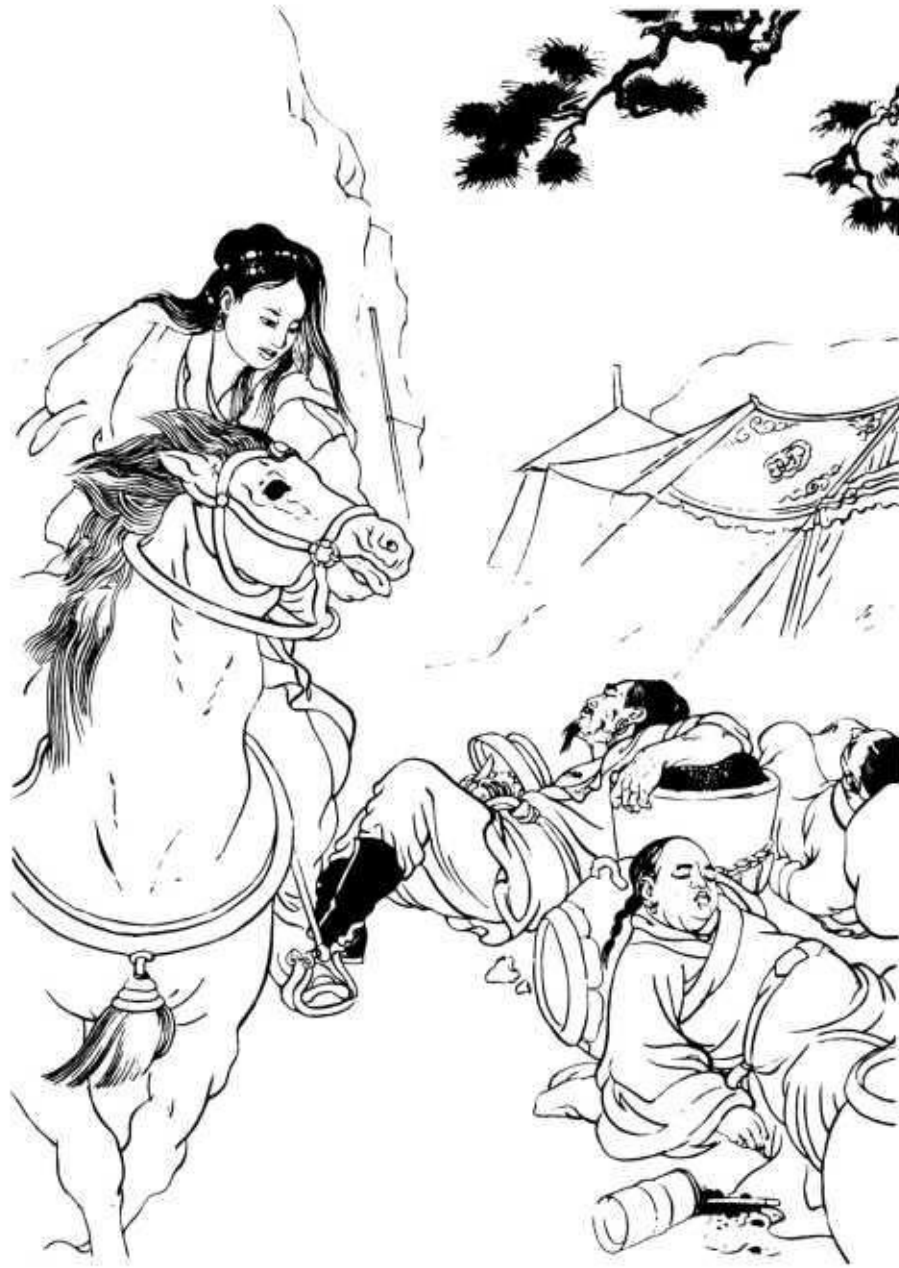
Then again the officials whipped me with a lash of iron thorns, until my back was a bloody pulp, and unable to bear the physical pain I stood up and accompanied them. That evening the master and his servants camped at Drakda, and out of joy they danced and sang. I was profoundly depressed and wept tears of blood. Although many plans passed through my mind, no opportunity of escape presented itself. My voice breaking with grief I sang this agonised plaint to the Buddhas of the ten directions:

Alas! Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions,  
protectors of beings,  
The guardians possessing compassion and magical power,  
The eye of awareness and magical legions,  
Now is the time to fulfil your compassionate pledges.<sup>1</sup>  
My pure thoughts whiter than the glacial snows  
Have become blacker than the shale of this alien devil;  
Take pity on me!  
My righteous thoughts as precious as gold  
Have now less worth than the bronze of this alien devil;  
You protectors with the Eye of Awareness, show  
understanding!  
My pure aspiration, a wish-fulfilling gem,  
Has less value now than the stone of this alien devil;  
You magicians show your magical skill.  
I hoped to reach *nirvāṇa* in one body in this lifetime  
But this alien devil has pulled me into the mire of *samsāra*;  
Quickly arrest my fate, compassionate lords.

Even as I made this prayer the men appeared to fall into a drunken stupor and slept. Then I fled, fled faster than the wind. Crossing many passes and valleys, I travelled south. The following morning my former captors were angry and shamefaced. They searched for me fruitlessly in every direction, and having searched Kharchen thoroughly to no avail they returned to Kharchu.

Meanwhile, Perna Jungne had returned instantaneously from Orgyen to Chimphu. Here the fiendish ministers discovered his whereabouts and set out to kill him. On their way to Chimphu they became frightened by the sight of a pillar of fire at their destination, and deterred from their purpose they returned shamefaced to Samye. Approaching the King, they addressed him in this manner:





## **Disillusionment and Meeting the Master**

O World Emperor, Lord of Men, Divine Prince, The vagrant foreign devil We banished to Turkhara Now lives in Chimphu, not in exile. Should we kill him or banish him again?

The King was secretly pleased. 'The Master possesses instruction through which Buddhahood can be gained without suppressing the passions,' he thought to himself. 'I must now ask him for those precepts.' And he sent three translators with golden bowls for the Master, and an invitation to the palace. Accepting this invitation, the Master descended from Chimphu towards a narrow defile where he knew that the heavily armed ministers were lying in wait for him. He sent the three translators on ahead, while he himself raised his hand in the gesture of threat intoning 'HUNG HUNG HUNG!' and ascended into the sky. He assumed the form of Guru Drakpo<sup>2</sup> inside a flaming mountain of fire that reached to the height of worldly existence, and his adversaries were rendered senseless. Then he appeared before the King in the same form, although to all others Guru Drakpo was invisible, and the terrified monarch lost consciousness. The Master then withdrew his wrathful projection and reassumed the Guru mandala<sup>3</sup> of Pema Jungne. The King then regained consciousness and performed innumerable prostrations and circumambulations to the Guru, before preparing a vast ganacakra<sup>4</sup> feast and making his petition.

'It is not yet the time to reveal the tantric mysteries to you,' the Guru told him. 'Purify your mind on the graduated path of the mahayana and repeat your offering a year hence.'

After my escape, I, Tsogyel, lived in the valley of Womphu Taktsang, sustaining myself upon fruit and clothing myself with the fibre of the cotton tree. But Zurkharpa, the unsuccessful suitor, heard rumour of where I had gone and sent three hundred men to search for me. They found me and forcibly brought me back to their master.

When Kharchupa, the successful suitor, heard of this development, he sent his letter to my father, Kharchenpa:

Holy Prince, Exalted Pelgyi Wongchuk: You gave me your daughter in marriage, but on the road she vanished without trace. I have heard it said, and I wish you to verify this, that Zurkharpa's party has abducted her in a distant land. If this is your design I must fight with you; if not my quarrel lies with Zurkharpa.

After Kharchupa had dispatched this letter, while he was marshalling his troops he received this reply from Kharchenpa:

Kharchu Dorje Pel, this is my message: Do not villify others in ignorance; I have no knowledge of Tsogyel since she left home. If you make war your defeat is certain.

Having sent this missive to Kharchupa, Kharchenpa marshalled his troops. Then he received another message, this time from Zurkharpa.

Holy King, Pelgyi Wongchuk: I sought your daughter in a distant border land, and finding her I brought her to live with me here. If I bestow upon you vast wealth and possessions, will you in return give your divine daughter to me?

He soon received a reply:

According to our binding contract, whoever won the contest would win my daughter; contention would be punished. However, to attain the happiness of us all, let the girl wander freely wherever she will.

But Zurkharpa had no intention of letting me go. On the contrary, he put me in irons, and marshalling his troops he prepared for war. However the Emperor Trisong Detsen was apprised of this situation, and he dispatched this letter to Kharchen Pelgyi Wongchuk:

Pay heed, Kharchen Pelgyi Wongchuk: Whoever defies the command of the Emperor quickly and certainly faces ruin. You have a superior and divine daughter, a daughter worthy to be my queen. A subject of mine who goes to war shall be punished with death.

The Emperor sent seven officials with this letter, and Kharchen Pelgyi Wongchuk related in detail the sequence of events concerning me, his daughter, to those officials, and he wrote this reply offering me

to the Emperor:

HO! O World Emperor, Holy Lord of Men: My daughter is indeed superior to other girls, so I am happy if you take her to be your queen. Moreover, since I fear to start even a trivial dispute, I am mortally afraid of the World Emperor's hosts.

The King was gratified by this letter, and set out for Zurkhar with nine hundred horsemen. Zurkharpa was terrified. But then Kharchenpa resolved all in harmony. Since he had two other daughters, my sisters, he gave the eldest, Dechen Tso, to Kharchu Dorje Pel, who was contented with her; he gave the second daughter, Nyima Tso, to Zurkhar Zhonnu Pel, who was also satisfied; and when I, Tsogyel, the youngest, was taken by the Emperor for his wife, the rival suitors finally gave up hope of possessing me. Thus war was averted and all lived in harmony.

I arrived in Samye escorted by the King's envoy of welcome, decked in ornaments of precious stones and dressed in silk brocades suited to my new rank. The King celebrated our marriage with a three-month feast. Then due to my faith in the Buddha-dharma he appointed me custodian of the dharma. Scholars taught me letters and grammar, knowledge of the five arts and sciences, and both secular and religious accomplishments. A mere indication was sufficient for me to grasp whatever I was taught.

One day the King again invited the Great Master Pema Jungne to visit him. He prepared a jewelled-encrusted throne for him, and when the Master was seated he offered him a great ganacakra feast, piling before him a mountain of material wealth. To make a formal mandala offering, he arranged pieces of gold upon a silver mandala tray, and pieces of turquoise upon a golden mandala tray. The elements of the silver mandala represented his empire. He offered the Four Districts of Central Tibet and Tsang as Mount Meru; China, Jang and Kham as the eastern continent and its two satellite islands; he offered jar, Kongpo and Bhutan as the southern continent and its two islands; and he offered Hor, Mongolia and the Northern Plains (fang-thang) as the northern continent and its two islands. Further, represented by the turquoise, he offered me, his queen, as an offering of sensual

gratification. Then he made this request: 'O Great Guru Rimpoche, in this mandala I offer everything within my power. Through your great compassion you hold in your care all creatures, men and gods, in every form and at all times. Please grant me the special instruction through which I can attain Buddhahood instantaneously, relying upon the effort of this one body in this single lifetime. Grant me the extraordinary teaching of the Tantra, the sacred word beyond karma and cause and effect.' And he prostrated before the Guru nine by nine times in supplication.



The Great Guru replied with these verses:

Listen carefully, O Emperor: From the lotus-fields of pure pleasure,  
undefiled and undefined, The Buddha Amitabha, unborn and undying,  
Projected his vajra Body, Speech and Mind as a ball of light  
Into the middle of the oceanic womb, without centre or boundary,  
And upon the pollen bed of a lotus, without cause or condition,  
Without father or

mother and without family lineage, I, Pema Jungne, this Great Being, miraculously appeared, Spontaneously manifest, unborn and undying, With dominion over the hosts of Dakinis, With knowledge of the supra-causal, most sacred Tantra, The oral traditions, secret precepts, practices and open-heart methods, And the vital samaya<sup>5</sup> that must never be forgotten; But the teaching is not to be bartered for material wealth, Nor even for the gift of the high power of the King. If I exchange the teaching for wealth, my root samaya is broken And both you and I must suffer retribution, die and fall into hell. Moreover, the whole world is already in my power. Your offering is vast, but for your purpose it is improper; The Tantra requires only a qualified recipient, a suitable vessel; The snowlion's milk, the best elixir, Can only be held in a fine, golden, jewelled bowl, And any other vessel will break and the elixir will be lost. The secrets are sealed in my heart.

As he finished speaking the upper part of his body appeared as the realm of desire and the lower part extended to the lowest hell.<sup>6</sup> After creating this illusion he resumed his customary apparitional form on the throne. The King prostrated like a falling wall, and cried out, 'O Great Guru, what karmic irony to be a king yet an unfit recipient of the tantric mysteries!' and he beat his body on the ground and wept noisily. Guru Rimpoche told him to collect himself and to attend, and he continued:

Listen! The tantric mysteries are said to be secret Not because the Tantra is immoral but because it is closed, Closed to the narrow-minded adherents of lesser paths. And there is no irony in your karma, O King! You have intelligence, intuitive insight and a broad mind; You will not alter your faith or renege on your samaya; And you will attend to the tantric Lama with devotion. This Great Being is free of any germ of desire, The aberrations of lust are absent; But woman is a sacred ingredient of the Tantra, A qualified Awareness Dakini is necessary; She must be of good family, faithful and honour bound, Beautiful, skilful in means, with perfect insight, Full of kindness and generosity; Without her the factors of maturity and release are incomplete, And the goal of tantric practice is lost from sight. However, throughout this Kingdom of Tibet There are many practitioners of the Tantra, But as many reach their goal as there are stars in the day sky. In view of that, O King, To you I will open the

door of tantric practice.

Completing his address to the King, the Guru assumed the form of Vajradhara,<sup>7</sup> and remained in that state. The King prostrated until his forehead was bruised, and then he offered the five sacred ingredients,<sup>8</sup> including myself, to the Guru, who was exceedingly pleased.

Thereafter, the Guru installed Tsogyel as his Consort and Lady, and gave her initiation and empowerment, and then as mystic partners they went first to Chimphu Geu to perform secret yoga.

Thus ends the third chapter in which is described how Tsogyel recognised impermanence and encountered the Master.

SAMAYA ITI GYA GYA GYA!



## CHAPTER FOUR

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### INITIATION AND INSTRUCTION

In Chimphu Gegong and Yama Lung, firstly, Tsogyel was inspired to a life of virtue by the teaching upon the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha Sakyamuni. Then she was taught the provisional truths contained in the Tripitaka (the sutras - aphorisms, the vinaya - discipline, and abhidharma - metaphysics), the inexorable laws of karma (the cause and effect of moral and immoral actions), and what she should renounce and what she should cultivate. And she was ordained into the stainless virtue of a bhiksuni. Then having received complete instruction upon the six lower vehicles so that it was deeply impressed upon her mind, what she must accomplish was profoundly imbued, what she had been taught was fully understood, and what she must cognise she already knew.<sup>1</sup>

At this juncture the goddess Sarasvati spontaneously appeared to her and bestowed upon her the power of an infallible memory. She gained the ability to see the whole world with her fleshly eye; she gained power to display miracles; and she gained foreknowledge of mundane affairs, together with a divine intuition. The sheer size of 'The Book of Studies,' Tsogyel's record of what she was taught, filled us with apprehension, and we have not printed it here in full. Here is a shortened account.

Guru Rimpoche, Perna Jungne, was filled with the Buddha's Word as if it had been poured into him like liquid into a vase. After I, the woman Yeshe Tsogyel, had offered him the three kinds of satisfaction,<sup>3</sup> serving him for a very long time, he imparted that wisdom to me as if he was filling a jug. Soon my mind was completely at ease on the path of virtue, and my sisters and I learnt to distinguish between the nine vehicles<sup>4</sup> which lead to nirvana, and to distinguish between what is righteous and what is unrighteous. However, I became aware of a greater reality, the hidden foundations of causality, and conceived a desire for the ultimate, perfect path that transcends karma

and its inexorable logic. So I made this petition to Guru Rimpoche:

O most revered Apparitional Buddha, Conceived in the Land of Orgyen, Supreme Sage of India, The Buddha's Regent in Tibet, I am young but not inexperienced For suffering was revealed to me at the age of twelve When my parents denied me my request for celibacy And gave me as a bride in a lay marriage. My mind was not engaged by the ways of the world And I fled to the Valley of Womphu Taktsang. But enflamed by lust, a tormentor sought me, And powerless, I was captured and submitted to pain. Then, Lord Guru, through your compassion, I was delivered by the Emperor, And enthroned as Queen at Samye Until at the age of twelve I was offered to you As the Emperor's offering for the Three Empowerments. Now, with intuition of the unitary foundation of causality, I beg for the Sacred Word which transcends cause and effect.

The Guru smiled radiantly at me, and forming his answer in verse, he replied:

So be it, Daughter of Kharchen. You, a woman of sixteen years, Have seen the suffering of an eighty-year-old hag. Know your pain to be age-old karma, And that the residue of that karma is erased. Now you have found pure pleasure, And it is impossible to revert to a body of bad karma. And now that you know the foundation of cause and effect It is right to aspire to the unsurpassable apex of the mahayana.

Then he entered the tantric sphere and recalled the root and branch vows. And he continued:

Hear me well, Daughter of Kharchen; Listen attentively, revered Kuntuzangmo. The foundation of the mahayana Tantra is the samaya vows; If the samaya is broken we both meet disaster. Therefore, keep these vows!

After he had spoken I swore to maintain the fundamental, root vows of the Buddha's Body, Speech and Mind, and the twentyfive branch vows. The fundament, the root samaya, is the samaya of an enlightened mind (bodhicitta):' the relative bodhicitta is sealed by the absolute bodhicitta, and in order to maintain this samaya so that I

would not pass beyond the state where from the beginningless beginning the body is actually a god, speech is the spontaneous vibration of mantra, and mind is the intangible, ultimate quality of all experience, first I took the samaya of the Buddha's Body. Here I will classify the types of master and spiritual brothers, and then explain the means of sustaining the samaya.

There are six kinds of Lama: Lamas in general, the Lama who guides us, the Lama with whom the samaya is maintained, the Lama who restores our broken vows, the Lama who liberates us from our personality and thoughts, and the Lama who gives instruction and oral teaching. Then there are four kinds of spiritual brothers: spiritual brothers in general, the close brother (who has the same Lama), the intimate brother (who has the same lineage) and the brother who is both close and intimate (having the same lineage and Lama).

Now to guard the samaya of the Buddha's Body, exoterically, the Lama is regarded as Lord and Master, or as parents, or as a loving uncle; esoterically, he is regarded like an eye, the heart, or life itself; and mystically, with body, speech and mind free of hypocrisy and dissimulation, he is identified with the Yidam deity.

To be brief, as far as physical respect is concerned, circumambulate and prostrate before your Lama and his spiritual brothers. Take care of their physical comfort like a servant or maid, and offer whatever may please them, such as food, wealth, body and possessions. To be specific, offer the same amount of respect to the Lama's relatives as to the Lama himself; respect his consort, his sons, his daughters, his parents, his spiritual brothers, yab, yum, consorts and attendants and servants: thus the sacred samaya is maintained. Accordingly, obey the orders and insinuated injunctions of the Lama; refrain from any disdain towards his young acolytes, monks and patrons who perform physical service; in short, whoever the Lama loves should be respected as the Lama himself - including his horse, his watchdog and his menials. Again, specifically, except when the Lama, or his spiritual brothers, have extended permission, do not partake so much as a sesame seed's worth of their food, wealth or possessions, or even allow the least covetous thought regarding them to arise in the mind. Further, if you overshadow or pass over the Lama's hat, clothes, shoes, seat,

bed or couch, or even his own shadow, it is said that such action is equivalent to destroying a stupa or an image of the Buddha. As a further illustration, it is said that you should not fight, kill, steal, or rob within range of the Lama's vision, even if only in jest.

Concerning verbal respect for the Lama and his spiritual brothers, if you relate whatever faults the Lama may have to others, or exaggerate his lack of defects, if you berate him or answer him back, then whatever worship you render to the Sugatas of the microcosmic universes is to no avail, and indubitably rebirth in the Vajra-hell follows.

Concerning mental respect for the Lama, do not deceive him, do not harbour malice towards him, ridicule him, hold opinions about him, inwardly accuse him or distrust him. I myself have never once yet failed in as much as the smallest part of a hair of this samaya of the Buddha's Body, or failed in these observances of respect to the Lama and his spiritual brothers.

Secondly, the samaya of the Buddha's Speech is with the Yidam deity. I will note the three kinds of mantra and four kinds of mudra that are aspects of this samaya, and then describe the methods of maintaining the samaya. There are three kinds of mantra samaya:<sup>7</sup> the samaya of the root mantra, the unfailing cause; the samaya of the creative mantra, the condition of the deity's appearance; and the samaya of the mantra that is recited to effect certain karmas. Then there are four samayas of union with the four mudras:<sup>e</sup> the mudra of verbal commitment, the karmamudra of Awareness, the dharmamudra, and mahdmudra.

The method of guarding this samaya is to sustain union with the mandalas of the Lama, the Yidam and the Dakini with body, speech and mind. To sustain this union there are various forms of practice suited to the capacity of the yogin. I myself practised the seven hundred thousand mandalas of the ultimate tantras that my Lama gave me, in the various modes of the superior, average and inferior yogin. The highest mode of practice, that of the superior yogin, is the Samadhi of Unqualified Pure Pleasure; the intermediate mode, that of the average yogin, is the samddhi in which light and energy forms

appear as gods and goddesses; and the lesser mode, that of the inferior yogin, is identity with the Flowing River Samadhi."

On the supreme level of practice the mandala is experienced as an unbroken stream, as I experienced the Mandala of Hayagriva and Vajra Varahi. On the intermediate level of practice, the vow to meditate during six periods of seclusion, three in the day and three in the night," is rigidly maintained, as I maintained the practice of Dorje Phurba. And on the inferior level of practice, each complete basic cycle of rites - the recitation of mantra with accompanying physical yogas, the ganacakra, *etc.* - should receive sustained and regular application once every day, as I applied myself to the Sublime Accomplishment of the Eight Logos Deities (Drupa Kabje).<sup>1</sup> Likewise I have never postponed even for a few minutes the practice I pledged to perform in order to sustain my attainment in numerous mandalas of other deities, whether it was according to the custom of the superior yogin who pledges to perform a prescribed amount of visualisation and recitation at regular times throughout each month; according to the average yogin who practises the complete basic cycle of meditation upon a particular deity on the full moon, the dark of the moon, the eighth, tenth, and eighteenth, *etc.*, days of the moon; according to the inferior yogin who practises one particular rite once each month; or the indolent yogin who practises a complete cycle once a year.

Thirdly, the samaya of the Buddha's Mind is the maintenance of Vision, Meditation and Action. I will define these three, and then disclose the methods of keeping this samaya: Vision is profound insight; Meditation is accomplished through experiential understanding of the nature of mind; and the Action that meditation induces is uninhibited outer, inner and mystic action. 12

Then the method of keeping this samaya is through secrecy: keeping the four universal secrets, the four intermediate secrets, the appropriate secrets, and entrusted secrets. The four universal secrets are the name of your Yidam, his heart mantra, his karma mantra, and your signs of mastery. The four intermediate secrets are the place and the time and the allies" and the sacred appurtenances of practice. The ritual appurtenances that the yogin relies upon in his practice of the ultimate

tantras, objects that it is appropriate to keep secret, are the elements of offering, internal and mystic offerings such as sman and gtorma, etc., manual symbols such as the bhanda, kila, khatvanga, vajra, ghanta, mala, etc., the names of the parts of the mandala, the eight adornments of the charnal ground, bone ornaments, etc., and in particular, the damaru, the kapala and the rkang-gling. Entrusted secrets are secrets concerning confidential behaviour such as the mystic practices of your spiritual brothers and sisters and the sexual behaviour of men and women in general. In short, all kinds of behaviour that it is proper to keep secret, whether of the Lama, your spiritual brothers and sisters, or of common people, should not be communicated to others.

Since I swore before my master to maintain the ten secret samayas of the Buddha's Body, Speech and Mind, the four samayas of the Buddha's Body concerning the master and spiritual brothers, the samayas of Buddha's Speech - three of mantra and four of mudra - and the samayas of the Buddha's Mind - the four universal secrets, the four intermediate secrets, the four appropriate secrets and the four entrusted secrets, I have guarded them inviolate, permitting not so much as the smallest deviation equal to a hundredth part of a hair's breadth to appear even for a split second.

Further, these are the twentyfive branch samayas that Pema Jungne taught me; the samayas of the five actions that should be practised - fornication, taking what is not given, false speech, cursing and shouting; the samayas of the five substances that should be accepted gladly - excrement, semen, meat, blood and urine; the samayas of the five realities that should be accomplished - the Five Aspects of the Buddha, the five modes of Awareness, the Five Male Consorts, the Five Female Consorts and the five modes of the Buddha's Being; the samayas of the five emotions that should not be suppressed - desire, hatred, sloth, pride and jealousy; and the samayas of the five categories of knowledge that should be understood - the five psychophysical constituents, the five elements, the five sense-organs, the five sensefields and the five colours.<sup>14</sup> Having taken these branch vows in the light of extended commentary from other sources," since I have never yet come close to deviating from even a single implication of a single one of these vows for even a moment, I have been held perpetually by Orgyen Guru's compassion, remaining within the

mandala of the ultimate inner tantra. And since I realised that initiation and empowerment is the key to the tantric mysteries, and that the samaya is the source of empowerment, I have maintained the samaya unbroken.

Thereafter, at Samye in Yama Lung, the Guru revealed to me the Mandala of the Tantric Mysteries, bestowing upon me 'the Communion of the Eight Logos Deities: the Ocean of Dharma',<sup>6</sup> and we stayed there together.

At the time of the Tibetan New Year the court and the people gathered at Samye. The ministers noticed that I, Tsogyel, was absent, and they enquired where I had gone. They made exhaustive enquiries as to what had befallen me, but nobody knew. When they asked the King himself where I was, unable to keep the secret, he told them the full story of how he had offered me to Guru Rimpoche as his Consort.<sup>17</sup> The zhang ministers, who were implacably hostile to the dharma, the great minister Lugong Tsenpo, Takra Lutsen, the Zhang General, Gyud Gyud Ringmo, Mama Zhang, Jarok Gyud, Shen Tago and others opposed to the dharma, petitioned the King with one accord and one purpose:

'O great King, O Lord of all the black-topped Tibetans, are you possessed by a demon? Don't skim law and order from the land like cream from milk. Don't let Tibetan heads fall in blood. Don't let Tibetan tails fly in the air. Don't treat Tibetan ministers like dogs. Don't treat the Tibetan kingship like rubbish. Our ancient heritage, the golden yoke that you received from the lineage of god-kings your ancestors, can so very easily be stolen away by this foreign devil, Pema Jungne, this vagrant sadhu,<sup>18</sup> this master of evil spells. Naturally your subjects are pained and downcast. This scion of the Kharchen Clan first created problems for her parents, then she made trouble for her rightful husband, and now she is bringing disaster down upon Tibet. Is this righteous behaviour? Now while your ministers still have breath in their bodies, let each of them voice his opinion. There is a proverb, "So long as the bag of ministerial authority is not rent, even though the king loses his heart there is means of replacing it!" You must take counsel!'

This speech angered everyone, but before the King or any minister had time to speak, Go the Elder addressed the King, 'O Lord, your ministers' discussions are interminable, and since it is said, "Speak briefly before the King", let us deliberate elsewhere.'

All agreed to this, and the ministers assembled outside the council chamber for consultation. Meanwhile the King was much agitated, and straight away sent a secret message of warning to the Guru at Drakmar at Yama Lung. Having received the letter the Guru sent this reply:

O Lord of Men, God-King, Even now when difficulties have arisen, I, Pema Jungne, the Lotus Born Guru, Have nothing to fear in life or death. How can this supreme vajra-like Being Be affected by any of the eight dangers?<sup>19</sup> Even if the whole world turns against me Why should Pema Jungne fear? If infants are feared by their elders Who can protect our children? I am the refuge of all creatures, And if I cannot protect my dependants How can I guide indifferent people? Therefore, Great King, put away anxiety and pray!

This answer calmed the King's mind, and in council he gave this general directive to all of his subjects:

Listen, my subjects, black, white or coloured. We shall practise the dharma and propagate the dharma, And establish the Buddha's doctrine; The Bon shall not obscure our vision: Obey this decree of your King, the Dharma-Protector. In this Land of Tibet, throughout my realm, The monasteries and meditation centres shall increase and flourish, The sutras and tantras yoked together. If any individual disobeys this decree, He shall be punished for opposing the King and his ministers' order. Further, I advise you to offer hospitality, Offering and confession, to the Venerable Guru of Orgyen.

Having spoken, the King received this response from Takra and Lugong:

Our only sovereign, Lord of Men, Divine Prince, Consider well! Take careful account! Give well-advised counsel, my sovereign! Do not obliterate the traditions of your ancestors. Do not flay the law and traditions of Tibet. Do not destroy the faith of the people. The



happiness of the country depends upon Bon; Without the Swastika Gods, who will protect Tibet? To whom can we pray to raise the flag of Tibet? And where is the best of the King's Consorts, Who is like the very Daughter of Brahma? Where has Yeshe Tsogyel gone? This foreign barbarian sadhu Is surely overstepping his limits. Are you insane, O King? Have you lost your senses? Is your mind wandering? What is the matter? If you are mad, your authority cannot last, And anarchy will prevail. Therefore keep Tsogyel at home, And let the law take care of the foreign devil.

'Eradicate those evil spells or loss will dog your footsteps. It is said, "A chronic internal disease is the cause of ceaseless wailing." So catch the foreign devil and turn him over to the law, and if he tries to escape, kill him! These other ministers support my counsel. This is our unanimous advice. If you do not accept this forceful counsel, I will immediately resign my ministerial office. The pig-headed king is bringing ruin upon the pride of lions, his ministers. Because the king's command carries great weight, whatever he ordains must be suffered. But the ministers' advice also carries authority, and that is decisive.'

The majority of the Bon ministers concurred with this counsel, but the ministers sympathetic to the dharma - Shubu Pelseng, Drugu Ube, Kaba Peltsek, Chokro Lui Gyeltsen, Namkhai Nyingpo, Langdro Lotsawa, Dre (Gyelwa Lodro), Yung and Nub (Sangye Yeshe) and others - spoke like this: 'This evil time portends the dharma's destruction. An unspeakably heinous crime has been prepared against the Master, the Second Buddha. The Emperor, who is like an ethereal jewel, is being disgraced. The Law will not be propagated, and the doctrine will not be established, and furthermore, following the Bon ministers' advice, we will accrue the karma of the five inexpressible sins.<sup>20</sup> Why should we not be ready to die? Therefore, although Tibet may become a desert, we will hold Yeru by force of arms, and whatever happens we will be sure that the Master and his Consort remain safe.' They stopped at that.

Then the Emperor spoke: 'Any minister who fails to show respect or perform service to the Master, who is like the true Vajradhara, and plans this inexpressible crime, will receive punishment nine times as severe as that prepared for the Master. I am the authority in the land.'

Queen Tsepong Za, a daughter of the Tsepong Clan, after inner deliberation sided with the criminal ministers.

Everyone at odds, a bristling quarrel ensued. Then Go the Elder gave the King this advice: 'O God-King, rather than let anarchy loose in Tibet is it not preferable to come to terms with the ministers?'

The King assented, and forthwith he gave this counsel to the evil ministers:

O friends, great ministers of Tibet, In this world there is no greater king than I.

If the king is great, the ministers perforce are powerful; If there is no king, what can the ministers do? So do not try to out-face the king. Is it not better to settle this matter with civil and wise discussion?

The Bon ministers agreed. Then the King spoke to the faction of Buddhist ministers:

Alas! Your cause is harmed by your self-centred zeal. There is no way to atone for a sin accrued for the sake of Truth. No one can harm the Master's indestructible being, So is it not best for the King and his ministers to settle this matter by discussion?

They all agreed with the King, and gathering around him they held an ordered council. They all agreed that for a short time, since it was inopportune for the King to meet with his Master or speak with him, the Master should be sent back to India with a load of gold, and that I, Tsogyel, should be punished by exile to Lhodrak.

We gave the ministers the impression that this would be done, while in fact, we two mystic partners prepared to go to the Tidro grotto in Zhoto. There we would stay unaffected by any malign influences, practising mystic sexual yoga in the cave called the Assembly Hall of the Dakinis, the power place of the Goddess of the Destructive Green Bell.<sup>21</sup> Then before we left Yama Lung the Emperor offered us two kilos of gold dust, seven golden bowls and other gifts, and he received blessing and prophetic injunction from the Guru. Descending from Yama Lung, we hid a cache of teaching-treasures to be revealed in the

future in the throat of a crag that resembled a crow, and we also prepared a prophetic manifest. And it was there that the Twelve Sisters of the Mountain Passes<sup>22</sup> appeared, blazing in light with a white palanquin of light. After we had seated ourselves within, it rose into the sky and sped away. The King and his ministers who had gathered there all gained faith, and from that time the mountain called Okar Drak (White O Crag) was known as Wokar Drak (Whooshing White Crag).

Instantaneously, we found ourselves in Zhoto, where we took up residence in the Great Assembly Hall of the Dakinis at Tidro. Here, I, the girl Tsogyel, prepared a conventional mandala, and prostrating nine times nine made this request:

O Venerable Lord of Orgyen, Having attained a Vajra-like Buddha's Being<sup>23</sup> You have no fear of the devil Lord of Death; Having attained an Illusion-like Buddha's Being You have won the battle against the Godling Devil; Having attained a Rainbow-like Vajra-Being At one stroke you vanquished the devil Embodiment; And having attained the Buddha's Being of Creative Samadhi You have liberated the Devils of Passion as allies. Immortal Lotus Born Guru, Now I have found heartfelt, undivided faith I want to request the ultimate tantra. In Yama Lung spirits of evil oppressed me, But through your compassion, my Lord, Flying through the air we have come to this place. Now through your compassionate understanding, I beg you to reveal the maturing and releasing mandala, And until I, too, gain enlightenment, Please grant me unimpeded grace.

The Great Guru replied:

You are welcome, Daughter of Kharchen. The Mandala of the Ultimate Tantra Like an udumbara<sup>24</sup> lotus flower, Rarely appears, and remains only briefly. Not all of the blessed encounter it, So rare is its blooming. So be glad! Now offer your mystic mandala.

Then without shame or in the manner of the world, gladly and with devotion and humility, I, Tsogyel, prepared the mystic mandala and offered it to my Guru. The radiance<sup>25</sup> of his smile of compassion shone in five-fold rays of light so that the microcosmic universes were

pervaded by clear light, before again the beams of light concentrated in his face. Invoking the deity with the ejaculations DZA! and HUNG! the light descended through his body and his mystical vajra arose in wrath and as Vajra Krodha he united with the serene lotus in absolute harmony. Through the progress of our ecstatic dance of delight, the sun and moon mandalas of we mystic partners' psychic nerves' eight focal points of energy gradually blazed up into intense light, and the essential energy of each of the eight focal points intensified through the four levels of joy as an offering to the hosts of deities of each of the centres. In a state of sheer pleasure, with an intense feeling of power and realisation that was difficult to bear, the Lama revealed the Mandala of the Dakini's Heartdrop (Khandro Nyingtik); he disclosed the personal reality of Mahavajradhara with the Buddha's Five Aspects in union with their Consorts in the mandala of the Guru's Body, and he bestowed upon me the initiation and empowerment of the Guru's Body; the five psychophysical constituents, intrinsically pure, manifest as the Five Buddhas, and the five elements, intrinsically pure, were their Five Consorts. Thus he conferred upon me the method of accomplishing the Buddha's Five Aspects together with initiation and empowerment.

After the Guru had granted me the means of accomplishing the Buddha's Five Serene Aspects, which are regarded as the Outer Guru, together with the Vase Initiation, and having introduced me to the exterior chalice as an immense insubstantial paradise, and the interior elixir as hosts of gods, he instructed me to apply myself to this practice of identification for seven days.

Even as I was enjoined by the Guru, for seven days I practised identification of the exterior chalice<sup>26</sup> as a divine palace and the interior elixir as gods and goddesses, and without need of effort on my part, indeed, the entire environment arose resplendent as the paradise of a god, and all corporeal forms of interior elixir appeared in variegated colours as the Buddha's Five Aspects in union with their Consorts.

After all appearance, irrespective of day or night, had arisen as the actuality of the Buddha's Five Aspects, the Guru told me that it was time to accord me the inner initiation and empowerment, and that I

should prepare to offer the same kind of mandala as before, but seven times over. So with joy and devotion I prepared him the mandala and offered it to him seven times:

In the Ultimate Mandala of Pure pleasure The body's tactile sense is the Sacred Mountain, My four limbs and head are its four satellite continents And the 'lotus' of pure pleasure is the source of both samsara and nirvana; Accept it with compassion for the sake of all beings.

Again the Guru was delighted, and the resonance of his joyful laughter shook the entire three realms,<sup>27</sup> forcefully shaking them up and blowing them apart, and assuming the form of Wong-Drak Pema Heruka, aroused by the terrific laughter of the Heruka's twelve-toned HA HA! HE HE! etc., the Mystic Symbol Heruka himself entered the space of the Lotus Mother. My face became the face of Vajra Varahi and the Guru mandala became the Mandala of Hayagriva, the principal Heruka of innumerable Fierce Buddhas: the Mandala of Hayagriva's Heartdrop was revealed at the coming moment of initiation and empowerment; in the five focal points of the Guru's mandala transformed into Glorious Hayagriva were the Five Buddha Heroes united in harmony with their Dakini Consorts; revealing his personal reality as an iridescent mandala he conferred upon me the empowerment of the Lama's Speech. My own body was transformed into the Body of Vajra Varahi; appearances were inseparable from Hayagriva himself; I intuitively realised the meaning of psychic nerves, energy flows and seedessence;<sup>28</sup> the five passions were transmuted and manifested as the five modes of Awareness: absorbed in the Samadhi of Transcendental Pleasure and Emptiness, I received the Mystic Initiation, attained the eighth degree of enlightenment, and received immediately the means of identifying with the Guru and his Consort in union as Hayagriva.

So after the Guru had granted me the means to accomplish the Yidam, which is considered to be the Inner Guru, at the same time as the Inner, the Mystic Initiation and Empowerment, and after he had introduced me to my own body as a divine mandala, and to psychic nerves, energy flows and seed essence as deity, mantra and mahamudra respectively, he instructed me to practise for three or seven

days.29

Obeying the Guru's instruction, sealing my body as a lighted butter-lamp, I applied myself to meditation until Awareness, the value of the initiation, had become strong. Initially, I was oppressed by anxiety, but later the sounds of the syllables in the focal points of the psychic nerves resonated spontaneously; I gained full awareness and perfect control of my vital breath and energy flows, and instinctive and immediate knowledge of how to employ them; I attained intuition of the meaning of seedessence as mahamudra; and the potential of the warmth of transcendent delight was fully realised. Thereafter, the capricious movements of karmic energy<sup>30</sup> subsided, the energy of Awareness injected into the medial nerve; and a few signs of mastery occurred.

However, the Guru enjoined me 'not to eat the barley until it was ripe', that my initiations were not yet complete. So with greater faith in Guru Rimpoche than the Buddha himself, I addressed him thus:

O Venerable Orgyen Rimpoche, Superior to the Buddhas past, present and future, To myself and other mean and lowly beings I beg you to grant the Supreme Initiation.

Then the Guru appeared as the mandala of the Red Heruka, and from the syllable HUNG in his heart extremely fierce beams of red light radiating and again concentrating in his mandala, he took up the Absolute Heruka in his hand like a spear, and he replied:

RAM HAM<sup>31</sup> Listen without distraction, Dakini Tsogyelma, Queen Kuntuzangmo, listen attentively. If you wish the seed to infuse your inner mandala, Offer your mandala of mystic delight. If you speak of this method your samaya is broken.

I, the girl Tsogyel, sank beneath mundane appearances, and having slipped into the nakedness of pure pleasure, I annointed my mandala of delight with the five sacred substances,<sup>32</sup> and made further petition:

Buddha Hero of Pure Pleasure, do as you will. Guru and Lord of Pure Pleasure, With true energy and joy, I implore you to inject The seed into the inner mandala. And I will guard the secret of the method with

my life.

Then with three fingers stirring the pollen dust of the lotus, I offered my mandala to the mandala of the Guru's Body with an intense snake-like dance. The mandala of dynamic space having gathered into itself the nature of the Great Pema Heruka himself by means of the hook of the lower member's focal point, the Absolute Heruka, his magnificent flaming vajra in a state of rapacity and violent abuse, his wrinkles uncreased, projecting his full emanation, took command of the lotus throne with a roar of scornful laughter that flooded appearances with glory, transmuting them into pure pleasure. Thus he revealed to me the Mandala of the Blazing Sun of Radiant Inner Space, conferring power upon me.

In this mandala of mystic union, Skilful Means and Insight, in this radiant mandala of Pure Being and Light Seed - the Pure Being of the Sublime Pure Land of the Four Herukas, the masters of the four focal points, and the Light Seed that is the actuality of a hundred million seed syllables - I was conferred the initiation and empowerment of the four joys.<sup>33</sup>

Out of the bliss-waves of the forehead centre of our union, in the sphere of intense experience of Awareness of joy, arose a white paradise divided into thirty-two lesser pure lands. In each of these pure lands was a white Heruka in mystic union with his Consort surrounded by hundreds of thousands, an incalculable number, of Herukas and their Consorts identical to the principal. In the centre of this vast mandala was the Master of all the Herukas, the principal Heruka and Consort into whose Awareness of joy I received initiation. Through this joy the passion of anger was purified, the body cleansed of all traces of habitual action and reaction patterns, insight was gained into the elements of the path of application," and I was enabled to act for the benefit of the seven worlds of the ten directions. At this level I was conferred the secret initiatory name, Tsogyel the White Goddess of Pure Pleasure (Dechen Karmo Tsogyel).

Accordingly, in the throat centre was a yellow paradise divided into sixteen pure lands in each of which was a yellow Heruka in union with his Consort surrounded by hundreds of thousands of identical Herukas

as in the forehead centre. In the middle of this mandala was the master of all the yellow Herukas, Ratna Vira and Consort, from whom I received initiation into all the infinite potentialities of superior joy. Thus the passion of desire was purified, all traces of action and reaction patterns were eradicated, and I gained insight into all the elements of the path of accumulation, obtaining the ability to assist the twenty worlds of the ten directions. Here, I received the secret name Tsogyel the Quality Increasing Yellow Goddess (Yonten Gyeje Sermo Tsogyel).

In the same way, in the blue-black paradise of the heart centre comprised of eight lesser pure lands were eight blue-black Herukas in union with their Consorts surrounded by innumerable likenesses as above. In the centre was the master of all the blue-black Herukas, the principal Heruka, Buddha Vira and Consort, who initiated me into the mahamudra of supreme joy. Thus all the seeds of passion inherent in the mind were eradicated, and I gained insight into the elements of the path of liberation and the ability to assist the twenty-six worlds of the ten directions. I was given the name, Liberating Samaya Tsogyel (Drolje Damtsik Tsogyel) at this time.

Accordingly, in the red paradise of the gut centre, in the sixty-one lesser pure lands, were sixty-one Herukas in mystic union with their Consorts, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of identical forms, in the centre of which was the principal of them all, the Red Heruka and Consort, into whose Awareness of innate joy I received initiation. Thereby, all traces of emotional clinging and the action and reaction patterns of undifferentiated body, speech and mind were eradicated, and with insight into the elements of the path of utter purity I gained ability to benefit the infinite unbounded universe. Here, I received the secret name, Boundless Awareness Tsogyel (Taye Yeshe Tsogyel).

Then the Guru instructed me to practise in this manner: 'In the Ultimate Mandala of the Four Joys bestow upon yourself the four initiations and empowerments into the four levels of Awareness for seven days. Then visualise the ascent of "love" as Awareness.'<sup>35</sup>

So maintaining unimpaired the progression of the four joys through the love-Awareness that is the value of this initiation, my experience



intensified, increasing from height to height. If there is leakage of bodhicitta, the Buddha Unchanging Light is slain, and since there is no superior presence to whom such a crime can be acknowledged and thus atoned, such karma as that of the Avici Hell results.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, with the power of retraction, drawing up 'love' with the base energy of life-force, I held it in the pot of my belly,<sup>37</sup> and maintaining the recollection of pleasure uncontaminated by lust, divesting myself of mindcreated samadhi yet not slipping into an instant of torpor, I experienced the ascent of Awareness.

Binding recollection of the bodhicitta in the womb's lotus, all ignorance was purified, and suppressing the thousand and eighty movements of karmic energy at the first juncture the Awareness of the dual omniscience of quantity and quality became the path of seeing, and I attained the first degree of enlightenment and certain extra-sensory powers emerged. Then the bodhicitta was drawn up and bound in the secret energy centre and motivation and volition were purified, and inhibiting the energy flows of the second juncture I gained the second degree. Then binding the bodhicitta between the secret and the gut centres consciousness was purified, and blocking the energy flows of the third juncture I gained the third degree. In the same way, the bodhicitta bound at the gut centre, name and form were purified, and when the energy flows of the fourth juncture had been stopped I attained the fourth degree; and the mind capable of both samsara and nirvana, and Awareness and innate joy, purified, I accomplished the Buddha's essentiality of being.<sup>38</sup> Binding the bodhicitta between the gut and the heart cakras the six sensefields were purified, and the energies of the fifth juncture blocked I attained the fifth degree. Then binding the bodhicitta in the heart centre, purifying sensory contact, the energy flows of the sixth juncture were stopped and I reached the sixth degree; ordinary sleeping mind and special joy purified, I attained the goal of the Buddha's absolute, empty being. Between the heart and the throat centres the bodhicitta was bound and feeling was purified, and stopping the energy flows of the seventh juncture I reached the seventh degree. Then binding the bodhicitta in the throat centre purifying craving and clinging, the energy flows of the eighth juncture stopped I reached the eighth degree; dream and supreme joy purified, I reached the goal of the Buddha's being of consummate visionary enjoyment. Binding the bodhicitta between the throat and

forehead centres sensual enthrallment was purified, and inhibiting the energies of the ninth juncture I attained the ninth degree. Binding the bodhicitta in the forehead centre transmigratory existence was purified, and obstructing energy outflow at the tenth juncture I attained the tenth degree; when consciousness of the five sensory doors upon waking from sleep, the body's veins and nerves and Awareness of joy had been purified I reached the goal of the Buddha's stainless apparitional being. Then binding the bodhicitta between the forehead and the crown centres rebirth was purified, and the energy flows of the eleventh juncture contained I reached the eleventh degree. Then retracting and binding the bodhicitta at the crown centre the entire twelve interdependent elements of samsara, including old age and death, were purified, and stopping the twentyone thousand energy flows of the twelfth juncture, lust, sleep, dream and waking - the four impure states of mind - were purified, and having purified the mind's psychic nerves, energy flows and seedessence, together with the four joys, I reached the twelfth degree.

Thus I was endowed with the Buddha's Pure Being and all the qualities of Buddha: I was transformed into the Pure Being that functions to imbue all creatures of the infinite universe with the value and meaning of existence, and I gained the innate ability to understand and employ any of the qualities of Buddha at will.

Within six months I had attained the purpose of the three initiations, and my Guru instructed me further:

Human woman and Dakini, Maiden with perfectly matured body, A fortunate body endowed with the ten and twice times six conditions of ease,<sup>39</sup> An enduring and courageous body,

Great Mother of Wisdom, Sarasvati, Sow-faced Dakini, Mistress of the Mysteries, Now that the elixir of self and others has brewed, And the door of the maturing mysteries has been opened to you, O Great Being, take a consort!<sup>40</sup>

But I prepared a ganacakra offering with my body and possessions, and rendered it to Guru Rimpoche with this petition:

Venerable Lord of Orgyen, Skull-Garland Skill, Stem of the Mysteries, Vajradhara, Your vast generosity is beyond gratitude; Whatsoever will give you joy I swear to give you heedless of body or life. Please grant me the final initiation, The Word Empowerment of Dzokchen - Let the Guru confer the Fourth today!

'The time is not ripe for you to practise the effortless method of Ati,' Guru Rimpoche replied. 'Persist in your practice on the path of the mahayana mysteries. Now, girl, without a consort, a partner of skilful means, there is no way that you can experience the mysteries of Tantra. It is rather like this: if a pot is unfired it will not bear usage; in an area without wood a fire will not burn; if there is no moisture to sustain growth it is useless to plant a seedling. So go to the Valley of Nepal where there is a sixteen-year-old youth with a mole on his right breast, who is an emanation of the Buddha Hero Hayagriva called Atsara Sale. He has wandered there from Serling in India. Find him, and make him your ally, and you will soon discover the realm of pure pleasure.'

So, having received my Guru's prophetic injunction, with a golden begging bowl and a pound of gold dust, I set out alone for the Valley of Nepal. In the district of Erong I encountered seven thieves. They sought to steal my gold, and followed me like dogs stalking a deer. I invoked my Guru and visualised the thieves as my Yidam, and conceiving the perfect plan of rendering my possessions as a mandala offering, I sang to them inspired:

O seven Yidam of Erong, It is fortunate to meet you here today. So that I may attain Buddhahood And fulfil the wishes of sentient beings Let karmic misadventure be swiftly transformed. To discover, fortuitously, the Lama's compassion - How truly marvellous! Happy thoughts arising from within May people find freedom through generosity.

Then placing my hands together in reverence, I arranged the gold in a pile as if it was a mandala. The seven thieves, though not understanding a single word, touched by the melody of my song, stood staring at me like statues, transported to the first level of samadhi. Then, in the Newar language, they asked, 'Venerable Lady, what is your country? Who is your father? Who is your mother? Who is your

Lama? What are you doing here? Please sing us another divine song!

As they made this request, the hairs of their bodies that had bristled in aggression lay down, a wreath of happy smiles signified their satisfaction, their malicious twisted faces became serene, and their pleasure showed in garlands of teeth. Gathering in front of me they sat down. I had a bamboo cane with three joints in it, and leaning upon it I replied in their Newar tongue:

You seven thieves with whom I have previous karmic connection,  
Know that aggression and malice are Mirror-like Awareness itself -  
Radiance and clarity have no other source Than a hostile mind filled  
with anger and enmity. Look into your anger And there is the strength  
of Diamond Being, Vajrasattva! Detached from appearances, you are  
purified in Emptiness. This maiden's fatherland is Overflowing Joy,  
Serene Fields of Emptiness and Visionary Pleasure; I am no stickler  
for conventional names and forms So if your favoured lady's fair land  
appeals to you, I will lead you there.

You seven thieves with whom I have previous karmic connection,  
Know that pride and vain complacency are Awareness of Sameness -  
Primal purity in meditative composure cannot be found Except in an  
ambitious mind that believes itself supreme. Look into natural purity  
And there is a Fountain of Jewels, Ratnasambhava! Detached from the  
state of Emptiness, lightform is pure. This maiden's father is that  
source of every gratification, He is the wishfulfilling gem itself; I am  
no glutton for the illusory chattels of wealth So if you think you would  
like the old man I will part with him.

You seven thieves with whom I have previous karmic connection,  
Know that desire and covetousness are Discriminating Awareness -  
You will find fine sensory distinction in no other place Than a mind  
hungering for beautiful things, wanting the whole world. Look into the  
intrinsic freshness of your desire And there is Boundless Light,  
Amitabha! Detached from radiance, your pleasure is purified. This  
maiden's mother is Boundless Light And in her is pure pleasure  
unlimited; I am no votary of the quality of feeling So if this old lady  
appeals to you I will give her away.

You seven thieves with whom I have previous karmic connection,  
Know that envy and alienation are All-Accomplishing Awareness -  
Efficiency and success have no other source Than a bigoted mind that  
is quick to judge and holds a grudge. Look behind jealous thoughts  
And there is immediate success, Amoghasiddhi!

Detached from crass envy and subtle resentments, whatever occurs is  
pure. This maiden's Lama is Every Purpose Spontaneously  
Accomplished, The Lama whose every action is invariably  
consummated; So because I am no slave to the sphere of my work If  
you want this Lama I will abandon him to you.

You seven thieves with whom I have previous karmic connection,  
Know that ignorance and stupidity are Awareness of Dynamic Space -  
There is no other way to hold fast to the path Than through ignorance  
and a dense understanding. Look into ignorance And there is Dynamic  
Visionary Panorama, Vairocana! Detached from hypnotic states,  
whatever arises is pure. This maiden's beloved is Visionary Panorama  
And I love that ultimate consort, the Illuminator; And since I am no  
adherent of the duality of vision and viewer, If you desire my service I  
will show you the way.

The thieves were filled with undivided faith, and they felt repelled  
by the wheel of rebirth. They begged instruction and precepts from  
me, and then gained release from samsara. They begged me insistently  
to come to their country, but I refused and continued on my way.

At the great stupa of Jarung Khashor,<sup>41</sup> which had been built by  
three Monpa boys long ago, I offered a handful of gold dust and then  
made this wishfulfilling prayer:

OM AH HUNG! In the Valley of Nepal, Pure Land of Conquering  
Buddhas, Lord of All Creatures, Symbol of the Buddha's Absolute  
Being, Stand for as long as time itself, Turning the wheel of the  
ultimate law To liberate beings from the ocean of confusion.

With your guiding power, O Lord, Lead all beings, embodied and  
disembodied, Out of the land of slavery into the exalted realm of  
freedom.

The myriad rays of light radiated out of the stupa forming a cloud-like mist, and from within this cloud Guru Rimpoche surrounded by the Abbot Santaraksita, King Trisong Detsen and many Dakinis, spoke to me:

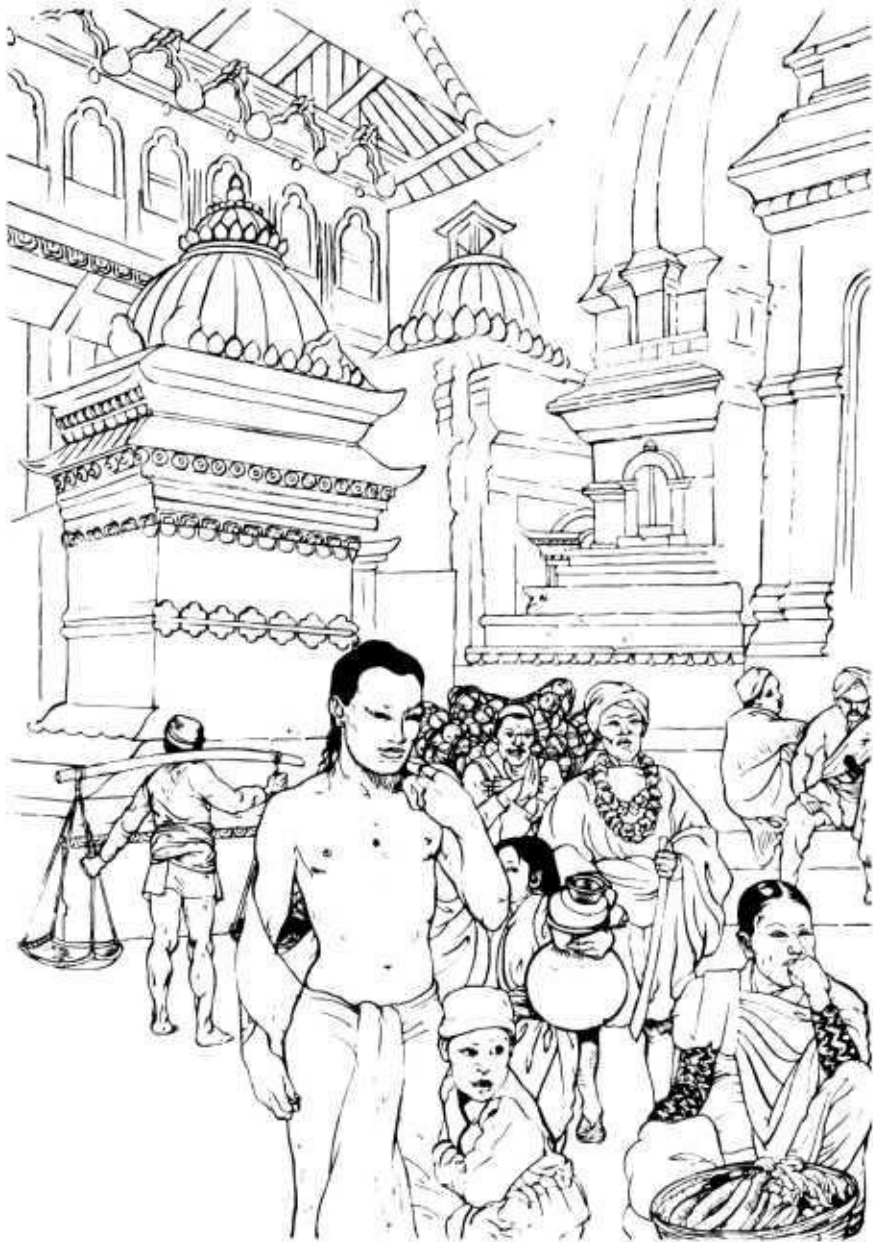
Listen, Daughter of Kharchen! With exemplary conduct, with forbearance from anger, Goddess of Great Insight, guiding men out of samsara, Through liberality releasing them, going to the end of endurance, May you traverse the paths and stages of meditation. Now do not wander here for long. Return to Tibet with the consort you need, And again I will reveal the profound tantric mysteries.

Having delivered this prophetic injunction,<sup>42</sup> the Guru vanished.

Wandering slowly, since I had no precise knowledge of the whereabouts of the object of my search, I found myself in the neighbourhood of the large market-place near the southern gate of the city of Bhaktapur (Khokhom-han). There a youth boldly approached me. He was handsome and attractive and a red mole on his chest threw out brilliant lustre. His front teeth were like evenly matched slates of conch and his four incisors were like white conches that spiralled clockwise. His intelligent eyes were haloed with a red tint, his nose was pointed and his eyes azure. His thick hair curled to the right and his fingers were webbed like a duck's feet.

'Lady, from where have you come?' he enquired in the language of Serling. 'Have you come to set me free?'

O Listen attentively, charming boy and consort! I have come from Central Tibet And I am the Venerable Pema Jungne's Lady. What is your name? Where is your homeland? And what are you doing here?



The boy answered:

I am from India, from the village of Serling. A Hindu sadhu stole me from my parent's bosom And sold me as a servant to a citizen of this land. My parents named me Ayra Sale, And I have lived here seven years as a servant.

While he was speaking a crowd of the town's traders gathered, mesmerised by my face, and then spontaneously they asked me to sing to them, offering me money if I pleased them. So I sang them this song:

**NAMO GURU PEMA SIDDHI HRI!**

**In the vast sky of Glorious Kuntuzangpo<sup>43</sup>**

**The sun of Dzokchen shines in pure space,**

**Bathing all beings of the six realms, our mothers, in light –**

**Is this not our father, Pema Jungne?**

**His space is unalterable *vajra*-fields,**

**His being is unborn and undying compassion,**

**His *karma* is neither good nor bad, Buddhahood attained –**

**Is this not our father, Pema Jungne?**

**Her home is the Highest Paradise, the Tidro Grotto,**

**The *Dākinī* inspired by Pema's compassion,**

**And she bestows delight upon all who relate to her –**

**Is this not the Lady Yeshe Tsogyel?**

**To this Land of Nepal, arisen in vision,**

**A sublime mystic partner has come,**

**And the boy with fit *karma* must leave with me –**

**Am I not Tsogyel, the provider?**

The crowd could not understand the meaning of my song, but they listened insatiably to the tone and melody, calling me the Dakini of Sweet Song. I accompanied Atsara Sale to his lodging, and that evening, left sitting on the doorstep, I was interrogated by Sale's owner.

'Where are you from? What are you doing here?' she asked me.

I related the relevant parts of my story, and concluded, 'The Guru Pema Jungne has sent me here to ransom Atsara Sale. So it is propitious for you to let me redeem him.'

'Although Sale is a servant, he is like a son to me,' she replied. 'And since we paid a great sum of gold for him, we will not free him. But if



you are so inclined you can stay here together with him. It would be quite satisfactory to me if you both stayed here in service.'

I replied:

Wherever the sun's *maṇḍala* shines  
Shadows of gloom disappear;  
When the sun has set stars appear  
But tomorrow the sun will shine again.  
Wherever a wish-fulfilling gem is found  
The need for gold disappears;  
Where there is no gem, gold is coveted  
But ever after the gem again is sought.  
Whenever a perfected Buddha appears  
There is no need of a consort;  
When the Buddha has gone depend upon a consort,  
For thereafter Means and Insight should unite.  
When my goal has been reached  
I will no longer have need of Sale,  
But now I need a partner to illuminate the path.<sup>44</sup>  
Therefore, at any cost, I must ransom him.  
Please name your price.

The household - mother, father and son - were captivated by my song, and they invited me inside where they served me a sumptuous meal. 'After you have freed this boy will you marry him? What will you do?' asked my hostess. 'You seem to be a girl of high principles. You are attractive. So if you wish, I will set you up with Sale.'

'Atsara Sale appeared in a vision to Pema Jungne, and he is required for a sacred purpose,' I repeated. 'I have gold for the ransom, and in every way it is propitious for you to set him free.'

'How much gold do you have?' asked Sale's owner. 'I bought him for

five hundred gold coins, and now his value is much greater.'

'I will give you whatever you ask,' I replied. 'I must have him.' But when I had weighed my gold dust I found I had no more than the equivalent of one hundred coins. 'Now what should I do?' I asked.

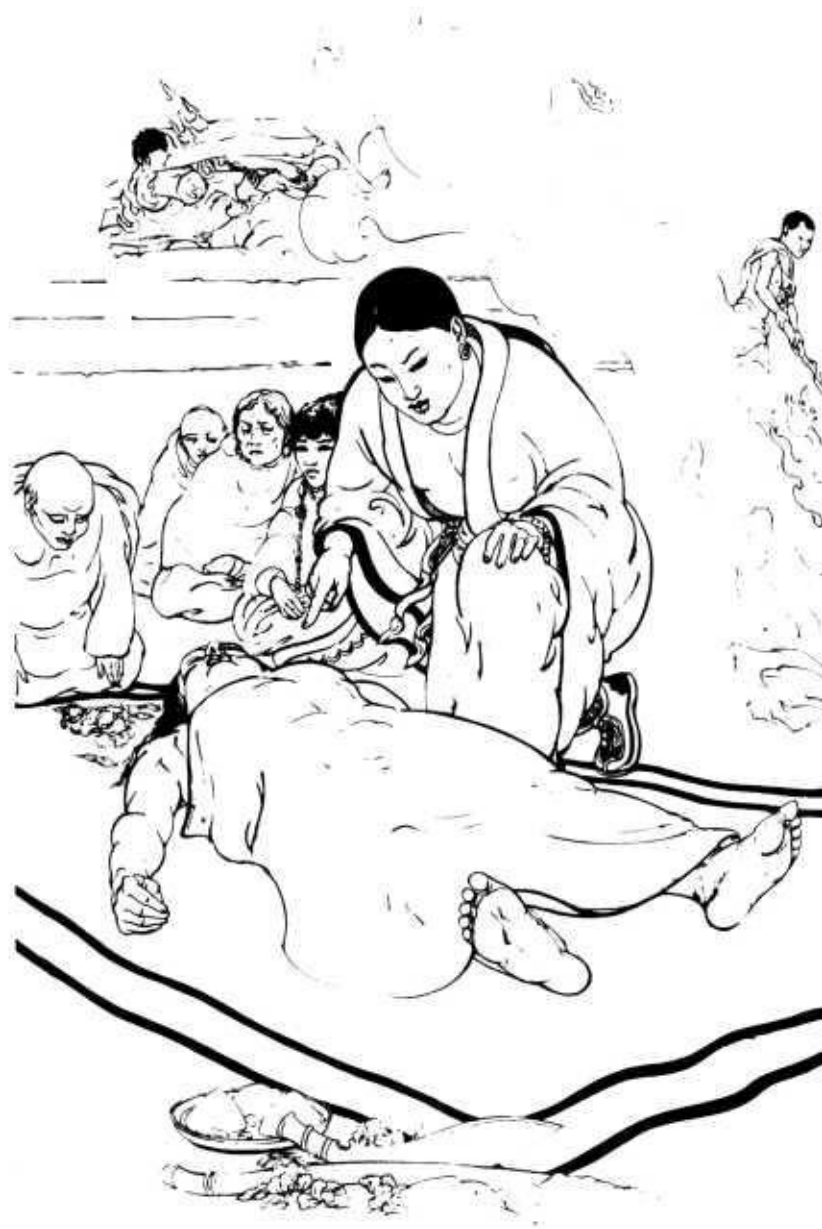
'I will let him go,' the lady said, 'but I must have gold. With such an amount you can't even buy one of Sale's arms. There is nothing you can do except find more gold.'

At this time there was a war in progress in Nepal, and amongst the citizens of Bhaktapur there was a man of incalculable wealth, a merchant called Dana Ayu whose twenty-yearold son called Naga had been killed in the fighting. His parents had brought his body home where they paid it inordinate homage. They were bowed with grief, vowing that they would immolate themselves on the same pyre as their son. I felt unbearable compassion for them, and approaching them I said, 'There is no cause for so much grief. In this city lives a youth called Atsara Sale, and if you will give me the large sum of gold that I need to release him from service, I will restore your son to life.'

The couple were overjoyed. 'If you can bring our son back to life we will even ransom a prince for you. But is it really possible?'

After they had agreed to give me whatever gold was required for Sale's ransom in return for resurrecting their son, I took a large white silk cloth, and folding it in half and half again, I covered the corpse up to the chin. Then I sang:

OM ĀH HŪNG GURU SARVA HRĪ!  
The universal ground is Kuntuzangpo,  
Undeluded, primally pure,  
And the path is manifold apparitional form,  
Emanation of the six kinds of beings,<sup>45</sup>  
Where positive or negative karmic action  
Causes certain inevitable results.  
Knowing this, why persist in folly?  
I am a *yoginī*, Mistress of the Tantra,  
Embraced by the compassion of Pema Jungne,  
And neither life nor death holds terror for me.  
Instantly I can remove the afflictions of others.  
Now pray and grace will flow!



Pointing my finger at the heart of the corpse, it began to glow with increasing intensity, and letting a drop of saliva fall into the dead man's mouth from my own, in his ear I intoned, 'AYU JNANA BHRUM!' Then I annointed his deep knife wounds with my hands, and his body was made entirely whole again. The youth's awareness became clearer and clearer, until, finally, he was fully conscious. In delighted astonishment all who were witness to this miracle prostrated before

me. The parents in their joy embraced and wept over their son restored to his original strength. With very generous gifts they offered a ganacakra feast to me, and ransomed Atsara Sale for a thousand pieces of gold and presented him to me.

My reputation spread throughout the kingdom. The king himself offered me his hospitality and gave me respect and honour, begging me to remain there as his priestess. But I refused, and departed with my consort for the E Temple in Kathmandu. There we met a spiritual son of Guru Perna called Vasudhara. We offered him a golden bowl and some gold dust, and as an equal I asked him for teaching and secret precepts. Knowing that I was Guru Pema's Consort, Vasudhara was extremely solicitous, giving me all respect and honour. In his turn he asked me for teaching and secret precepts, and I granted whatever he desired.

We then visited ~akya Dema, Jila Jipha and others at Asura and Yanglesho, giving them presents of gold. I sang this song to ~akya Dema:

**My Guru's only Consort, sister in the Tantra,  
Please listen to Tsogyel of Tibet.  
The mind's nature an inexhaustible fountain of every desire,  
Impartial dispensation of every requirement,  
That is the generosity of Tsogyel of Tibet.  
Mind unblemished, free of public and private vows,  
With careful awareness that keeps proper conduct,  
That is the morality of Tsogyel of Tibet.  
Mind unbiased, free of pleasure, pain and indifference,  
With patience enduring the good with the bad in every  
situation,  
That is the forbearance of Tsogyel of Tibet.  
Mind a continuum like a river's flow,**

With continuous endeavour cultivating empty delight,  
That is the perseverance of Tsogyel of Tibet.  
Mind a union of creation and fulfilment whatever arises,  
With fixation upon *mahāmudrā*,<sup>46</sup>  
That is the meditation of Tsogyel of Tibet.  
Mind a continuum of Awareness, immanent pure pleasure,  
Serving a consort of Skilful Means, Insight transcending  
perfection,  
That is the perfect insight of Tsogyel of Tibet.  
Well-born Śākya Dema, whatever precepts you possess,  
Please share them with me, your sister in truth.

Sakya Dema was rapturous, and answered:

You are welcome, sister, my own Guru's Consort,  
But I possess very few secret precepts.  
Through Venerable Orgyen Saṃbhava's compassion  
I received the secret teaching we need in life and death:  
Creative and fulfilment processes united, *mahāmudrā*,  
Clear light and magical illusion emanating – such precepts I  
possess,  
And now the womb called the *bar-do* is barren:  
That is the instruction of Śākya Dema of Nepal.  
I received the secret instruction we need in transition and dying:  
Employing the vital breath's energy to purify the medial nerve,  
The mystic heat, the syllable A, the blazing and dripping<sup>47</sup> –  
such precepts I possess,  
And now in transition and death I am fearless:  
That is the instruction of Śākya Dema of Nepal.  
I received the secret instruction using passion as the path:  
Using Means and Insight's seed-essence, cultivating empty  
delight,  
To generate the four joys' Awareness<sup>48</sup> – such precepts I  
possess,  
And now I am fearless though legions of hostile passions arise:  
That is the instruction of Śākya Dema of Nepal.  
I received the secret instruction we need in slothful sleep:<sup>49</sup>  
Relying on the teaching of Dzokchen, purifying dream,  
To enter the sanctum of clear light – such precepts I possess,  
And now I am fearless if engulfed in an aeon of darkness;

That is the instruction of Śākya Dema of Nepal.  
I received the secret instruction we need in the experience of  
ultimate reality:  
Utilising the six lamps, cultivating the clear light,  
To maximise the four convictions<sup>50</sup> – such precepts I possess,  
And now I am fearless though the Buddha turns hostile:  
That is the instruction of Śākya Dema of Nepal.  
And now I ignore cause and effect, the stages and the paths,  
For instant by instant the manifest Buddha is accomplished.  
The ultimate attainment is supremely wonderful!  
Now whatever instruction you possess, accomplished sister,  
Share it with me, this ready vessel.

Then our finite minds united in the Buddha's mind, we exchanged precepts and instruction. Thereafter, I returned to Tibet with my consort.

Leaving Nepal we entered Tsang, and then proceeding to Tidro we stayed in the Assembly Hall of the Dakinis. We were provided for and honoured by the patrons of the district, though a number of gossips maligned me: 'The Lady Tsogyel has been seduced by the devil. She doesn't practise worship such as that of Guru Pema now that she has found this vagrant Indian yogi.'

On the tenth day of the moon I celebrated worship and offering, revealing the Mandala of the Lama's Secret Communion.<sup>51</sup> At the juncture in the rite where I performed the invocation, Orgyen Guru himself appeared, riding on a sunbeam. I was jubilant but touched with guilt, and with extreme emotion I fell down to the ground in homage, before entreating him in this manner:



Alas, O compassionate Guru!  
I am an ignorant woman, a creation of delusion,  
Lost in negative *karma*. Embrace me with your compassion!  
Now cleanse every evil state.  
Never leave me, Lord. Be kind!  
The object of my journey to Nepal is accomplished –  
I found the youth Āyra Sale without mistake.  
Now I beg you for entry into the mysteries,  
And with compassion dispel the obstacles on my path.

Radiating joy, smiling, the Guru answered:

O Daughter of Kharchen,  
Faithful One, listen attentively!  
If with your body you wish to cross over  
This boundless ocean of *samsāra*,  
Rely upon a qualified Lama as captain,  
Board the boat Oral Transmission,  
Hoist the great sail of secret precepts,  
Send out the course-setting crew of instruction,  
Destroy leviathan obstructions with the conch,<sup>52</sup>  
Ballast with lead against adverse winds of *karma*,  
Make full sail with the fair winds of faith,  
Plug leaks in the pure white *samaya*,  
And with the sudden breaking of the wave of maturity and  
release,  
Cast up upon a serendipitous isle,  
Enjoy the abundance of whatever you desire,  
Delighting in a vision replete with jewels,  
Contented in the disappearance of matter and mortality,  
Now relaxing in the dawning of permanent pleasure.

And he continued, 'What hardships did you encounter? Did you have an easy journey? How long did it take you?'

I related in detail the vicissitudes of the road, the problem of gold in Nepal and how I restored a man to life to obtain the necessary thousand pieces of gold.

'Good! Good!' said the Guru. 'Whatever hardship you suffered is beneficial. It purifies all kinds of karmic obscuration. You lack the devotion of a woman who loves her husband, so although the price you paid for Sale was high the bargain was fair. You have accrued boundless merit. You are free of the clinging of a lustful woman. But the power to resurrect a dead man and so on is merely mundane siddhi, so do not be conceited. Your consort is called Exalted (Ayra) because he is superior to others. And because his price was paid in gold he is called Golden Light.'<sup>53</sup>

Atsara Sale was brought to spiritual maturity through disclosure of the Mandala of the Guru's Blessing.<sup>14</sup> I, myself, was the mainstay of the initiation. Thereafter, Atsara's maturity led to further spiritual development, and established on the path of liberation, having gained emancipating comprehension of both provisional and ultimate teaching, the Guru assigned him to me as my ally and consort. After exhorting us to practise until we had gained mastery of the Tantra, the Guru departed for Lhodrak.

I and my spiritual son ensconced in a corner of the meditation grotto (which came to be called Tsogyel's Secret Cave) were completely hidden from view, and for seven months we cultivated the nature of the four joys. At the end of this session I found that I could pass unimpeded through any material object whatsoever, and that my body was unaffected by ageing, frailty or disease, *etc.* In short I had gained control over the five elements. Further, as the four joys manifest, I gained the Buddha's four modes of being.<sup>55</sup>

Thereafter, the Guru returned and stayed in the great cave at Tidro, for it was time to turn the wheel of the Buddha's teaching. Previously, Guru Rimpoche had initiated the Dharma Protector, King Trisong Detsen, into several tantric mandalas, including the Single Yamantaka, the Single Hayagriva, the Single Lamp of Yangdak, the Single Tindle Phurba, the Single Dudtsi Tod and the Single Mamo.<sup>56</sup> The King had practised the rites of visualisation and recitation,<sup>57</sup> and various

miraculous signs and marks of accomplishment had appeared. He had gained deep faith, and he decided to ask for many of the more profound teachings of the tantras. Therefore he sent Shubu Pelseng, Gyatsa Lhanang and Ma Rinchen Chok with presents of gold for the Guru and his Consort with an invitation for them to visit Samye. Arriving at the Tidro Assembly Hall they approached the Guru and delivered their message:

O Guru and Dākinīs, mystic partners,  
We are the Tibetan King's speed-walkers.  
The sole God-king of Tibet, Trisong Detsen,  
Resolved to establish the Tantra, the most profound, ultimate  
vehicle,  
Invites you to Samye.  
Consider us with kindness and come quickly.

After offering him the gifts of gold, they waited for his reply:

Three loyal speed-walkers,  
Three blessed sons, you are welcome.  
I am Pema Jungne,  
My residence is the human world,  
My purpose is the same as the Buddhas,  
And my emanation encompasses the world.  
The Emperor's aspiration is exemplary;  
Now the message of the *tantras* will spread.

The Guru and Consort, their spiritual son and the three speedwalkers departed for Samye together. At Zhodro the Guru told the three speedwalkers, who would later become translators, to ride on ahead to the King, so that he could prepare a welcome for we three who would follow. The King's three courtiers, arriving at Samye, told the King the story of the Master's coming, and that he was expected to go out to meet him.

The Tibetan ministers, having heard of the Guru's imminent arrival, conferred: 'This man Perna Jungne is like space - he is everywhere but nowhere; he is like a river - weapons cannot harm him; he is like fire - his body glows with lustre; he is like the wind - he cannot be bound; he appears to be a real human being and at the same time he seems disembodied. So for the present we will abandon our nefarious designs and agree with everything that the King proposes. However, when our wretched Queen arrives, if we fail to make an example of her, ultimately the government's authority will be lost.'

Guru Rimpoche was well aware of their intentions. 'What is known as the Tantra implies facility in many, diverse skilful means,' he said. Then straightaway he transformed me, in the minds of others, into a three-pronged trident (khatvahga). And we proceeded into Tibet proper.

The representative of the King, Takra Gungtsen, with a hundred mounted ministers as envoy of welcome, greeted us at Zhoda, and from there we made our way to Samye. In front of the Great Stupa the King, his ministers and his entourage gave us a royal welcome. The King prostrated to the Guru and made a gift of a golden pot wrapped in white silk and filled with fresh white chung.

The Guru made this pronouncement: 'At this moment the Tantra has the vital potency of youth. In the future its promise will not be fulfilled. Its practice will be confused and perverted.'

Then we made our way up to the Utse Pagoda where the courtiers remarked that I was absent, and that an Indian sadhu was attending the Guru. 'If Tsogyel is not here, this opportunity to receive the Tantra will be lost,' thought the King. 'She is certainly not here now. I will ask Guru Rimpoche where she is, and because I long to encounter her again, searching for her I will insist upon inviting her.' And aloud he said to the Guru, 'O Great Guru, where is Tsogyel at present? Why has she not come here? Is this Indian sadhu a disciple of yours? What instruction has he received?'

The Guru smiled at him, and replied:

O King and Bodhisattva,  
My manifestation has the nature of space,  
And a space-master's magical powers are limitless;  
Tsogyel has dissolved into the vastness of inner space,  
Even now she stands at the junction of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*.  
My manifestation is a fountain of instruction,  
My every movement appears as instruction;  
Tsogyel has entered the immensity of my empty being,  
Her present abode is the realm of Kuntuzangmo.  
My manifestation is empty delight  
And my desire for any empty illusion is spontaneously fulfilled;  
Tsogyel has vanished into the expanse of empty delight,  
Her present abode is the Citadel of Delight, the Buddha's three  
modes of being.

Thereupon the Guru touched his tridents which turned into myself. The King was exceedingly amazed. This miracle was seen by the Bonpo Queen Tsepong Za and others. The Queen reported it to the ministers. 'This Indian master is full of surprises. He hid Tsogyel in a trident!' Some ministers were lost in astonishment, but the majority agreed that what the Queen said did not ring true, that it was impossible to contain even one hand in a trident, and although it must have been magical illusion that the Queen saw, it was no less wonderful for that. All that they had been plotting was set aside for the moment, and most of the courtiers gained great faith in the Guru.

Thereafter, the King, twentyone of his courtiers, thirty-two acolytes, seven Dakini ladies of high birth, and others, totalling three hundred and five, went to the retreat house of Chimphu Gewa. And there the Guru revealed to us one hundred and twenty mandalas of the Ultimate Tantra, and confirmed the initiates in spiritual maturity and release. Specifically, he gave us the precepts of the Eight Logos Deities, and of Mamo, Yamantaka, Phurba, Dudtsi Yonten, The Communion of the Lama's Mind, The Communion of the Yidam's Mind, The Wrathful and Peaceful Deities of Illusory Emanation, The Wrathful and Peaceful Deities of Yangdak's Mandala, and The Wrathful and Peaceful Deities of Padma Sung's Mandala. And again, in particular, sixty-one Heartdrop precepts, the Seven Divisions of Mind Communion, eleven

concise and extensive precepts of the Eight Logos Deities, one hundred and two Mind Accomplishment precepts, seventy-six secret precepts and one hundred and thirty direct transmissions of tantra. To the King he gave the seven root methods of accomplishment of Dudtse Yonten and twenty secret precepts, and then he told him to practise them, giving him certain visionary indications. To Namkhai Nyingpo of Nub he gave the methods of accomplishment of the Nine Lamps of Yangdak, and the precepts for the Twenty Black Phurba Demonslayer practices, etc., and instructed him to practise in Lhodrak, giving him visionary direction. To both Sangye Yeshe and Dorje Dunjom he gave the method of accomplishment of Manjuṣri Yamantaka primarily through the Six Gods of Overwhelming Mudra with twenty subsidiary secret precepts, telling them to practise in Yong Dzong in Drak and giving them visionary injunction. To Gyelwa Chokyang of Kung Lung and Gyelwa Lodro of Dre he gave the Three Yogas belonging to the Most Secret Dance of Hayagriva as the basic method of accomplishment, together with twentyfive subsidiary secret precepts, twelve tantras and the method of accomplishment of the Tramenma Sorceresses, and told them to practise at Chimphu itself, giving them visionary guidance. To both Vairotsana and Denma Tsemang he gave the method of accomplishment of Mopa Drakngak and of Glorious Tobden Nakpo, primarily with the Eight Classes of Spirits and secondarily with the Eighteen Arrogant Spirits, and told them to practise in Yama Lung, showing them visionary indications. To both Kaba Peltsek and Odren Wongchuk he gave the root method of accomplishment of Mamo, the external, internal and secret rites and their ramifications, and told them to meditate at Yerpi Drak, giving them visionary injunction. To both Jnana Kumara Vajra and the Mongolian Lhapel Zhonnu he gave the secret precepts of the Secret Yangdak and Phurba and the method of accomplishment and oral transmission of Mahamudra Immortality, and told them to meditate at Jemidrak in Nyemo, giving them visionary instruction. To both Pelgyi Senge and Chokro Lui Gyeltsen he gave the basic method of accomplishment of Dreka, the Garland of the Ten Krodhas, and a subsidiary practice, the Method of Samaya Restoration of the Thirty Chief Dreka together with secret precepts upon behaviour, and told them to meditate at the cave of meditation on Pelchuwori Mountain, giving them visionary injunction. To both the translator Rinchen Zangpo and Tingzin Zangpo he gave the method of accomplishment of

the Mystic Mahakarunika, the means to accomplish the Rikdzin Lama, and also the oral transmission of the Supreme Siddhi of the Knowledge Mahamudra, and told them to practise at the Uru meditation cave, giving them, also, visionary injunction. To both Langdro Konchok Jungne and Gyelwa Jangchub he gave the method of accomplishment and oral transmission of Jinlab Lama and the method of accomplishment of the Proud Black Horse belonging to the Embodiment of the Secret Hayagriva, and he told them to meditate at Shangidrak in Yeru, giving them visionary direction. To both Drenpa Namkha Wongchuk and Kheuchung Kading he gave the method of accomplishment of the Wrathful and Peaceful Deities of the Secret Perna Sung and the method of meditating upon the Six Gods in a single deity, the basic Vajrasattva, together with the oral transmission of the meditation of the Thirty-six Herukas, and he told them to meditate at the northern lake of Namtsodo, giving them visionary instruction. To both Ma Rinchen Chok and Gyelmo Yudra Nyingpo he gave the method of accomplishment of Vajrapani, twenty oral transmissions and a hundred secret precepts; in particular he gave them the method of accomplishment, the oral transmission and the secret precepts of the Yoga of Immortality, and he told them to practise in the cave of meditation at Chimphu itself, giving them visionary instruction. To me, Tsogyel, the Guru gave the external, internal, secret and ultimate methods of accomplishment of the Mind of the Guru himself of which the basic practice was the method of accomplishment of Pema Wong, comprising seven dissimilar redactions related to the Guru's mandala.;<sup>9</sup> In short, he gave me the means of accomplishing the Three Roots (Guru, Yidam and Dakini) in one mandala. 'Practise at Womphu Taktsang, Mon Taktsang and Kham Taktsang and in all those places where there is a naturally manifest image of Guru Rimpoche, particularly in Tidro itself,' the Guru instructed me. 'When any difficulty arises pray to me and I will surely come and give you advice. Further, it is forbidden that you should be separated from your partner, Atsara Sale.' Having imparted these instructions he gave me certain visionary indications.

Then the Emperor celebrated as many full ganacakra feasts as the Guru had given mandalas, providing an enormous celebration of thanksgiving to the Guru. Then, offering him a mountainous pile of worldly goods - gold, silk, brocade, - etc., he said:

We have now received the *maṇḍalas* of the Ultimate Tantra  
That are so very difficult to gain in our aeon.  
Your kindness is overwhelming, and impossible to repay.  
Now until I gain enlightenment,  
Lord, let not your compassion forsake me.  
Upon your distracted and agitated disciples like me,  
Lost in states of uneasiness and confusion,  
We beg you always to look with compassion.

So saying, he poured seven handfuls of gold upon the Guru's body. To each translator and initiate who had been instructed by the Guru to meditate in the various power places he gave a pound of gold dust for his immediate needs and provisions, a golden begging bowl, a piece of white, red and blue brocade, a robe, a horse and a pack animal, and he promised them all the means of their sustenance during the period of their retreat. The Great Guru, radiating happiness, replied to the King:

O Great King, O God-king,  
This procedure is correct.  
And although I, Pema Jungne,  
Have no need for material goods,  
To sustain your tantric *samaya*  
And to accrue merit for you, the King, I accept them.  
Through your generosity your twenty-four subjects  
Will achieve their aim free from obstacles.  
To promise sustenance is highly meritorious;  
That is the activity of a Bodhisattva.  
Very good!  
My disciples' perseverance and courageous practice,  
Pema Jungne's secret precepts and the King's provisions,  
These three combined will create inexhaustible virtue.  
Through prayers of aspiration, synchronistic circumstances<sup>60</sup>  
and good *karma*,  
The infinitude of the Buddha's qualities will be accomplished.

The Guru gave encouragement and advice to each of the twentyfive



disciples (but that is not included here - their personal stories are told in separate works), and then they all dispersed to practise in the places that the Guru had indicated. First, Tsogyel went to Tidro, and entered the Mandala of the Union of the Three Roots. In The Book of Studies is listed a vast number of general and specific tantras, which liberate the listener merely by his hearing them, but discouraged by the length of such lists I have not included them here.

Thus ends the fourth chapter in which is described how Tsogyel requested teaching and instruction from her Guru and how she received initiation and practical precepts.

**SAMAYA ITI GYA GYA GYA!**

## CHAPTER FIVE

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## **MEDITATION, AUSTERITY AND SPIRITUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT**

This is a short account of Tsogyel's methods of spiritual accomplishment, her practice in the Dakini's Assembly Hall at Tidro in Tsogyel's Secret Meditation Cave, and in other places.

At first I lived in a concealed anchorite's cave in a corner of the Tidro Assembly Hall. I was supplied ungrudgingly with provisions by local patrons. Here I diligently applied myself to the method of realising the Serene Guru Perna Jungne in his unconditioned reality. After only a short period of meditation my body assumed a divine form and the Yidam deity appeared before my very eyes. Perceiving my psychic nerves and energy flows as the Dakini's mandala, whatever transformative activity I began was automatically accomplished.' Favoured by the Lama's empowering blessings, seedessence, the nature of mind, arose as the Lama's dancing form, and all phenomena appeared as the Lama's purelands. Simultaneous with the spontaneous emergence of genuine, nonreferential devotion and respect for the Lama, the external mandala began to effloresce iridescently, and Buddha Heroes and Dakinis shimmered in union in my sensefields.<sup>2</sup>

In this vivid vision of radiant light I arrived at a place called Orgyen Khandro Ling, The Land of the Dakinis. In this land the fruit trees were like razors, the ground was plastered with meat, the mountains were bristling piles of skeletons and the clods of earth and stone were scattered fragments of bone. In the centre of this mandala was an immeasurable palace built of skulls and wet and dry heads, and the ceilings and door-blinds were made of human skin.<sup>3</sup> At a radius of a hundred thousand leagues the palace was ringed by a circle of volcanoes, a wall of vajras, a perimeter of falling thunderbolts, a ring of eight cemeteries and a wall of beautiful lotuses. Within this boundary were flocks of flesh-eating, blood-drinking birds and crowds of demon savages, male and female, and other brutes, all of whom surrounded me glaring at me threateningly, but thereafter they acted with neither hostility nor friendliness.

Then I went up into the palace, and having passed through three

successive doorways, I found many Dakinis in human form, carrying various offerings to the principal Dakini. Some cut shreds of flesh from their bodies with knives and preparing the flesh as ganacakra offering, they made worship. Some let blood from their veins, some gouged out their eye-balls, some cut off their noses, their tongues, or their ears, some cut out their hearts or their lungs, liver, spleen or kidneys, some gave their flesh and some their life blood, some gave their bone marrow and fluids, some gave their life-force or their breath, and some cut off their heads or their limbs. After cutting and preparing their offerings, they presented them to their principal Dakini and Consort who blessed them and distributed them as tokens of faith.

'Why are you pursuing pain like this?' I asked them. 'If you take your own lives, how is it possible to reach the end of the Buddha's path?'

They replied:

O woman with procrastinating mind,  
The accomplished Lama, a real Lama,<sup>4</sup>  
Instantaneously confers his compassion,  
Knowing what pleases him but deferring his pleasure,  
Procrastinating, merit is lost –  
Delay, and hindrances and obstacles multiply.  
In so far as your cognition of ultimate truth is instantaneous,  
It is fast as a flash of genuine faith;  
If you fail to offer Awareness the moment it dawns,  
Procrastinating, merit is lost –  
Delay, and hindrances and obstacles multiply.  
In so far as your cognition of ultimate truth is instantaneous,

It is fast as a flash of genuine faith;  
If you fail to offer Awareness the moment it dawns,  
Procrastinating, merit is lost –  
Delay, and hindrances and obstacles multiply.  
In so far as we have obtained this body for a moment,  
Only a moment exists to celebrate the path;  
Failing to offer this auspicious body while you have it,  
Delaying, hindrances and obstacles multiply.  
Inasmuch as the Teacher appears only for an instant,  
There is only an instant to enter the door of the mysteries;  
Failing to offer the teaching the moment you possess it,  
Delaying, hindrances and obstacles multiply.

Hearing this, I felt ashamed.

Simultaneous with the dedication of the merit of the offerings, a Vajra Yogini appeared in front of each of the Dakini devotees, and at a snap of the thumb and forefinger she dissolved, and all was as before. Then each of the Dakinis asked the principal for instruction before withdrawing into herself for meditation. Thus their offering and meditation periods were repeated twelve times a day. Inside each of the doors to the meditation chamber was a guardian of the gate; in the centre of the mandala was Vajra Yogini standing in a blaze of light so intense that it was almost unbearable to gaze upon.

(What Tsogyel saw in the vast expanses of other purelands is written elsewhere. Disconcerted by the size of these accounts I could not include them here.)

When Guru Rimpoche visited me again I described the various visions that I had experienced. 'I want to practise something of that kind of austerity,' I told him. 'Please accept my pledge to undertake such a sacrifice.'

'All that was only symbolic vision,' Guru Rimpoche replied. 'It is not necessary for you now to make an actual offering of the flesh. Better than that, practise these austerities.'

Listen to me, you goddess Tsogyelma;  
Listen attentively, bewitching lady!  
Those who possess this precious human trunk of gold  
And who practise meditation always find sustenance,  
While those ignorant of meditation go hungry,

And failing to grasp their chance they die of starvation.  
 It is beneficial to fulfil a pledge to practise these eight great  
 austerities.  
 Practise austerity of diet: subsist on mineral essences,  
 Extract the essences of ambrosial medicinal herbs and then eat  
 air.  
 Practise austerity of dress, wear cotton cloth, then only bone  
 ornaments,  
 And then go naked, relying on the mystic heat.  
 Practise austerity of speech: perform recitation and  
 visualisation;  
 Sing prayers, songs and liturgies, and practise *mantra* and  
 breathing,  
 And then stay mute; abandon all idle talk.  
 Practise austerity of body: perform prostration and  
 circumambulation,  
 Physical *yoga*, and the lotus posture in formal meditation.  
 Practise austerity of mind: develop the creative and fulfilment  
 processes,  
 Cultivate the seed-essence of empty delight and abide in the  
*samādhi* of union.  
 Practise austerity of teaching: bear the torch of the Buddha's  
 doctrine;  
 Sustain the tradition, perfect the technique of transforming  
 beings,  
 And cultivate skill in discourse, debate and composition.  
 Practise austerity of compassion: cherish others over yourself,  
 Treating aggressors like your sons and gold and excrement  
 alike.  
 Practise austerity of benevolence: without concern for body or  
 life;  
 Cultivate the *mahāyāna* aspiration of selfless service to others.  
 If you practise these austerities you become one with the  
 Buddha and his teaching;  
 You attain the unsurpassable, the miraculous and pure  
 pleasure.  
 If you deviate from this practice to follow self-mutilating  
 asceticism  
 You become no different from despised fanatics and extremists.<sup>5</sup>  
 Daughter of Kharchen, take my injunction to heart!

Then I vowed to practise these eight great austerities described by  
 the Guru:

The Buddha's teaching has come to this vicious land;  
 A lamp of radiant fire-crystal<sup>6</sup> has come to this dark land;  
 Venerable Orgyen has come to Tibet, the land of demon  
 savages.  
 You dispense the sacred *mahāyāna* knowledge to insecure  
 beings,  
 You transform the wretched into the blessed;  
 I have never heard of such *yoga* as this  
 Even when the Buddha lived in Vajrāsana.  
 There is no way that I can repay the Guru's kindness.  
 Now that I, Yeshe Tsogyel, a woman,  
 Have entered the most secret tantric *maṇḍala*,  
 May I die if I fail in a fraction of my pledge.  
 And further, unconcerned with body, life or social status,  
 Caring only for the Guru's injunction,  
 Practising these eight great austerities,  
 May I die if I infringe this sacred vow in any way.  
 Come whatever, I swear to practise truly altogether,  
 Austerities of diet, clothing and food, these three,  
 Austerities of body, speech and mind, these three,  
 And austerity for the Buddha's teaching and for sentient beings,  
 And the austerity of kindness, cherishing others above myself.

I took this vow to practise the eight great austerities three times. The Guru was delighted, and after giving me further advice and prophetic injunction he returned to continue his mission as the Emperor's priest.

First, I practised the austerity of dress by means of the mystic heat. On the mountain peak of Tidro where scree and glacial ice meet, protected by nothing but a piece of cotton cloth I meditated for one year. Initially the warmth of the mystic heat failed to arise within me, and I could hardly bear the piercing wind of the new year blowing about me, together with the frost and snow. Atsara Sale could not endure it, and he left me to serve the Guru as manservant. With my vow as witness I continued my meditation. Blisters erupted all over my body, convulsive pains wracked me within, I began to hiccup incessantly, and I came close to death. Then evoking my Guru I



prayed:

**Orgyen, Master of Truth, Lord of Beings,  
Compassionate sun, shine on me.  
This friendless, solitary, naked girl  
In her scree house that beckons the wind,  
I am an ice-maiden when the blizzards blow.  
Frozen between the four slates of my bed and roof,  
All activity forgotten, sitting like a heap of earth and rocks,  
Here is no outside, inside or golden mean  
And I am no White Cotton-clad Dākinī.<sup>7</sup>  
Now, with the sunlight of your compassion,  
Bless me. Ignite the fire of mystic heat and help me.**

From a slight respiratory movement brought about by karmic energy, the warmth of mystic heat was generated. Finding even greater certainty and faith in the Lama than before, I sang:

**When the real Guru bestowed  
The elixir of potent grace  
Of the mysteries, the *vajrayāna*,  
Then Vajrasattva's Awareness,  
The four joys, arose within me.  
The White Cotton-clad Dākinī assumed her proper place  
Giving me the warmth of bliss  
And now I am utterly happy.  
Still, I ask you to show me your favour.**

And as I spoke Lama Orgyen himself appeared in a vision in the guise of an Heruka and gave me a skull-cup of chung<sup>8</sup> to drink before vanishing like a dream.

'In this continuous visionary state my pleasure is real pleasure, warmth is real warmth, and happiness is spiritual joy,' I sang.

Then my frost-bitten, blistered skin was sloughed off like the skin of

a snake, and thinking that the time was propitious to practise the austerity of bone ornaments, I cast away my cotton cloth and decked myself with the various bones.<sup>9</sup> That year I practised the austerity called 'the three precepts in one'. For the entire year I had nothing to eat, not even a single grain of barley; for food I relied upon stones and for drink upon water. Thus I sustained my meditation. After some time my previous perception of the nature of mind, and its accompanying insight, had waned. My legs could not bear my body, my body could not support my head, my breathing from the mouth and nose ceased, and my mind seemed totally enervated. My condition grew worse, and finally, coming close to death, I prayed to my Lama, cried from the depths of my heart to my Yidam, and visualised an unbroken stream of offerings to the Dakini:

**From the first my body has been offered to you;  
You know its happy and sad deeds, Lama.  
From the first my speech has followed the Buddha's path;  
You know what my stream of breath creates, Lama.  
From the first my mind was stirred to virtue;  
You know its merits and vices, Lama.  
From the first this body was the citadel of the Yidam;  
You know the nature of his residence, Lama.  
From the first nerves and energy flows were the Ḍākinī's  
courses;  
You know what these currents create, Lama.  
From the first seed-essence was the nature of the Sugatas;  
Should I pass into *nirvāṇa* or turn the wheel of the teaching?  
Look at the madness of sentient beings, my mothers!  
Whatever appears in *samsāra* or *nirvāṇa* is adequate sign for me.**

Then I had a vision of a red woman, naked, lacking even the covering of bone ornaments, who thrust her bhaga against my mouth, and I drank deeply from her copious flow of blood. b0 My entire being was filled with health and well-being, I felt as strong as a snowlion, and I realised profound absorption to be inexpressible truth.

I decided that the time was ripe to go naked, depending upon the air for sustenance. So for a further year I meditated without any cover for

my body with only the air I breathed for food. At first my respiration was easy, and various distinct visionary experiences occurred through the unimpeded play of Knowledge. Later an influx of doubt brought adversity. Respiratory movement ceased, my throat and gullet became extremely parched, my nose was as if stuffed with cotton wool, my bowels were filled with shooting pains, and my intestines shrivelled. It seemed as though I would die. Then taking courage, marshalling my remaining strength, I sang this song to exhort myself to persevere, and then called Guru Rimpoche from afar off:l"

**You girl, out of eternity, took a body and roamed in *samsāra*,  
Spinning upon the wheel of birth and death,  
Suffering in the lower realms,  
Enduring heat and cold, hunger and thirst,  
Slaving as a beast of burden.  
Now the essence of the meaningful human situation,  
The direct path of the tantric teaching,  
Is quickly traversed by austerity –  
For this reason endure whatever occurs.  
There is nothing else to do.  
Death is no alternative. Take courage Tsogyelma!  
KYEMAHO!  
Apparitional being, miraculously born in the pollen heart of a  
lotus,  
Spontaneously manifest Lama, Sage of Orgyen,  
Lord of Compassion in human form,  
Rainbow *maṇḍala*, supreme *vajra*-being,  
Look with compassion upon embodied beings,  
Save this girl with an ordinary body,  
Do whatever you will with this mortal.  
Wherever you are, look upon me with loving compassion.**

And instantly the Guru appeared in a ball of light, smiling radiantly, and from the distance of a man's height in the sky in front of me, he admonished me thus:

Listen, Daughter of Kharchen,  
Royal daughter, infatuated with your own beauty and pleasure,  
Ever wont to be intolerant of unpleasant situations,  
Now is the time to employ both joy and pain as the path.  
Turn whatever suffering arises into the path of pure pleasure,  
And be less desirous of an easy life, faithful, virtuous consort.

## Listen, Daughter of Kharchen, King's consort, youthful and vain,

Ever wont to be bound by wantonness and self-will,  
Now is the time to abandon futile self-indulgent pursuits.  
Meditate upon impermanence, ponder the pain of the lower  
realms,  
And be less ambitious, faithful, virtuous consort.

Listen, Daughter of Kharchen,  
Lama's consort, conceited and proud,  
Ever wont to consider yourself superior,  
Now is the time to reveal your faults.  
Do not hide your latent vices, lay bare your inadequacies,  
And be less desirous of fame, faithful, virtuous consort.

Listen, Daughter of Kharchen,  
Sanctimonious nun and hypocrite,  
Ever wont to be over-extended in deceit,  
Now is the time to throw off hypocrisy and dissimulation.  
Expose your secret self and take courage,  
And be less boastful, faithful, virtuous consort.

The Guru then descended to earth, sat upon a rock and continued,  
'You are too repressed and too fervent in your practice. You should use  
essential elixirs of herbs and shrubs to cultivate the play of your  
intelligence and restore your body to health.'

'Now I, Pema Jungne, can do nothing more for beings here. It remains for me to conceal the ultimately inexhaustible treasures of the sacred teaching (terma)<sup>12</sup> for discovery in the future for as long as samsara is not emptied of beings. After these treasures have been hidden, I must go again to Ngayab, to the Land of the Dakinis. You, Tsogyel, will be the custodian of these profound treasures. In the near future, after I have disclosed to you many more of the mandalas of the Tantra, the time will be ripe for you to begin work for the sake of others. So prepare yourself!' After granting me extensive instruction, he departed.

Then I took Atsara Sale and a girl called Dewamo to Senge Dzong Sum in Bhutan, where we practised meditation. First, arriving at Senge Dzong, I extracted the essences" of various medicinal herbs and shrubs and used them in an alchemical metamorphosis of my psychoorganism. Secondly, I imbibed the essences of minerals. Discovering that the mineral chongshi'<sup>4</sup> was 'the essence of all stones', I used it in my continued practice of the alchemical metamorphosis of my bodymind. Then my body became like a vajra; it could not be pierced by weapons. My voice gained the quality and tone of Brahma's sweet voice, so that even a proud tigress hearing it would be pacified and obedient. My mind became set in the samadhi that is like an immaterial vajra.

Then with sublime purpose I thought that the time was propitious for me to practise the most pure austerity. In the first place, in order to purify the defilements of my speech, I practised approach and identification;<sup>15</sup> through recitation and visualisation the deity invoked approached, and through meditation on Emptiness of the deity I attained union with that deity; and performing liturgical rites without respite I repeated mantra in a perpetual stream of sound. First, I practised knowledge mantras and extended mantras (dharani), such as the One Hundred Syllable Mantra of Vajrasattva, making atonement by practice of the three classes of kriyayoga-tantra. Second, I recited the extended mantras of the mandalas of upayoga-tantra and yogatantra, such as those of the Buddha's Five Aspects and Three Aspects.<sup>16</sup> Finally, applying myself with vigour to the very end, I recited the verbal confessions and vows of the sutras, the rules and regulations of the vinaya discipline, the practices of the Buddha Boundless Life,

Amitayus, and the treatises upon language and logic, etc., of abhidharma metaphysics that cultivate the intellect.

At first my voice developed a stammer, quantities of blood and pus oozed out of a rent in my neck, my throat became twisted, parched and paralysed, and various swellings of blood and pus erupted. I came close to death. But finally, however much I used my voice, there was no discomfort. My enunciation was distinct, and the sweet tones of my voice were mellifluous. Whether I spoke loudly, moderately or in a whisper, slowly, conversationally or swiftly, however I spoke I had perfect control. In short, I had been endowed with the sixty elements of speech, and I had gained the seven supports of a retentive memory.

In the second place, according to the procedure of mahayoga, I disclosed the mandala of the Sublime Accomplishment of the Eight Logos Deities. I recited mantra with visualisation until all the deities approached in visible form, and then, through absorption in Emptiness, I continued until I had gained union with them. Sitting in lotus posture with hands folded in meditation position, firstly, when the deities appeared, many signs such as blazing light arose and various qualities were generated in my mind. Secondly, I received instructive vision of the Yidam together with his authorisations, and mundane siddhi - the eight great siddhis,<sup>17</sup> and ultimate realisation in the Bodhisattva's samadhi that is like a vajra.<sup>18</sup> And finally, I received a prophetic vision indicating liberation into the matrix of Kuntuzangmo.

In the third place, I opened the mandala of the Communion of the Lama's Mind according to the procedure of lung anuyoga. Training myself in mantra, control of vital energies and samadhi, I created the mandalas of the Mind Communion in the focal points of my psychic nerves, and free of dichotomising concepts I apprehended the reality of psychic nerves, energy flows and seedessence. At first my nerves ached, my vital energy flows were reversed, my seedessence was paralysed, and the horror of death's proximity overcame me, but I continued to practise indifferent to these reverses. After some time the deities manifested themselves and I gained control over psychic nerves, vital energy flows and seedessence; the flows of the four rivers of birth, old-age, sickness and death were dammed; and I was granted the title 'Siddha'.

Then the thought arose in my mind that I was without the means to repay Guru Rimpoche's kindness to me, so I sang this song:

Lord Guru, Pema Jungne, I bow to you!  
This pile of dust accumulated from beginningless time,  
You, Lord Guru, have transformed into the Sacred Mountain,  
And now this mountain of mind will serve others.  
Virtuous Indra, come here and be my patron!  
Let luckless inhabitants of the valleys be as Great Kings  
And all the heavens shall be contented.  
This ocean of accumulated droplets gathered from  
beginningless time,  
You, Lord Guru, have transformed into the Seven Lakes of  
Enjoyment,

And now this Lady of the Lake will serve others.  
Virtuous Ānanda, come here and be my *nāga* patron!  
Let luckless frogs and fishes of the ponds be as the Eight Great  
*Nāga* Kings  
And all the *nāga* realms shall be contented.  
To this Munīndra replete with merit gathered from  
beginningless time,  
You, Lord Guru, have given inexhaustible quality,  
And now this Munīndra will serve others.  
Lord of Men, Great King, come here and be my patron!  
Let luckless barbarian savages be as monks  
And the whole world shall be contented.  
The reward of virtue collected from beginningless time,  
You, Lord Guru, have transformed into this precious human  
body,  
And now this girl will serve others.  
Fortunate spiritual sons, come here and be my patrons!  
Opinionated, guilty people ignorant of the teaching,  
Tibetans having gained faith, this whole land shall be  
contented.

After I had finished this song in which I expressed my gratitude to the

Guru as commitment to selfless service, I extracted and consumed the essences of one hundred and eight psychotropic substances and medicinal shrubs. Then the Four Divine Great Sages<sup>19</sup> appeared surrounded by four hundred and eight goddesses of medicinal substances, each holding a vase containing a different ambrosial panacea, and they sang these verses of praise to me:

**KYEMAHO!**

Human girl who has discovered the Supreme, the Miraculous,  
In the past you were our goddess, our sister,  
And wise aspiration brought you great wisdom,  
Leading the celestial musicians with the sound of your lute:  
We adore you as the Goddess Sarasvatī.  
Later, when Munīndra was turning the wheel of the teaching,  
Through pure aspiration you became a disciple, a *bhikṣunī*,  
Leading all beings with your compassionate eye:  
We adore you as the Goddess Gangā Devī.

Now, when Vajradhara as Padma Jungne,  
A *vajra*-master, is turning the wheel of the teaching,  
You open the door of the mysteries and absorb *mahāyāna*  
precepts:  
We praise you, ascetic Tsogyel, suffering for the sake of others.  
All manner of things spring up in the vastness of your mind;  
Extracting the essences of medicines and poisons you revel in  
ambrosia;  
In your immortal, youthful body, the ideal marks are complete:  
We adore you, mother of beings past, present, and future.  
You have cured the chronic diseases of rebirth and death,  
Nourishing yourself on the elixir of immortality:<sup>20</sup>  
You are the source of all the Buddhas' qualities, Medicine  
Goddess.  
In you, Tsogyel, all these forms are embodied.

Through a synchronistic coincidence of external events and inner needs, a human girl called Khyidren visited me and offered me a large quantity of honey. Consuming it, I began my practice of physical



austerity. At first I practised circumambulation, and then, without respite or concern for the passing of day and night, I practised prostrations. But bones began to protrude through the wounds on my forehead, the soles of my feet and the palms of my hands, and a stream of blood and pus ran out of them. I continued regardless, practising countless different purificatory exercises of the body (the majority of which can be found in various manuals of instruction). At first my body became fatigued, exhausted, worn out. Then the seedessence at the joints of my limbs turned to lymph, and feverish, aching, twisting, swelling, my tendons split apart, my muscles slackened, and my body lost its vitality. However, after the poisonous seedessence separated from the pure, my consciousness expanded; permanently my seedessence became the nature of Awareness, the knots in my tendons, veins and nerves were united, their flaccidity became tension, their weakness was cured, their worn-out patches were restored, their breaks rejoined and their splits mended. Thus a basis for the accomplishment of the Tantra was established.

Then in the extremely isolated meditation cave of Nering Senge Dzong and other places, after I had sworn an immutable commitment, I continued my physical austerity. I sat in mute samadhi, never relaxing the important points of posture,<sup>21</sup> sitting immovable in lotus posture, my eyes set in a fixed gaze. The malicious local gods and demons, however, could not endure my samadhi's glory, and created magical illusions, threatening me with seductive and fierce, embodied and disembodied, phantoms. First they projected themselves as various delectable foods, and repeatedly appeared in front of me. Then they transformed themselves into all manner of material objects, clothes, horses, oxen and every possible necessity and luxury that this world can offer. I overcame all these temptations with my samadhi's radiance. Through my insight into the nature of the world as illusion, inasmuch as I felt profound disgust for attachment to worldly things, some of these phantoms dissolved; by changing earth and stone into dung by the power of my samadhi I rendered some repulsive; and some vanished after my wish that they became that district's future store of food and wealth was fulfilled.

On another occasion these demons projected themselves as charming youths, handsome, with fine complexions, smelling sweetly,

glowing with desire, strong and capable, young men at whom a girl need only glance to feel excited. They would begin by addressing me respectfully, but they soon became familiar, relating obscene stories and making lewd suggestions. Sometimes they would play games with me: gradually they would expose their sexual organs, whispering, 'Would you like this, sweetheart?' and 'Would you like to milk me, darling?' and other such importunities, all the time embracing me, rubbing my breasts, fondling my vagina, kissing me, and trying all kinds of seductive foreplay. Overcome by the splendour of my samadhi, some of them vanished immediately; some I reduced to petty frauds by insight into all appearances as illusion; by means of the Bodhisattva's meditation that produces revulsion, I transformed some into black corpses, some into bent and frail geriatrics, some into lepers, some into blind, deformed, dumb or ugly creatures, and without exception they all vanished.

Then these malicious gods and demons demonstrated their violent devices. The earth moved beneath me, shaking and quaking, emitting an empty roar louder than the bellow of a thousand dragons, with the intolerable banging of black lightning, the roaring of white lightning, the swishing of red lightning, the knocking of yellow lightning, the baying of blue lightning, the shimmering of iridescent lightning, and the blazing of the light of the sky. Likewise, I was threatened by a terrific display of weapons, various knives, sharp-pointed daggers and spears, all glistening steel-blue, bristling menacingly, jostling for space. I dissolved these apparitions with my samadhi of divine assurance.



Another day I was besieged by phantom herds of ferocious beasts. Tigers, leopards, bears, yetis and other carnivores appeared, roaring above and outside the cave entrance. From my right and from my left, animals attacked from every direction, howling in their various styles, their mouths gaping ravenously, snarling in rage, beating their tails, their paws scratching at me, shaking their bodies, hackles risen, hair bristling. From the assurance I had gained from abandoning

attachment to my body and love of myself, arose compassion for all these beasts, and they vanished. Then, leaving me with no respite, a vast army of billions of different insects and worms led by spiders, scorpions and snakes inundated the area. Some slipped through my sensory doors, some bit me, some stung me, some scratched me, some climbed over me, some jumped upon me, some fought each other, ate each other and left piles of carcasses scattered about. There was no trick that these insects failed to use to frighten me. I shuddered a little, yet I found pity in my heart, but the insects became increasingly terrifying and loathsome. 'Since I have often vowed that I will in no way be attached to any form of body, speech or mind,' I thought to myself, 'why should I now be afraid of such illusory tricks of spirits, the activity of sentient beings - insects - that is karmic manifestation? Because all behaviour is determined by positive or negative concepts, I should understand that whatever occurs, good or bad, is a mental construct, and so keep a level head.' With this thought I regained my assurance, and I sang:

**All 'phenomena' are only tricks of the mind;<sup>22</sup>  
I see nothing to fear in inner space.  
All this is nothing but clear light's natural radiance;  
There is no reason at all to react.**

**Since all activity is my ornamentation  
I should remain in mute meditative absorption.**

And so saying, I entered the samddhi of universal identity in which there is no discrimination or evaluation, and the apparitions vanished.

Again a variety of shapes and forms appeared. Many limbs without bodies hung in space before me. Many exceedingly repulsive forms flashed in and out of my vision, writhing around in spectral configurations in space. An enormous head without a body, its upper jaw lost in the clouds and its lower jaw resting on the ground its tongue lolling in between, its fangs gleaming white, approached closer and closer. Other violent forms also appeared: within a castle the size of a mustard seed many men struggled and fought; fires blazed, floods

poured forth, landslides hurtled down, trees fell, gales blew, etc., but always I would sit unmoving in vajra-like samadhi, and the forms would vanish.

'We are the legions of gods and demons, Khatra and Kangtra,<sup>23</sup> come hither from the southern lands lying between E in Nepal and Ja in Bhutan,' pronounced a voice, and these demons proceeded to threaten me with various sounds. Some wept, some raged, some wailed and some roared. Then thunderbolts fell from above, fire blazed up from below, and in between rivers flowed backwards. Blizzards of various weapons swirled about me. In this manner they strove to obstruct my meditation. But with my intuitive understanding fully charged, my awareness expanded, my insight's nerves opened, attaining irreversible faith, I sang:

**Since I entered the dimension of dynamic space,  
Reaching the Mind of the Great Mother, absolute, empty being,  
The heart of the ten transcendental perfections,<sup>24</sup>  
Enjoying profound and perfect insight,  
I am not to be cowed by visionary experience.  
Every situation is a play of empty being,  
The magical illusion that is the Lama's compassion:  
Now stir my creativity still more!  
Since I entered the dimension of spontaneity,  
Reaching the Mind of Lama Kunzang,**

The heart of Vision, Meditation and the Goal,  
Enjoying the unstructured quality of every occurrence,  
I am no coward in the face of my thought-forms.  
Every event is a display of mental projections,  
The thought-forms that are the Lama's compassion:  
Now excite my creative skill still more!  
Since I entered the dimension of pure pleasure,  
Reaching the Mind of the Lotus Born Guru,  
The heart of all-encompassing Ati,  
Enjoying the mind's immaculate nature,  
I no longer possess a sense of impurity.  
The welter of defilements are the stuff of reality,  
The forms of vision that are the Lama's compassion:  
Now inspire my creative expression still more!  
Since I entered the arena of mystic practice,  
Arriving at the heart of the *mahāyāna* mysteries,  
Enjoying the identical flavour of pleasure and pain,  
I have no preference for good or bad.  
Both good and bad are lifts to peak experience,  
To the visual experience that is the Lama's compassion:  
Now arouse my creative potential still more!

At the end of my song legions of Indian, Nepali and Tibetan gods and demons again rose up. With three of their number - the red, blue and black - appointed as leaders, they attempted to create obstacles through many different devices, but they were in no way successful. Then they induced human beings to tempt me. Through these gods' and demons' machinations a thick black fog blanketed the land of Bhutan so that the day was as night. Thunderbolts and hail blighted the fields, blizzards swept down, pestilence struck, and confusion reigned in the land as these and other calamities struck the people.

'Who is harming us?' they asked one another. 'Why is this happening?'

A Bhutanese hunter had happened to catch a glimpse of me in my cave. 'There's a dumb Tibetan woman up there in the Nering Drak Cave,' he told them. 'She must be the cause. Why look any further?'

They all agreed with him, and forming a lynching mob they came up to the cave to kill me. 'You starving Tibetan corpse!' they cried. 'You have been practising black magic. Now our land of Bhutan is enshrouded in darkness. Thick fog has descended upon the country. Thunderbolts and hail have laid waste our fields, and pestilence and other disasters have befallen us. Remove your curses! If you refuse, we will kill you immediately!'



'It seems that the malicious devices of these gods and demons have harmed the local people,' I thought. 'There is nothing positive that I can do. I will account whatever occurs a creation of my mind and meditate upon it. Come what may I will not break my vow.' And refusing to answer them I kept still with my gaze fixed, staring at the nature of my mind.



'She's paralysed by guilt,' said some. 'Perhaps she can't hear us,' said others. So they threw ashes into my eyes and poked knives into my ears. I sat where I was, totally detached, thought-free. 'She must be a yeti!' they cried, and then they proceeded to shoot their arrows at me, beat me with their clubs, stab at me with their spears and slash at me with their knives. But no matter in what way they attacked me or with what weapons, they caused absolutely no harm to my body. They gave me the name Invulnerable Tibetan, and not knowing what to do they dispersed to their homes.

Then the girl who had previously brought me honey returned. She was the daughter of a Bhutanese king, and she possessed great power and wealth. Filled with high faith she prostrated before me, and then departed. Thereafter, from time to time, she would bring me buffalo milk and sometimes honey, serving me in every way that might please me. - - - - -

Not long after, led by devils, local demons and nagas, all the gods and demons who had previously threatened me with their illusions came to offer their lives to me. The devils, local demons and nagas in particular, vowed to protect my dharma and to destroy my enemies:

**EH HO HO!**

**Only Consort of Guru Pema Skull-Garland Pleasure,  
Dākinī Heruka, unvanquished heroine,  
We confess our devilish crimes.**

**Now as your entourage, we offer you our very lives,  
Faithfully vowing to obey your every command.**

Then, individually, they offered their lives to me, and departed.

Similarly, all the great and terrible gods and demons of Tibet - Rahula, Dorje Lekpa and others - offered their lives, and promised to protect the teaching. Then the men and women who had previously tried to harm me gathered there, and confessing their faults they paid homage to me. In particular, King Hamras of Bhutan came in a state of wonder and credulity. I asked him to give me his beautiful thirteen-year-old daughter, who had all the marks and signs of a Dakini, and

who was called Khyidren (Leader of Dogs). With strong faith and devotion the King presented her to me, and I conferred the name Tashi Chidren (Fortunate Guide of Mankind) upon her. I then took her to Paro Taktsang.

At Paro Taktsang I began the last austerity to be practised for my own benefit. This was the austerity of 'the seedessence of coincident pleasure and Emptiness'.<sup>25</sup> With my consorts Atsara Sale, a Bhutanese boy called Sale and Atsara Pelyang, all three invigorated by nutritious herbal elixirs, I disciplined myself in the cultivation of creative skill to its full potential for seven months through day and night without respite. At first, shaking and trembling, my body was enervated and my mind was stunned and intoxicated. Lymph saturated my whole body, above and below, and diseased, aching, feverish and trembling, I came close to death. But later, all the lymph was transmuted into the nature of seedessence and pleasure flooded my entire body. Initially this pleasure was contaminated by passion, but soon it became a field of Awareness and finally an unremitting flow of Awareness. Red and white seedessence gradually blended into an homogenous mixture, and the resulting seedessence was not capable of evolving into dualistic vision. After placing my psychoorganism into the Conqueror's mandala, through offering pleasure and worshipping in pleasure the full potential of pleasure was aroused and sealed in the body of pure pleasure. Red radiance suffused my white body, and retaining the appearance of a charming, sixteen-year-old maiden, my body was transformed into the pure being of an Heruka Dakini Heroine (Vajra Varahi). At the same time I had a vision of Amitayus' mandala, and in the immutable being of a vajrbody I accomplished the Immortal Knowledge Holder<sup>26</sup> who is free of ageing and infirmity. At that time I received a prophecy that I would live for 225 years in this world; Glorious Hayagriva and Vajra Varahi exorcised obstructive spirits; the Five Buddha Heroes and the Five Dakinis became my constant companions, accompanying me like shadows and performing whatever magical transformation was necessary with unimpeded efficiency; the Bodhisattvas gave auspicious benediction; and since I was now a Knowledge Holder with power over my lifespan I was given the name Radiant Sky-blue Mistress of Life (Tsedak Tingwo Barma).

Thereafter, I and my five companions went to Womphu Takstang

where Guru Rimpoche was staying. When we met him I prostrated, and greeting me he said, 'So you have come, Dakini Heruka! What a surprise! I thought that you would have lost heart!' And he continued:

O *yoginī* who has mastered the Tantra,  
The human body is the basis of the accomplishment of wisdom  
And the gross bodies of men and women are equally suited,  
But if a woman has strong aspiration, she has higher potential.  
From beginningless time you have accrued merit from virtue  
and awareness,  
And now, faultless, endowed with a Buddha's Qualities,  
Superior woman, you are a human Bodhisattva.  
This is you I am speaking of, happy girl, is it not?  
Now that you have achieved your own enlightenment,  
Work for others, for the sake of other beings.  
Such a marvellous woman as you  
Never existed in the world before,  
Not in the past, not at present,  
Nor in the future – of this I am certain.  
Yeshe Tsogyel, a la la!  
Hereafter, in the future, at the end of your time,  
You will project five emanations,  
And the Buddha's doctrine will survive 30 more years.  
Specifically, in a place called Lab in the Land of Dak<sup>27</sup>  
A woman will appear known as Drolma  
And imbibe the essences of the Great Mother's precepts;  
She will spread the Zap-chod Doctrine, Profound Severance,  
And her teaching will produce the highest good of beings.  
At that time Atsara Sale will appear as a monk called Topa,

And as the Ḍākinī's Consort he will open your secret door;  
The Bhutanese girl, Tashi Khyidren, will be your only daughter;  
This Bhutanese boy, Sale, will be your spiritual son  
And act in the manner of a crazy saint;  
Atsara Pelyang will appear as a monk called Drapa Ngonshe,  
And after becoming the Ḍākinī's mystic consort  
He will achieve his own and others' supreme purpose.  
Then I, Pema Jungne, named Dampa of India,<sup>28</sup>  
Coming from Lato, will preach Zhi-je, the Doctrine of Peace,  
And after you and I, Lady, have encountered each other,  
Circumstances beneficial to the Tantra will arise;  
The Doctrine of Zhi-je, the profound path of skilful means,  
Will bring temporary comfort to the world.  
After that you will not stay long;  
Thereafter, in supreme fields of lotus light,  
You and I will unite,  
And serve beings through the body of visionary enjoyment.

After the Guru had given this prophecy, he reassured me further, and again I sang a song of thanksgiving:

Vajradhara, Stem of the Mysteries,  
Amitāyus, free from death and free from causality,  
Heruka, Master of Magical Power:  
These three are united in you, Pema Jungne, alone.  
And since I have depended upon you, finding no other,  
Out of your kindness, Supreme Guide,  
I attained the *siddhi* of the Tantra;  
I accomplished the miraculous powers of the eight great *siddhis*,  
And I became master of both *sūtra* and *tantra*.  
My birth was low but my merit was great;  
Now my body has been transfigured  
And ordinary vision has permanently vanished;  
The *samādhi* in which all is illusion has arisen,  
And I control the five elements.  
Now my speech has become *mantra*  
And useless, vacant gossip is a thing of the past;  
The *vajra*-like *samādhi* has arisen,  
And intuitively I know and use the modes of *sūtra* and *tantra*.  
Now my mind has become Buddha,

And my ordinary thoughts have vanished into empty space;  
The *samādhi* of a Bodhisattva has arisen  
And my Mind is identical to Vajradhara.  
What great kindness, Lord Guru!  
While there is time, form, rebirth and life,  
If I would forsake your lotus feet  
I could never find another Guru such as you.  
So never deprive me of your compassion.  
Such great kindness as yours I can never repay.  
If in the past, overwhelmed by unknowing,  
I have been in conflict, even in part,  
With your Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities or Action,  
I acknowledge it. And I promise that hereafter  
I will avoid every conflict, even in the slightest degree.  
Now, for the sake of all beings, out of your great kindness,  
I beg you to turn the wheel of the tantric teaching.

Then I related in detail how I had performed my austerities, how I attained siddhi, in what manner the illusory devices of gods, demons and men arose, and most particularly, how through my experience of the Tantra at Paro Taktsang I had seen the deities of the mandala of Amitayus. Radiating satisfaction, the Guru placed his right hand upon my head, 'In your present state it is propitious for you to practise the Yoga of the Immortal Knowledge Holder. Your experience in Paro Taktsang was merely an indication that if with the Guru's compassion you practise in such a way, then a certain result will occur. I will reveal to you the mandala of Amitayus and grant you initiation and empowerment, and then you must find a consort who will act as mainstay in the long-life practice.

'Also, this Bhutanese girl, Khyidren, has all the marks and signs of an Awareness Dakini, a vajrakarmaki, and if you give her to me I will employ her as the consort of Dorje Phurba, fulfilling the need to spread the secret teachings of Dorje Phurba. Otherwise in this dull land of Tibet the Tantra will stagnate, and yogins will be unable to protect even their own lives. The many gods and demons throughout Tibet who are hostile to the spread of the tantric doctrine will cause

obstacles, and they will prevent the doctrine's propagation. Even if the doctrine spreads, it will soon wane.'

I prostrated, and as a thanksgiving offering, I presented a plate of gold and turquoises, together with Tashi Khyidren, to the Guru. Then I made this request: 'O Great Guru, I thank you for your offer to give me the secret instructions upon the Yoga of Immortality. What kind of consort is required as an aid in this practice? Is not Atsara Sale qualified? It is exceedingly magnanimous of you to reveal the mandala of Dorje Phurba, so I offer you the girl Khyidren. Embrace her with your compassion, and please, please, reveal the tantric mysteries to her.

'Inadequate women like me with little energy and an inferior birth incur the whole world's hostility. When we go begging the dogs are hostile. If we possess food or wealth then thieves molest us. If we are attractive we are bothered by fornicators. If we work hard the country people are hostile. Even if we do nothing at all the tongues of malicious gossips turn against us. If our attitude is improper then the whole world is hostile. Whatever we do, the lot of a woman on the path is a miserable one. To maintain our practice is virtually impossible, and even to stay alive is very difficult. Therefore, I beg of you to give me the secret instructions upon Dorje Phurba also.'

The Guru thought for a moment, and then replied, 'The practice of the Yoga of Immortality is like a general, while Phurba is like a protecting escort. It is certainly of great importance, no matter what your principal tantric practise, to cultivate Phurba, the Remover of Obstacles; but it is of more relevance that your personal deity is Phurba, so I will initiate you.' And then he continued, 'No matter whether you practice Phurba or the Yoga of Immortality, you need a partner for practice. Go to Uru in Central Tibet, and there you will find a fourteen-yearold boy of canddla cast whose father's name is Lhapel and whose mother's name is Chokroza. You will undertake practice with him, and you will accomplish your deity.'

I found the boy according to the Guru's prediction, and together we returned to Pema Jungne. The Guru said:

This boy is a Knowledge Holder who has Phurba's *siddhi*;  
Possessing indestructible life-force he is invulnerable.  
The Deity named him Devil Destroying Buddha Hero (Dudul  
Pawo),

And since he appeared as a lion at his initiatory  
enthronement  
The name Lhalung Pelgyi Senge was conferred upon him.

Upon Pelgyi Senge's induction into the mandala of the tantric  
mysteries, he gained spiritual maturity.

Then the Guru's five 'root' spiritual sons - Lhalung Pelgyi Senge, Namkhai Nyingpo of Lhodrak, Ma Rinchen Chok, Dorje Dunjom and 1, Tsogyel - together with the girl Dewamo, were assigned roles in the initiatory rite of Dorje Phurba by the Guru. Dewamo, who was renamed Chonema, the Glorious Priestess, was appointed the Vajra Hostess (Dorje Jenmo); Atsara Sale and Atsara Pelyang were appointed Vajra Dancers (Dorje Gingpa) and renamed Karma Dondrub and Karma Tarje; the Bhutanese boy Sale was appointed Vajra Attendant (Vajrakar-maka); and then, at the beginning, he made me the 'root consort' and Tashi Khyidren the 'liberating consort'. Then after the Guru had revealed the forty-two etram mandalas associated with the Dorje Pliurba Tantra Byitotama,<sup>29</sup> and the mandalas of the seventy-eight Phurbas, the Guru and we two mystic partners practised for seven days. All the signs and marks appeared to perfect'on. The gods attendant upon Dorje Phurba manifested to the eye, and the symbolic phurbas, the sacred ritual daggers, bounced, danced and flew, and shining brightly they became redolent with perfume. The evening that these miraculous signs appeared, the Guru himself was transformed into Dorje Trollo (Adamantine Sagging Belly) with myself as Ekajati (The Crone with One Hair Knot) joined in union with him, and Tashi Khyidren as our mount, the tigress, to subject the gods and demons of the microcosmic worlds of the four quarters of Tibet. Riding upon the back of the girl Khyidren transformed into a tigress, the Guru and his mystic partner absorbed in the samadhi of Dorje Phurba, holding a nine-pronged vajra in his right hand and rolling a phurba of bell-metal in his left hand, the Guru projected countless fierce, terrifying beings



in forms identical to himself. In particular, one of these forms called Blue-black Vajra Wrathful Phurba (Tingnak Dorje Trophur) flew directly to Paro Taktsang, and there he subjected gods, demons, wrathful Dakinis, and demon savages and the three eight-fold classes of spirits-'10 of the barbarian borderlands and beyond - Bhutan, Nepal, India and Lho - and bound them to serve the dharma. Another emanation called Purple Vajra Wrathful Phurba (Muknak Dorje Trophur) flew as far as the second Taktsang, in Kham, and subjected the gods, demons and demon savages and the three eight-fold classes of spirits in the barbarian lands of Kham, Jang, China and Hor, binding them to serve the dharma, taking away their life-essence.

At that time a venomous naga-serpent who lived in an inlet of Lake Manasarovar escaped from the Purple Vajra Wrathful Phurba, and transforming himself into a red ox he begged for sanctuary at the Emperor's feet. This red ox appeared to the Emperor with feet bound by an iron chain, a deep wound in his head out of which seeped blood and brains, his tongue distended and his eyes bulging. The Emperor asked him who had afflicted him so, and the ox answered, 'The savage wretch from the borderlands (Mon) called Perna Jungne is systematically exterminating both the gods and men of Tibet. Just now he has been scourging even innocent gods and demons, and I have come to you, the Emperor, for refuge.'

The Emperor, moved to pity, told the ox that sanctuary was granted, but at that very instant the red ox vanished into thin air. The Emperor was pondering the meaning of this strange occurrence when the Guru's voice echoed in his ears:

**Your sympathy is sadly misplaced, O Emperor!  
Now in all your future existences  
Siddhi will always be fraught with obstacles.  
The Buddha's future followers will have short lives and ill-luck;  
In the third generation, this red-ox demon,  
Transformed into a prince called Ox (Langdarma)  
Will kill his brother and establish an iniquitous regime,  
Eradicating even the names of *sūtra* and *tantra*.  
However, this is *karma* and cannot be deflected.**

At that Pelgyi Dorje prayed, 'May I be able to destroy this Ox King!'

'So be it! So be it!' said the Guru, and ordained through prophecy that indeed Pelgyi Dorje would kill the Ox King. He gave him initiation and empowerment, and it was then that he conferred upon him the name Pelgyi Dorje. He also gave him detailed predictions and personal advice written upon a scroll. The Guru then granted him the practice of the rites of the Twenty Mahasakti Kilayas,<sup>31</sup> who are endowed with great magical powers, instructing him to practise them immediately.

Then I, the woman Tsogyel, with the youth Pelgyi Senge, achieved identity with Dorje Phurba, and very soon we had a vision of the deities of Phurba's mandala and gained Phurba's siddhi. Then the Guru gave us the method of accomplishing auto-initiation, the personal practice and the general practice in assembly of Phurba Chidu, which is associated with the subsidiary cycle of Dorje Zhonnu. The Phurba Chidu has two sections: the upper part contains the means of obtaining enlightenment through the peaceful method of practice associated with Vajrasattva, and the lower part contains the means of effecting particular karmas, such as killing, through the liberating karma of the Poisonous Black Phurba (Dukphur Nakpo) associated with the Son Kilaya. When he had given us this empowerment the Guru said, 'I, Perna Jungne, possess nothing more profound pertaining to Dorje Phurba than this teaching. Practise it and extract magical power from it. You should transmit part of this cycle as oral teaching of the pronouncement lineage and part of it as treasure to be revealed in the future.' Then he gave us visionary indications.

Later, he gave us the mandala, precepts and method of accomplishment of the Garland of Light of Immortal Amitayus, the Vajra Garland, the Communion of All Secrets, the Communion of All the Conquerors, the Hundred Thousand Gods in One, the Sixty-two Gods of Longlife,<sup>32</sup> and others. Pelgyi Dorje and I, brother and sister, practised without an instant of inertia, and, the deities manifesting themselves, we accomplished the Immortal Knowledge Holder in happiness.

At this time Tsogyel annihilated the heretical Bonshamans, but that is

related below together with a description of the practice of her final austerities.

Tsogyel practised meditation throughout Greater Tibet in a way that is beyond the mind's power to grasp: below Tise (Kailas) and above Jampaling, on twentyfive mountain peaks, in eighteen great forts, a hundred and twenty-eight minor power spots, twelve great hidden valleys, seven places of miracles, five secret power spots, and seven million spots where treasures were concealed. Some of these places are mentioned below. The details are not given here due to fear of the immense length.

Thus ends the fifth chapter in which is described how Tsogyel practised meditation and performed her austerities.

**SAMAYA GYA GYA GYA!**

# CHAPTER SIX

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## SIGNS OF SUCCESS AND PROOFS OF POWER

An extensive account of the evidence of Tsogyel's success in some meditation practices has been included above. Here is her own short description in verse.,

At Tidro, inspired by the Dakinis' symbolic indications, I practised austerity, and evidence of success appeared. Where shale and snow met, I found the mystic heat's inner warmth And I took off my samsaric clothes. In the Assembly Hall, possessing the warmth of the four empowerments, I transformed the visual world into the Lama's ideal form. In Nepal, I resurrected the corpse of a dead man, Ransoming Atsara, my Skilful Means, by skill in means. I attained the siddhi of zap-lam's nectar: My voice gained Brahma's quality and tone, My body became a sky-dancing rainbow body, And my mind, the Mind of Buddhas past, present and future. At Senge Dzong, I drank alchemical, medicinal elixirs And received a visitation of the gods of medicine. At Nering, I subjected the legions of devils, And temptation overcome I gained siddhi. Accomplishing each Yidam I invoked and seeing his face, I easily gained the siddhi of each with pleasure. At Paro Taktsang, I practised on the profound path of zap-lame

With three partners, pure pleasure Herukas: 1 gained control of nerves, seedessence and energy flows And controlling the five elements I gained self-control; My body, speech and mind became the Buddha's three modes; I received Amitayus' visionary prophecy; I became inseparable from Vajra Varahi herself; I became the chief Dakini of all mandalas. At Womphu Taktsang, Dorje Phurba was accomplished, And I took the life-essence of the microcosmic worlds' gods and demons; I saw the divine host of Amitayus' mandala, The Immortal Knowledge Holder was accomplished And my body became inviolate, indestructible like a vajra. In Upper and Lower Tibet and the areas in between, Innumerable power-places witnessed my practice And I blessed them all, Neglecting never a handful of earth. 1 he future will gradually reveal this truth For each treasure discovered will be evidence of it. And in numerous minor power places Rocks were marked with my hand and foot-prints, And in antras, seedsyllables and

images were placed there, Left as articles of faith for the future With prayers that qualified devotees will discover them.

(Details of Tsogyel's destruction of devils and heretics, signs of her siddhi, follow later.)

Through intuition of the reality and manipulation of the five elements' I filled the earth below with treasures; Through my attainment of an infallible memory I absorbed the pronouncements of Perna Jungne; Through the achievement of fearless conviction I predicted the future, strengthening the destiny of the fortunate; Through identification with all the Buddhas, Perfectly, I performed the deeds of Sugatas past, present and future. And thus I gained these ornaments of spiritual power:

My mundane siddhis, in brief, are control of phenomena, Speedwalking, the eye-salve of omniscience, the healing pills of everlasting life, And the siddhis of sky-dancing, dancing through matter and the mystic dance. And my supreme siddhi: possessing the three samddhis,<sup>4</sup> Dynamic Mind, the vast expanse of Kuntuzangmo, Reality is disclosed as an ornamental display. I have no hope for higher states nor fear of the hells, But my vision is not nihilistic, not extreme, For I possess the conviction of profound Emptiness; I have reached the goal, Dzokchen's pure potential, Where all pervasive Ati is spontaneously accomplished.<sup>5</sup> My mind is coextensive with space, My compassion is more radiant than the sun, My blessings are more extensive than an immense cloud And my siddhi falls faster than gentle rain. So you of the future with faith, Pray! and reading the language of synchronicity You possess the answer to your ultimate prayer.<sup>6</sup> I will guide you out of the lower realms: If you deny that, you deny all the Conquering Buddhas.? False views and opinions cause you to suffer, But again my compassion will not forsake you, And karma exhausted, you become my converts.

Thus ends the sixth chapter in which Tsogyel describes in verse the evidence of her success in meditation and the nature of her siddhi.

**SAMAYA GYA GYA GYA!**

# CHAPTER SEVEN

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## **ESTABLISHING, SPREADING AND PERPETUATING THE TEACHING**

The Buddha's teaching has no other purpose than the welfare of mankind. The well-being of mankind is the only object of a Buddha's activity. Therefore there are three parts to this chapter that describes the way in which Tsogyel served all living beings. The first part describes the manner in which she firmly established the precious tradition of the Buddha's teaching, exorcising evil spirits and converting diabolists and unbelievers. The second part describes how having established the tradition she disseminated the teachings of sutra and tantra, thereby expanding the monastic communities and sustaining them. And the third part describes how she concealed an inexhaustible wealth of apocalyptic teaching-treasures to be revealed in the future so that the Word of the Conquerors would not disappear but increase until samsara is emptied of worldly desire.

Nyatri Tsenpo, descended from the Sakya Clan of India, was enthroned king of all Tibet. He propagated the Bon religion. The last of his line was Lhatotori, in whose reign the Buddha's teaching was introduced into Tibet. The name of Indian Sakyamuni became well-known in the Four Districts of Central Tibet, and the people received transmission of the practice of the ten virtues.' At this time the doctrines of Reformed Bon were propagated widely. The practice of these doctrines was in accord with the Buddha's teaching. The Reformed Bon believed that the Buddha Sakyamuni and the Bon Master, Shenrab, were two forms of one essence, and painted scrolls depicting this relationship became popular. This new movement became known as The New Translation of Zhangzhung.<sup>2</sup> During the lifetime of the Buddhist Emperor Songtsen Gampo, who was an emanation of Arya Avalokiteṣvara, two images of the Lord Buddha were brought to Tibet and installed in the Lhasa and Ramoche Temples, which the King had built for that purpose. He raised one hundred and eight other temples that were instrumental in the conversion of the Four Districts and the borderlands.' Many clay and cast images, and painted scrolls depicting the gods, all of Nepali or Chinese design, became popular.



When the naturally manifest image called Jowo Zhalzema (Tara) miraculously appeared in Trandruk, the astonished King built a particularly sublime temple for her. The sacred name of the Three Jewels as Deity, the practice of the Six Syllable Mantra (OM MANI PADMA HUNG), and the image of Great Compassion (Mahakarunika - Tujechembo), spread throughout the Land of Tibet as far as the Chinese border. Both the Buddha's teaching and reformed Bon spread, existing together free of prejudice. There was no distinction made between the values of different practices. Thus it was said regarding circumambulation, to ambulate anti-clockwise indicated Dzokchen, to ambulate clockwise indicated mahamudra, and to make prostration indicated Umachembo (maharnadhyarnaka). The King established a law based upon the ten virtues. Tonmi Sambhota translated many tantras of Tujechembo, extensive, abridged and concise, and the King, his ministers, courtiers and queens, lived strictly according to their commitments and pledges to that deity.

Twentyfive years after the God-king died, the influence of the heretical Bonshamans increased, and both the Buddha's teaching and Reformed Bon were bitterly persecuted. The followers of Reformed Bon were muted even as they are today. Some were banished to Kham, some to Yar and other outlying places, until none remained in Central Tibet. When the Buddha's teaching was threatened with eradication, the King and his ministers were at odds, but influence prevented further persecution, although faith remained at a low ebb. The religion of the misguided Bonshamans corrupted the country, so that later, at the time of the Buddhist Emperor Trisong Detsen, conditions had been created that made propagation of the Buddha's teaching very difficult.

The religion of the Bonshamans with its deviant metaphysics held that there were no such places as purelands. Their gods were spirits - gyalpo, gongpo and others of the eight-fold classes of spirits - and country gods and earth-lords, and Cha and Yang, Gods of Chance and Fortune, and other mundane entities. Their religion prescribed exchange of daughters for marriage to sons, and elaborate wedding celebrations. Their teachings were transmitted as inspired fables and legends. It was believed that Cha and Yang, the Gods of Chance and Fortune, could be propitiated by dance and song. In autumn they

performed a blood sacrifice of a thousand wild asses. In spring they performed a rite in which the legs of a hind were offered to the gods as ransom for new life. In winter blood sacrifice was made to the Bon-god (Bon-lha), and in summer they killed an offering and made sacrifice to the Bon Master (Shenrab). Thus they accumulated the karma of the ten vicious actions and the inexpiable sins. Concerning their metaphysical vision, the universe was held to be immaterial mindstuff in the form of gods and demons, so whatever the mind conceived was a god or demon. Their highest goal was rebirth in the sphere of utter nothingness; failing that rebirth in the sphere of infinity; or at least rebirth in limbo where there is neither existence nor non-existence.<sup>4</sup> The sign of success of their rites was actual manifestation of the god propitiated, who at best would eat the flesh of a sentient being or drink its blood, or at least appear as a rainbow. The common people with little intelligence were impressed by such signs, and believing in the philosophy of the Bonshamans were led to disaster. Anyhow, this perverse religion of the Bonshamans pervaded the country, patronised by the majority of the zhang ministers. At this time the sacred Buddhist paintings and sculpture disappeared, the Buddha's teaching was no longer taught, the Lhasa and Trandruk temples fell into ruins and the provincial temples were destroyed.

Tibet was in a state of anarchy when Ayra Manjugrn incarnated as the Buddhist Emperor Trisong Detsen in order to restore the traditions of the Buddha's teaching. The King invited many scholars from India, amongst whom was the Bodhisattva of Zahor, Santaraksita. The temples of Lhasa, Trandruk and Ramoche, which had been built in fulfilment of the sacred pledge of the Emperor Songtsen Gampo, were repaired and reconsecrated. Then preparation was made for the construction of the Samye Temple, but the Tibetan gods, men and Bonpos caused so many obstacles that construction was postponed. The Abbot, the Bodhisattva ~antaraksita of Zahor, gave this prophetic injunction: 'No man embodied, nor god nor demon disembodied, can ever harm one who has attained an immutable vajrbody. Invite the Lotus Born Master of Orgyen here, otherwise you and I, priest and patron, will face obstacles at every turn.'

Acting upon this advice the King sent three of his trustworthy courtiers, who had studied language, to India to invite Orgyen Guru

Rimpoche to Tibet. The three translators arrived at the feet of the Guru without incident, and having delivered their invitation they returned with him to Tibet. The King, his ministers courtiers and queens were involuntarily seized with faith. An envoy of distant welcome was sent as far as Zhongda; the second envoy of welcome met him at Lhasa; and the King himself with his entourage welcomed him in the Ombu Grove. Leading his guest's horse by the bridle to Samye, the King and patron gained an immediate rapport with his Guru and priest. The King, his ministers, courtiers and the queens all gazed at the Guru with devotion, and overwhelmed by his splendour, the radiance of his being, they were impelled to obey him without hesitation. The Abbot also prostrated before him, and passed some time with him in religious discussion.

After the King, his ministers and their entourage, together with the Abbot, Master and translators, had come to Samye, the Guru examined the site of the projected temple and made his prognosis.

'During the lifetime of my ancestor Songtsen Gampo,' said the King, 'one hundred and eight temples were constructed. But because they were scattered it was not possible to attend to them, and they fell into ruin. I would like to build a like number of temples within the confines of a single wall.'

The Guru agreed, and out of his samadhi he magically projected a vision of four temples each with two satellite temples surrounding a central pagoda temple within a confining wall, a spectacle that all beheld. This design represented the mandala of Mount Meru with its surrounding continents and satellite islands. 'Great King, if we create this vision in wood and stone, will it please your heart?' asked the Guru.

The King was delighted. 'This is inconceivable! Surely it is impossible to fulfil such a dream! If we indeed succeed, this temple complex shall be called Samye, The Inconceivable.'

'Widen your horizons, Great King!' the Guru replied. 'Act! and nothing can stand in your way. As you the King have dominion over human beings, the embodied beings of Tibet, and I control the

formless, disembodied gods and demons, why should we not succeed?'

So Samye was constructed. The outer shell completed and purified, the temples were filled with receptacles of the Buddha's Body, Speech and Mind - images, books and stapas - piled up high. Then the monastic community was assembled. One hundred and eight brilliant translators, who were karmically favoured, were chosen according to the Guru's intuitive judgment. Further, three thousand men were assembled from the thirteen principalities,' and of these three thousand, three hundred were ordained as monks by the Abbot. The Guru became their master (vajrdcarya). But when the translators began their work on the scriptures, the Bon ministers who were hostile to the Buddha's teaching and the Bonshamans referred to above, began to create obstacles. On several occasions translators were banished separately to border areas through the machinations of these diabolists. After the translators' work had been stopped for a third time, the King was forced to accord the Bon religion equal status with the Buddhist, and it was decided that the Bonpos should found the monastery called Bongso in Yarlung.

After the King and his ministers had been reconciled, twentyone scholars were invited at once from India.<sup>6</sup> The hundred and eight translators who had been dispersed were reassembled at Samye, and three thousand candidates for orders gathered from the thirteen principalities to be ordained simultaneously. From Zhangzhung and other Bon areas seven Bon scholars and seven Bon magicians were invited to Ombu. The King sent three courtiers to meet and to escort the great translator Drenpa Namkha Wongchuk; to Guru Rimpoche, who was living with me in Womphu Taktsang, he offered a magnificent horse named Nine Galloping Garudas;<sup>7</sup> and to all the other translators and candidates he dispatched a horse and a pack animal. In this way we all arrived at Samye quickly.

The Guru insisted upon a detour to Lhasa, where he augured seven good omens portending success in the establishment of the Tantra. The Jowo image of Sakyamuni in Lhasa spoke at this time, predicting an auspicious outcome. The Guru returned to Samye in stages and was met by an envoy of welcome in front of the stone flask at Zurkhar.

On the Yobok Plain near Samye a high throne was raised. When Guru Rimpoche took his seat upon it, the twentyone scholars from India, and the Tibetan translators, made obeisance, and the twentyone scholars all said the same: 'A la la! Just this once we are favoured to meet the Guru of Orgyen, Perna Jungne, in person! A la la! This is the fruit of many aeons of accumulated merit!' And gazing at the face of the Guru, they wept. In particular, the meeting of the Guru and Vimalamitra was attended with great joy, like the reunion of a father and his son, and later, hand in hand, they strolled to the Utse Pagoda Temple.

In the first floor shrine room of Utse, the King, his courtiers and the Abbot made prostration, and then they ascended and sat down in the upper shrine room, the abode of the Buddha Vairocana. Here the Guru announced that to facilitate the increase of the Buddha's teaching three rites of consecration should be celebrated at Samye, and three rites of fire sacrifice should be performed to subdue devils. The consecrations were celebrated, but due to the King's distraction he neglected to petition the Guru to conduct the third fire sacrifice, and the Guru omitted to perform it. 'Now if you ask about the future,' the Guru said later, 'the Buddha's teaching will certainly spread, but the power of tempting devils will increase proportionately.'

During the final moon of the year, at the festival known as Loze Daze," both Buddhists and Bonpos converged upon Samye to celebrate the rites of worship of the Tibetan King. The five Bon scholars, who had been personally invited to Samye by the King, did not recognise the sacred symbols of the Buddha's Body, Speech and Mind, and they did not accept the ethic of the ten virtues. They made no prostrations or circumambulation whatsoever, sitting down in a row with their backs to the images. The King and the majority of his ministers were offended. Early the following day the King encountered the Bon in front of the image of Vairocana in the Utse Pagoda. 'O God-king, what does this naked figure and his entourage of eight naked men represent?' asked the Bon scholars. 'What is its purpose? Where did they come from? Are they not Indian pundits?'

'The central, principal figure is an image of the Buddha Vairocana, and his circle of attendants are eight great spiritual heroes,' replied the

King. 'We consider the image to be the actual Body of Buddha, so we prostrate to it and worship it. Our vicious karma is eradicated and merit is accumulated thereby.'

'What are those two horrible forms at the door? Are they not murderers?' the Bon asked further. 'What are they made from and what is their purpose?'

'Those two door-keepers are Glorious Lekden Nakpo, the Great Raging One, Master of All Magical Power,' said the King. 'He is the executioner of vow-breakers, but he is an ally of those who follow the mahayana. These images of him were made from various precious stones by divine sages and blessed by the great Indian sage, Perna Jungne. This deity performs the very necessary function of spreading the Buddha's doctrine and purifying the defilements of sentient beings.'

'What can come of clay statues fashioned by skilful men?' the Bon asked scornfully. 'You have been deceived and beguiled, O King. Tomorrow we Bon will perform a spectacular rite for you, a sacrifice that will completely renew your spiritual resources.'

Later, while walking outside for recreation and observing the many stupas, the Bon asked the King, 'What are those monuments over there that have a pile of vulture droppings on the top, rolls of fat around their middles and a pile of dog manure as their base?'

'Those are called "Sugatas' reliquaries" or "symbols of the Buddha's absolute, empty being". The meaning of these names is self-explanatory', replied the King. 'There is no representation of the Buddha's visionary being, but because the stupa's apparitional form, this deceptively concrete edifice, is the receptacle of offerings of all beings, it is also called "place of worship" or "receptacle of offerings".<sup>9</sup> Of the components of its superstructure, the thirteen discs indicating the thirteen wheels of the teaching's propagation are adorned with the canopy and crowning ornaments symbolic of the Buddha's eighty ideal marks and signs. The dome indicates the four boundless qualities of absolute, empty being - loving kindness, sympathetic joy, compassion and equanimity. And the base, decorated with lions that are at once a vehicle and a throne, represents a treasure

house of wealth and wishes fulfilled.'

'This monument built with so much hard work is totally useless,' said the Bon. 'It is useless as a barricade for courageous warriors and it is useless as a hiding place for cowards. It is most strange. Some evil Indian has bewitched the King.'

At this the hearts of the King and his ministers shrank.

Then the Bon gathered in the three Lady Temples (Jowo Ling) to perform the rite of worship of the King.<sup>10</sup> The Bon priests stayed in the eight small temples and the scholars in the Tamdin Temple (Tamdin Ling)." 'Because this rite is for a great king,' said the Bon priests to the King, 'we will need a stag with fine antlers, a hind with a turquoise halter, a thousand male and a thousand female yaks, sheep and goats, and a complete outfit of royal robes.' The King quickly supplied them. 'We need specimens of all things existing in the world,' they then demanded, and the King quickly supplied them. 'We need eight kinds of wine and nine kinds of grain,' they told him, and it was granted.

Then the King and his entourage received a formal invitation to witness the rite of the Bon, and King, queens, ministers and courtiers arrived to find nine Bon scholars sitting in a central line, and in lines to the right and left of them nine magicians and other Bon priests. The many slaughterers called Servants of the Sacrifice each carried a knife; the many Purifier Bon brought water in golden ladles which they sprinkled upon the deer and other sacrificial beasts to purify them; and other shamans called Black Bon threw grain upon them. The shamans called Petitioner Bon asked questions and received answers from the gods and demons that surrounded them. Then the slaughterers, crying 'Here is a stag!' cut the throat of the animal in sacrifice. Three thousand yaks, sheep and goats were sacrificed at the same time in the same way. Next the four legs of a hind were severed in sacrifice. Crying 'Here is a she-dri!' 'Here is an ewe!', 'Here is a she-goat!' as they took each kind of animal, the slaughterers flayed the limbs of three thousand living animals. Horses, oxen, zo, mules, dogs, birds and pigs were sacrificed in different ways. After the killing the stench of burning hair permeated Samye as the various kinds of flesh were

offered up. After the roasting a shaman called the Butcher Bon cut up the meat; a shaman called the Sorter Bon divided the meat and distributed it to the various functionaries; and the Diviner Bon made calculations. Then the Blood-letters, having already filled the copper bowls with blood, arranged them on skins while other priests piled the meat upon more skins. Their work completed they all chanted invocations. As the King, his ministers and queens watched with apprehension the copper bowls of blood began to steam and boil, and from the steam rainbow-like wraiths shone and sparkled, and various evil disembodied voices sounding shrill or drunken, with heavy breathing or with raucous laughter, could be heard. 'These are the voices of the Swastika Gods, Cha, the God of Chance, and Yang, the God of Fortune,' cried the Bon priests jubilantly. The flesh and blood was then offered to us to eat and drink.

'Does this bloody rite have any virtue in it?' asked the King.

'It is good for the King,' they answered, 'but it is of little benefit to us. Isn't your heart full, O King? Aren't you amazed?'

But the King was depressed, and the others were filled with confusion and doubt as they returned to the Utse Pagoda. All the scholars and translators who had witnessed the rite were unanimous in their opinion. 'One doctrine cannot have two teachers,' they said. 'If the east is down, then naturally the west is up. Fire and water can never be allies. No purpose is served by mixing the Buddha's doctrine with the tradition of these extremist fanatics. The wise man abhors evil companions. We will not accompany these fools for a moment. We will not drink the water from the valley in which these vow-breakers live. Rather we will seek peace and happiness in the border areas.' Then they sent this ultimatum to the King, and presented it to him nine times over, 'Either the teaching of the Buddha is exclusively established in Tibet, or Bon is permitted to flourish. It is absolutely impossible for them to co-exist.'

On the ninth occasion of presentation of this petition, the King called his ministers and court before him, and addressed them: 'Tibetan ministers and subjects, please listen to me! As the customs of the Buddhists and Bonpos are like the palm and the back of the hand and



mutual recrimination abounds, who can sustain confidence in either? You Indian scholars, Tibetan translators and newly ordained monks who have given me such uncompromising counsel, what is to be done?'

The Bonpo zhang ministers replied, 'O God-king, when the river and its water-course are the same size there is harmony. Previously when this problem arose, it was necessary to banish many translators. If you follow the same course of action now, both Bonpos and Buddhists can sleep in their own beds, and there will be peace.'

Then Go the Elder demanded silence. 'When Bon is on the increase, then the King is disconsolate and full of doubt and fear. When Buddhism spreads the ministers lose their confidence and their purpose wavers. When Bon and Buddhism are given equal status, like fire and water, they become deadly enemies. It is evident that this agony must finally cease. Truth shall be separated from falsehood in a court of law. The relative validity of the two doctrines shall be weighed by the pebble procedure. If the real is distinguished from the unreal nothing at all remains to be done. Therefore, tomorrow, with the King presiding, the ministers and courtiers in the front row, the Buddhist faction in a row on the King's right and the Bon in a row on his left, a contest will be initiated. By metaphysics shall you be judged. Truth shall be given recognition by the customary cup of wine, and fraud shall receive just punishment. Further, the rivals must demonstrate miraculous power as evidence of their righteousness, their creative skill fully potentiated through psychic strength. Then if the Buddha's doctrine is proven valid, it will be preserved and strengthened and Bon will be eradicated. If Bon is validated, then Buddhism will be destroyed and Bon will be established. A decree to this effect shall be promulgated. Whoever disobeys this decree, whether it should be the king, ministers, queens or subjects, he will be delivered up to the law. All must vow to abide by it.'

This was found acceptable to the King, ministers, queens and courtiers, all of whom vowed to obey the decree. The Bonpo ministers advised concurrence, believing that in such a contest the Buddhists could not possibly rival the magical powers and craft of the Bon.

Then the King sent this reply to the scholars' petition:

Pay heed, O you gods, masters of wisdom and power! Buddhists and Bonpos treat each other as executioners, And as neither gives credit to the other The King, ministers and queens are full of distrust for both; Both Buddhist and Bonpo are overcome by doubt and fear. Therefore, tomorrow, you will compete with the Bon priests, Rivalling them in signs of truth, proof of power, in magic and psychic strength. Whichever dharma inspires confidence in the King and his ministers In that dharma shall we place our trust, and that dharma shall we follow. The false and untrustworthy shall be utterly rejected, And they shall be banished to barbarian tribal borderlands. This the King and ministers have ordained. Reflect and act wisely.

The scholars were delighted to receive this communication, and they sent this response:

So be it, Lord of Men, sacred God-king! This is the method of all just kings. The righteous shall vanquish the unrighteous; The truth will certainly defeat these devils and rebels. As all the great sages and adepts are present here, More devils will perish than in Vajrasana. Often before has our dharma defeated fanatical extremists, So why should we fear these common Bon? Whoever is defeated should be punished by the victors, And it is just that the losers should be banished.

The King was very pleased by this reply. He then explained the terms of the contest in detail to the Bon, and told them to prepare. The Bon sent assurance that their nine scholars would win the contest, informing him that their nine magicians were unrivalled in magical power.

On the fifteenth day of the new year, in the middle of the great plain of Yobok near Samye, a high throne was raised for the King. The scholars and translators took their seats on his right, the Bon on his left and the ministers and courtiers in rows in front of him. Behind them milled a vast throng wearing red or black, assembled from the Four Districts of Central Tibet. First the King made this pronouncement: 'HO! People of my Land of Tibet, gods and men, Buddhists and

Bonpos, ministers, queens and courtiers, please pay attention. Formerly the kings permitted Buddhism and Bon to co-exist. Then the Bon gained ascendancy. I have tried to establish Buddhism and Bon in equality like my ancestor Songtsen Gampo, but Buddhism and Bon are inimical, and mutual recrimination has created doubt and suspicion in the minds of the King and his ministers. Now we will compare and appraise their metaphysics and whichever system gains our trust will be adopted as a whole. Whoever refuses to embrace the winners' doctrine the law will destroy. The adherents of whichever of these two systems, Buddhism or Bon, proves false will be banished to the borderlands, so that even the name of their doctrine will be forgotten in this land. This official decree warrants that the vanquished will receive their just deserts. To the victors we shall accord all praise, and all will adhere to their doctrine.' The King repeated this decree nine times over, and the ministers corroborated it by repeating it from their law scroll, and all were agreed.

Then the Great Orgyen himself levitated to the height of a palm tree and addressed the contestants: 'It is right to distinguish the metaphysics of Buddhism from Bon. First, since it is the preface to all formal debate, sharpen your wits with the customary exchange of riddles.<sup>12</sup> Then with gems of exegesis lay bare the heart of your tradition, because there lies the joy of every lineage. At last, your arguments, their premises and conclusions will be judged, because authentic polemics are the mark of a sound metaphysique. Thereafter, you will demonstrate evidence of your siddhi, because magical skill inspires confidence in the King and his ministers.' After this announcement he manifested the essence of his Body as Sakyamuni, Lord of the Sakyas, and the King, his ministers and the Bonpos were overwhelmed by his aura; he manifested an emanation of his Speech in the form of Padma Sambhava,<sup>13</sup> the leader of the hosts of scholars, and the translators and scholars were given courage and inspiration; and an emanation of his Mind took the form of Dorje Trollo, vanquishing the opinionated, and showing miracles contrary to nature so that even the Bonpos gained undivided faith and praised him.

Then Atsara Pelyang and a Bon engaged in the exchange of riddles, and the Bon won. The Bon entourage worshipped their god, raising his flag. The King presented them with the ceremonial cup of wine, and

the Bonpo ministers were contented, giving their contestants in riddles generous gifts. The King was anxious. 'Early morning food is a presage of imminent pain,' said the scholars. 'They have won the contest in riddles, but riddles are not part of Buddha's teaching. Now the Bon must discuss religion with the scholars.'

The Great Sage Vimalamitra arose at the head of his row:

All phenomena arise from a cause, And that cause was explained by the Tathagata. What effects the cessation of that cause The Great Ascetic explained in these terms: Do no evil whatsoever And cultivate virtue in full measure; Your own mind is thus fully disciplined.

And sitting in lotus posture in the sky, his aura glowing, he snapped his fingers thrice. The nine Bon magicians fainted away, and the nine Bon scholars were struck dumb. They sat stunned without an answer. Then, likewise, the twentyfive Indian scholars and the hundred and eight translators each expounded an essential passage of scripture, and taking a topic of contention each demonstrated miraculous, authentic evidence of his realisation. The Bon were struck dumb, enshrouded in gloom because they were unable to perform any genuine miracles.

'You must win this debate,' urged the Bon ministers. 'Show your magical powers. These monks have astonished the gods and men of Tibet with their miracles. They have argued convincingly. Their demeanour and behaviour is a delight to the mind, and they radiate benevolence and joy. It seems that our expectations have been betrayed. Now if you have any skill at all, whether it is in evidence of siddhi, magical powers or evil spells, use it quickly.' And their minds disturbed, they became angry and bitter, exhorting their priests with terrible curses.

'These Indian barbarians have insulted our Bon Swastika Deities,' said the Bon. 'We will not debate with these scholars. Later we will kill them by magic. We will only debate with the translators, because they are Tibetans.'

Meanwhile, praising the scholars, the King gave each of them a pound of gold dust, a yellow begging bowl and a robe of brocade. The

flag of the dharma was unfurled, the conch was blown and an actual, miraculous rain of flowers fell upon them. From the sky the gods proclaimed their homage in verse, and revealed themselves in reality. At that all the Tibetan people were amazed, and their tears of faith in the Buddha's teaching fell like rain. But upon the ranks of the Bon fell hail and stones. 'The gods are indicating the genuine signs of achievement,' said the Bonpo ministers, and they paid homage to the Buddha's teaching, placing the feet of the scholars upon their heads, and acknowledging their misdeeds to the translators. Manjusri himself appeared to the King showing him the difference between true and false dharma.

'The Buddhists already hold the victory,' most of the people agreed. 'Their marvellous dharma is superior. We shall all practise the Buddha's teaching.' And they began to disperse.

'Stay!' commanded the King. 'The translators must debate with the Bon.'

First the great translator Vairotsana debated with the Bon Tangnak. Then Namkhai Nyingpo debated with Tongyu. Likewise each translator debated with a Bon and not a single Bon could rise to the height of his rival. The King counted out a pebble for each valid statement or action and a black pebble for each inauthentic statement or action. Vairotsana accrued nine hundred of the white pebbles and Tangnak accumulated five thousand of the black. The translators relaxed in relief, and the sacred flag was again unfurled. At the end of his debate Namkhai Nyingpo of Nub had accrued three thousand white pebbles of truth and Tongyu had acquired thirty thousand black pebbles of falsehood. Again the translators unfurled the flag. I, Tsogyel, debated with the Swastika Bon yogini, Bonmo Tso of the Chokro Clan, and I was victorious. I demonstrated my magical powers, which I will describe later, and Bonmo Tso was struck dumb. Likewise one hundred and twenty translators were victorious. Even the nine leading Bon sages were defeated. Struck dumb, their tongues shrinking, their lips paralysed, their faces perspiring, their legs shaking, they were unable to utter a word.



Then the time arrived for the competition in evidence of siddhi. Vairotsana held the three realms in the palm of his hand. Namkhai Nyingpo, riding on the sun's rays, demonstrated many miracles. Sangye Yeshe summoned malevolent spirits with a gesture of his phurba, slew his enemies with a movement of his phurba, and pierced a stone with a thrust of his phurba. Dorje Dunjom ran like the wind, encircling the four continents in a flash, and offered the King seven

different kinds of treasure as proof of his feat. Gyelwa Chokyang projected Hayagriva, the Horse-necked, from his fontanelle, instantaneously filling the microcosmic universes with the sound of his neighing. Tsangri Gompo conquered the three realms in an instant, and offered the god Brahma's nine-spoked wheel as proof of his feat. Gyelwa Lodro walked on water. Denma Tsemang conclusively defeated the Bon in religious debate, explaining the Kanjur Rochok<sup>14</sup> from memory, projecting the forms of the vowels and consonants into the sky. Kaba Peltsek enslaved the legions of arrogant spirits. Odren Zhonnu swam like a fish in the ocean. Juana Kumara drew ambrosia from a rock. Ma Rinchen Chok ate pebbles, chewing them like dough. Pelgyi Dorje moved unimpeded through rocks and mountains. Sokpo Lhapel summoned a female tiger in heat from the south by means of his hook-mudra, his mantra of summons and his samadhi. Drenpa Namkha summoned a wild yak from the north. Chokro Lui Gyeltsen invoked the manifest forms of the Three Lords of the Buddha's Three Aspects in the sky in front of him. Langdro Konchok Jungden brought down thirteen thunderbolts at once, and despatched them like arrows wherever he wished. Kyeu-chung caught and bound all the Dakinis with his samadhi. Gyelmo Yudra Nyingpo disciplined the Bon in grammar, logic and science, and overpowering external appearances through the penetrating insight of his samadhi, he effected many transformations. Gyelwa Jangchub levitated in lotus posture. Tingdzin Zangpo flew in the sky, his vision encompassing the four continents simultaneously. In this manner all of the Twentyfive Mahasiddhas of Chimphu demonstrated evidence of their siddhi. Furthermore, the Eight Siddhas of Yerpa, the Thirty Tantric Priests of Sheldrak, the Fifty-five Recluses of Yong Dzung, etc., all showed a particular dissimilar sign of siddhi. They transmuted fire into water and water into fire. They danced in the sky, passed unimpeded through mountains and rocks, walked on water, reduced many to a few and increased a few into a multitude. All the Tibetan people could not help but gain great faith in the Buddha, and the Bon could not help their defeat. The Bonpo sympathisers amongst the ministers were speechless.

Concerning the details of my contest with the Bon in evidence of siddhi the Bon were defeated. But afterwards they wove nine evil spells called The Magical Odour of the Skunk, Flinging Food to the

Dog, Snuffing the Butter Lamp with Blood, Black Magical Leather, Projection of Pestilential Spirits and Projection of Devils, etc.<sup>15</sup> With these curses they struck down nine young monks at once, but I spat into each of the monks' mouths, so that they stood up fully restored, showing greater skill in the play of wisdom than before. Thus again the Bon were defeated. Then pointing my index finger in gesture of threat at the nine magicians, and incanting PHAT! nine times over, paralysed, they lost consciousness. To restore them I intoned HUNG nine times. Levitating in lotus posture, etc., I demonstrated my full control over elemental forces. Spinning fire wheels of five colours on the tips of the fingers of my right hand, I terrified the Bon, and then ejecting streams of five-coloured water from the tips of the fingers of my left hand, the streams swirled away into a lake. Taking a Chimphu boulder, breaking it like butter, I moulded it into various images. Then I projected twentyfive apparitional forms similar to myself, each displaying some proof of siddhi.

'These Bon cannot even defeat a woman,' said the people of Tibet, becoming contemptuous of them.

'Tomorrow our nine magicians will each call down a thunderbolt simultaneously, and reduce this Samye to a pile of ashes,' said the Bon. And they went to Hepori and called down their thunderbolts, but I wound them around the tip of my index finger, holding a gesture of threat, and flung them upon the Bon settlement of Ombu, which was demolished. After I had called down thirteen thunderbolts upon the heads of the Bon, they returned to Samye repentant.

When the Bonpos were to be banished, having been defeated in magical skill as described above, the ministers Takra and Lugong and others swore that they would not go into exile. They returned to Ombu where they made elaborate preparations to ruin Tibet by unleashing the efficacious magical powers of the ninefold cycle of the minor karmas and then the ninefold cycle of major karmas of Pelmo, through imprecations cast into fire, into water, into the earth and into the air by means of a flag and so on. The King fully explained this matter to the translators and scholars, asking them for means to repel the evil. Guru Rimpoche, assuring them that all would be well, instructed me to protect them. Then I went to the Utse Pagoda where I revealed the



mandala of Dorje Phurba, and practised Phurba's rites, until after seven days the deities of the mandala appeared. The siddhi obtained in this practice was the power to make enemies their own executioners. Thus the Bon destroyed themselves. Both Takra and Lugong, together with five other Bonpo ministers implacably hostile to the dharma, died at once, and of the nine magicians eight died, only one remaining. Thus the Bon covens became empty, all defeated by magic.

The Emperor immediately confined all the Bonpos at Samye, where they suffered some chastisement. Guru Rimpoche decided their fate. 'Since the Reformed Bonpos have a faith that is in accordance with the Buddha's doctrine, they may sleep in their own beds. The Bonshamans, however, all fanatical extremists, shall be banished to border countries. No purpose is served by killing them.'

The King, acting in accordance with the Guru's command, classified Bon books into Reformed and Shamanist categories, casting those of the Bonshamans into fire, while the books of Reformed Bon were concealed as hidden treasures for future revelation. The Reformed Bonpos were sent back to Zhangzhung and the provinces, while the Bonshamans were sent to Treulakchan in Mongolia.

Thereafter, the King, his ministers and courtiers, all the King's subjects, both Tibetan and foreigners, were bound by law to refrain from Bonshaman practices, and to practise the Buddha's teaching alone. Due to this law all of Central Tibet and Kham as far as the Throne Gate of China became filled with the teaching of the Buddha and the community of the Sangha, and many monasteries and meditation centres and academies were founded.

Then after the King had promulgated this second decree, at Samye the drum of the teaching was beaten, the conch of the teaching was blown, the flag of the teaching unfurled, and the throne of the teaching was prepared. The twentyone Indian scholars took their seats upon nine brocaded cushions. Great Orgyen Perna Jungne, the Bodhisattva Abbot of Zahor and the Kashmiri Sage Vimalamitra took their seats on great golden thrones furnished with nine brocaded cushions. The translators Vairotsana and Namkhai Nyingpo each took his seat upon more piles of nine brocaded cushions, and the other translators were

seated upon piles of two or three brocaded cushions. Then to each of them the King gave generous gifts of gold and other presents. To each of the great Indian scholars he presented nine bolts of brocade, three golden bowls, three pounds of gold dust, etc., so that the offering created a mountainous pile. To the three priests, from Zahor, Orgyen and Kashmir, he presented a plate of gold and turquoises and a heap of brocade, etc., gifts of immense honour. Then he entreated them all to propagate the teaching of both sutra and tantra in Tibet. All the scholars were delighted to accept, smiling their approval, and the Abbot, the Vajra Master and Vimalamitra gave their solemn word that they would stay to strengthen the teaching of the Buddha until the King's ambitions were fulfilled.

Thereafter, seven thousand monks entered the academy at Samye, and nine hundred entered the meditation centre at Chimphu; a thousand monks entered the academy at Trandruk, and a hundred monks entered the meditation centre at Yong Dzong; three thousand monks entered the academy at Lhasa, and five hundred monks entered the meditation centre at Yerpa: the new monks were ordained at these three pairs of institutions within a year. Furthermore, monasteries and meditation centres were established at Langtang in Kham, Rabgang in Minyak, Gyeltam in Jang, Jatsang in Mar, Rongzhi and Gangdruk in Kham, Dongchu in Powo, Ronglam in Barlam, Buchu in Kongpo, in Chimyul, at Danglung in Dakpo, at Tsuklak in the Four Districts of Central Tibet, and at Takden Jomo Nang in Tsang. On Everest, etc., throughout Tsang, Tsangrong and Ngari, monasteries and meditation centres were established in great numbers.

The Second Part to Chapter Seven describes how in her benevolence Yeshe Tsogyel strengthened the Religious Community.

The Buddha's teaching, monastic communities, tantric colleges and the exegetical tradition spread and increased in the land of Tibet without opposition. Then the Indian, Chinese and Nepali scholars, laden with gold and provisions offered to them as a thanksgiving offering, returned to their own lands full of happiness. The Bodhisattva Abbot the Vajra Master and Vimalamitra remained in Tibet turning the wheel of the teaching of sutra and tantra, and soon the ambitions of the Emperor had been completely fulfilled. King Trisong Detsen's

authority and sovereignty was higher than the sky; aggressors in the four border areas were subdued and the Bonshamans had vanished. Not even a fraction of his life's work remaining undone, the King appointed Prince Mune Tsenpo to the throne, while he himself was totally free of the suffering of even the most trivial anxiety. Thus in a state of mind that would pass from bliss to further bliss, at twilight on the day before his passing, he gave final advice to the Prince, the queens, his courtiers and ministers. At midnight he offered flowers of consecration in all the temples, and he gave benediction. Before first light the following morning, he chanted the liturgy of his practice of the creative process of meditation upon his Yidam, and at daybreak he dissolved into the plenum of clear light in Ayra Manjuṣri's heart, and vanished.

Soon afterwards the Prince Mune Tsenpo was assassinated when a queen administered the poison of calumny. His brother, Mutri Tsenpo, was appointed to the throne in his place, and crowned king. The queens were very hostile to the Buddha's teaching at this time, and incited two religious communities to quarrel. With skilful means and compassion I brought the two groups together and reconciled them. Thereafter, quarrelling within the Community was prohibited. It was at this time that the woman Bonmo Tso of the Chokro Clan, an adherent of Reformed Bon living at Hepori near Samye, who I had known well since I was a child, presented me with a subtly poisoned elixir to drink. I drank it knowingly, saying:

O listen, friend of my heart, This ambrosial elixir is delicious! Myself, yes this immaterial vajrabody, Ambrosial in essence,<sup>16</sup> has become pure essence. Is it not wonderful! While your ambition remains unfulfilled, My aspiration has been consummated. Do not be jaundiced in jealousy; Practise Bon and Buddhism with no bias; Pray to the Yidam deity; Cultivate a pure vision of your friends and sisters in truth. Compassionate One, give up your power-play, And give faith and devotion to Lord Guru.

And my body became a mass of radiant, rainbow light, and every pore of my body was filled with a vajra. The Bon yogini was ashamed and, unable to stay there any longer, she went to another country.

The queens, full of vindictiveness, banished me to Tsang. In Tsang I stayed first at Kharak Gang, and three hundred monks gathered in the Kharak retreat centre I established there. Later this place was to become known as Jomo Kharak. Thirty-nine of the three hundred monks in the Kharak meditation centre gained siddhi, attaining the ability to display miracles, and of these thirty-nine, there were twenty with the capacity to serve others, and seven who were equal to myself and whose accomplishment for the sake of others was immeasurable. Then I meditated at the place that was later to be called Jomo Nang because I practised internal meditation there, and of the one thousand nuns who gathered there, a hundred gained the ability to give ultimate meaning to the lives of others," seven were my equal, and five hundred attained siddhi.

Then continuing to Sangak Ugpalung, I recommenced my labours, and my reputation spread throughout Tsang. A thousand tantric priests and monks and one thousand three hundred nuns assembled there. I brought all these to spiritual maturity and release through the Ultimate Tantra, some becoming unalterably set towards their goal. Seven became known as the Seven Blessed Sages of Tsang, and a further eighty became known as the Eighty Mahasiddhas.

Specifically, I taught all these initiates in Tsang through the lineage of the oral transmission of the pronouncements.<sup>18</sup> In Jomo Nang I taught the secret precepts of the whispered transmission, and in Ugpalung I established the scriptural tradition. Many siddhas appeared in Kharak and Jomo Nang.

Then I went to live in Shampo Gang, and it was there that seven bandits robbed me of my possessions and raped me. Afterwards I sang them this song of introduction to the four joys:

**NAMO GURU PADMA SIDDHI HRI!**

**My sons you have met a sublime consort, the Great Mother,  
And by virtue of your resources of accumulated merit,  
Fortuitously, you have received the four empowerments.  
Concentrate upon the evolution of the four levels of joy.**

Immediately you set eyes upon my body-*maṇḍala*,  
Your mind was possessed by a lustful disposition,  
And your confidence won you the Vase Initiation.  
Apprehend the very essence of lust,  
Identify it as your creative vision of the deity,  
And that is nothing but the Yidam deity himself.  
Meditate upon lustful mind as Divine Being.

Uniting with space, your consort's secret *maṇḍala*,  
Pure pleasure exciting your nerve centres,  
Your aggression was assuaged and loving kindness was born,  
And its power won you the Mystic Initiation.  
Apprehend the very essence of joy,  
Mix it with your vital energy and maintain it awhile,  
And if that is not *mahāmudrā*, nothing is.  
Experience pleasure as *mahāmudrā*.

Joined to your consort's sphere of pure pleasure,  
Inspired to involuntary exertion,  
Your mind merged with my mind,  
And that blessing won you the Wisdom Initiation.  
Undistracted, guard the very essence of pleasure,  
Identify pure pleasure with Emptiness,  
And that is what is known as immaculate empty pleasure.  
Experience pure pleasure as supreme joy.

United at your consort's blissful nerve,  
Our two nectars fused into one elixir.  
The phenomena of self and others extinguished,  
Awareness won you the Initiation of Creative Expression.  
Guard the natural purity in the world of appearances,  
Identify your love and attachment with Emptiness,  
And that is nothing other than Dzokchen itself.  
Experience innate joy as no-joy.

This is extraordinary, exalted secret instruction;  
To consciously practise this method brings a fall,  
But discovered by chance it gives miraculous release.  
You attained the four empowerments at once,  
And your success was matured by the four stages of joy.

As soon as I had spoken the seven thieves gained simultaneous spiritual maturity and release. They gained energy control and knowledge of the evolution of the four joys. Without leaving their bodies these seven Mahasiddhas, who were thieves, arrived in the Land of Orgyen and served other beings to immeasurable purpose.

Thereafter, having gained seven new disciples, I arrived again in the Valley of Nepal, where my previous patrons and the King of Nepal, called Jila Jipha, supported me, and I propagated many of the Guru's secret precepts. Here in Nepal a fourteen-year-old girl called Dakini, daughter of Bhadana and Nagini, became my disciple. I conferred upon her the name Kalasiddhi because she would gain the siddhi of the Tantra in the incarnate family of Dakinis. Then from Khosho we travelled in stages to Mangyul, where I revealed the mandala of the Tantra Lama, and for one year Kalasiddhi, Lodro Kyi, Dechenmo, Selta and others, applied themselves to their meditation, and through my instruction they gained siddhi. As many as two hundred faithful people gathered there, and although the Buddha's teaching had made little headway in that country before, after my visit both lay men and women at least knew the essential doctrine of karmic causality.

While I was still in Mangyul the King Mutri Tsenpo sent three of his

courtiers to invite me back to Samye. Leaving the nun Lodro Kyi as my representative in Mangyul, I departed for Tibet with twelve disciples. Kharak, Jomo Nang and Ugpalung offered generous hospitality, honour and worship on my way to Samye. The King arranged a wonderful welcome, and a procession of rejoicing monks accompanied me to the Utse Pagoda. The ministers, courtiers and translators were overjoyed to see me, greeting me as if I had returned from the dead, but as soon as I was able I went to the stupa enshrining the remains of the Great Abbot Santaraksita. I made an offering of seven handfuls of gold dust and nine pieces of silk in a mandala, and weeping profusely I said:

Alas! alas! O Best of Teachers, Holy One, The sky is vast and the stars are many, But now that the Seven-horsed Sun has gone Who can dispel the gloom of our ignorance? Where is the shining lamp in this Tibetan isle of darkness? Where is the stainless globe of fire-crystal? Now that the beams of your compassion no longer sustain us, Who will lead the blind who stare like statues?

The king's treasury may be filled with wealth, But now that our wishfulfilling gem has gone, Who will grant us our hearts' desire? Who now is the deliverer of our land of hungry ghosts? Where have you gone, precious Wishfulfilling Gem? Now that the fountain of our desires no longer sustains us, Who can protect the lame who have legs they cannot use?

The microcosmic worlds may be full of kings, But without a universal emperor who will protect us? To whom can we look for refuge in this savage Tibet? Where have you gone, universal emperor and lord? Now that a teacher of discipline no longer sustains us, Who will protect the dumb who have tongues they cannot use?

There are many saints and sages in Magadha in India, But without you, Great Abbot, who will bear the torch of the doctrine? Where have you gone, exalted regent of the Buddha? Now that a teacher of sutra and tantra no longer sustains us, Who will protect these corpses who think and move?

Alas! alas! O great sage and scholar, Santaraksita, Bodhisattva, god of

gods, Lord, through your compassion, may I and all living beings, Walk the path in every lifetime, and with ease Gain maturity and release through the teaching of sutra and tantra, Achieving the good of all beings through the four principles of fellowship. 19 Perfecting, completing, the activity of the Bodhisattva, May I become the leader of the teaching and teachers; Raising the doctrine's banner to remain for ever, In human form crossing the ocean in the boat of the doctrine, May I be Lama of beings, the captain of the boat.

Then from the upper part of the stupa a disembodied voice intoned:

**OM ĀH HŪNG!**

**Performing the actions of Buddhas, past present and future,  
Your activity will spread co-extensive with the sky;  
Spreading root and branch of the Buddha's teaching,  
embracing the ten directions,  
All-embracing Mother of Buddhas past, present and future,  
be blessed.**

All those assembled there heard the same sound and were happy.

Then I became the King's priestess and remained in Chimphu for eleven years, living with my Guru, spreading the Buddha's teaching in theory and practice. Drawing out the tantric teaching and secret precepts contained within the Guru's spiritual treasury, he bestowed them all upon me, retaining nothing, just as the contents of one vessel are poured into another. Of particular importance, Guru Rimpoche told me this: 'Very soon the time will come for me to go to Ngayab Khandroling, the Land of the Dakinis. I must leave behind me inexhaustible teaching, immense in its profundity,<sup>2°</sup> throughout the entire Tibetan Empire. You must carefully assimilate and compile and prepare my teaching as treasure to be revealed in the future. Also, as the girl Kalasiddhi has realised the meaning of her name, having gained the siddhi of the Tantra in the family of incarnate conch-like Dakinis, she must be my consort in the task of engendering many profound, secret precepts of the Tantra that are not found elsewhere, and which I wish concealed as apocalyptic treasures.'



I presented the girl Kalasiddhi to him as he requested. Then I revealed the mandala of the Communion of the Lama's Mind,<sup>21</sup> and brought the King Mutri Tsenpo to maturity and release, and thus he continued in his ancestral stream of the Buddha's teaching.

Then all the teaching that Guru Rimpoche had given and which was to be concealed as treasure for future revelation (terma) was written down. Namkhai Nyingpo who was preeminent at speed-writing, Atsara Pelyang preeminent at calligraphy, Denma Tsemang preeminent at spelling, Chokro Lui-Gyeltsen preeminent at clarity, Yudra Nyingpo master of grammar and logic, Vairotsana master of every skill, and myself endowed with an infallible memory: all the twentyfive disciples and many acolytes assisted in the work. Some wrote in Sanskrit, some in the Dakini script, some in Newari, some in letters of fire, some in letters of water, some in letters of air, some in Tibetan script in either long hand or capitals, with either long hooks or short hooks, with illuminated letters on black paper, in the scripts of 'Bru and Gilgit, in kong-seng or khyi-nyal styles, with long leg or short leg, all correctly punctuated. We wrote a million cycles of Mind Accomplishment, a hundred thousand Heartdrop cycles,<sup>22</sup> tantras, commentaries, secret precepts, all of immense profundity, some extensive but of great import, some short but complete, some easy to practise but great in grace, some profound but quickly endowing whatever is required. All these texts were reduced to manifests, lists of twice concealed texts, concise lists and prophetic catalogues, etc.<sup>23</sup> to inspire trust, and then they were all arranged in order.

The Guru and Dakini, mystic partners, having identical ambition, serve all beings with skilful means and perfect insight; with the same activity of Speech we expound the sutras and tantras; with the same apparitional projections we control the phenomenal world; with the same knowledge and talents we work for the good of the teaching and all living beings; with the same karmic activity we utilise the four karmas of transform-ation<sup>24</sup> at will. Ultimately Perna Jungne and Yeshe Tsogyel are identical to Kuntuzangpo and Kuntuzangmo (Kunzang yabyum): our Body, Speech, Mind, Activity, and Quality are coextensive with all-pervasive space.



From Chimphu we went from place to place on foot, blessing all the power spots of Greater Tibet. First we went to the three Taktsangs. In Paro Taktsang in Bhutan we disposed the treasures separately and left prophetic catalogues. 'This is the place of the Guru's Mind,' prayed the Guru. 'Whoever practises here will attain mahamudra siddhi. When the Guru dwells in The Highest Paradise (Ogmin) these symbols of his Body, Speech and Mind will spontaneously manifest.' Then he made

wishgranting prayers and made benediction upon an image of Dorje Trollo, a naturally manifest stupa and the spontaneously manifest Six-syllable Mantra. Then we went to Womphu Taktsang in Central Tibet, where the Guru coerced the Lords of Hidden Treasure, enjoining them to protect the treasures that he entrusted to their care, and he disposed concise lists. 'This is the power place of the Guru's Body. Whoever meditates here will gain the power of long-life. When the Guru is born on the Dhanakosa Lake these symbols of his Body, Speech and Mind will manifest naturally.' Then, as before, he made prayer and gave benediction upon the images, the Three Seedsyllable Mantra, the Nine Seedsyllable RULU Mantra, a stupa and a vajra. At Taktsang in Kham, having concealed the treasures individually, he extorted a vow and promise from the Lords of Hidden Treasure to protect them, making prophecies and disposing manifests. 'This is the power place of the Guru's Speech. Great renown and great blessing will accrue to those meditating here, but great opposition will arise to those who have no samaya. Both mundane and supreme siddhi can be attained here. When the wheel of the teaching is turned, devils subjugated and opinionated unbelievers converted as at Vajrasana, Sarnath, etc., the Buddha's three modes will naturally manifest, and the Six-syllable Mantra, the Three Seedsyllables and the Twelve Syllable Mantra will appear together with a stupa.' And he then said prayers and gave benediction.

(To discover details of the Guru and Consort's activity in many other power spots look into the biographies of Guru Rimpoche and other tomes.)

Then the Guru and his Consort, we mystic partners, returned to the Utse Pagoda as priest and priestess of the Tibetan Emperor. After bestowing oral instruction, prophetic catalogues of treasures and their discoverers, and extensive personal advice upon the King, his ministers, queens, courtiers and translators, on the tenth day of the tenth month of the monkey year, the Guru departed, riding on the rays of the sun to the Island of Ngayab in the SouthWest. For the sake of the King, and because I was the Superior of the three pairs of religious communities, I remained behind, working for the welfare of beings, filling the earth with the treasures of the Guru's teaching.

As the short distance escort of honour, the King, patrons and their

entourage carried the Guru on their shoulders up to the Gungtang Pass. There they entreated him for final advice and prognostication, and then depressed in spirits they returned to Samye. Riding on the sun's rays I accompanied him as far as the Nepali border at Tsashorong, where we descended into the Secret Cave of Tsashorong for twentyone days. Here the Guru revealed the mandala of Dzokchen Ati Khyabdal<sup>26</sup> and initiated me. The priestess Chonema was accompanied by an ill-omen that indicated her doubt and equivocation, and to her the Guru said: 'The teaching of the Tantra has spread in Tibet, but Ati, the supreme teaching of the mahayana has become a cause of dispute. Spiritual release has not been attained through it as much as through the lineage of the oral transmission of the pronouncements or the lineage of revealed treasure. Furthermore, its practitioners have no inclination to serve other beings. The conditions of its practice, and indeed the Tantra in general, are conducive to a quick rise and fall in limited power and capability.' Thus he refused Chonema initiation. But to me he granted it in full, exhaustively, leaving nothing out. 'Now you are ready to be given the precepts of the extraordinary vehicle which make the analytical view redundant. This teaching must not be given too early or too late, at an inopportune juncture or to someone who is unprepared, because like setting the seeds of a crop that after ripening cannot remain in the fields, after the goal is attained there is no way that existence in this world can be prolonged. On this path there is no good or bad karma, no superior or inferior beings, no acuity or dullness, no youth or old age - the goal is total immersion in the dynamic space where all reality is extinguished.<sup>27</sup> If this teaching had been given to someone like you too early, to enter upon the career of selfless service for embodied beings, propagation of the Buddha's teaching, and concealing profound treasures for the good of all beings, would have been rendered very difficult. And why? Because your mortal body would have been immediately consumed. Now you should immerse yourself without a moment of forgetfulness in the vision of reality manifest,<sup>28</sup> and retaining your body you will quickly attain Buddhahood. After I have gone immerse yourself in meditation at Zapu and Tidro and such places; after three years the intensity of your visionary experience will have increased; and after six years you will have attained optimal, nonreferential Knowledge. At that time you will conceal the remaining treasures for future revelation, and through transmission of secret precepts you will complete your duty to others.

Then you will go to Kharchu in Lhodrak to continue your practice, and then showing magical transformation contrary to nature, appearing first as one form and then as another, you will assist specific individuals as their need determines. After two hundred years in all your body will vanish, and you will meet me in the macrocosmic realm of Awareness in Ngayab Khandro Ling, the Land of the Dakinis, where indivisibly united we will work for the welfare of others as an infinite expanse of purity.'

After giving me these visionary predictions he prepared to ride away on the sun's rays, but bowing down to him I offered this urgent plaint:

Alas! alas! Lord of Orgyen, Here one moment, gone the next, Surely this is the impermanence of birth and death. How can I arrest the process of birth and dying?

Alas! alas! Lord of Orgyen, We have been together so long And now in a flash we are separated - This is surely what is meant by meeting and parting. How can I remain with you always?

Alas! alas! Lord of Orgyen, In the past you have pervaded the whole of Tibet But now only the imprint of your presence remains - Surely this is what is called impermanence. How can I arrest the winds of karma?

Alas! alas! Lord of Orgyen, In the past your advice has strengthened Tibet But now we have only legend to listen to - Surely this is what is called change and becoming. How can I gain unshakable conviction?

Alas! alas! Lord of Orgyen, Until now I have been your constant companion But now the Guru is vanishing into the sky Leaving this woman in her bed of bad karma. Who will give me empowerment and blessing?

Alas! alas! Lord of Orgyen, Your words have been full of profound instruction But now undying you dissolve into space Leaving this body-bound woman behind you. Who can I ask to dispel obstacles and inspire me?

Alas! alas! Compassionate One, Please grant me three simple words of

advice. Look upon me always with compassion, Please remember Tibet in your wish-filling prayers.

Then I threw thirteen handfuls of gold dust upon the Guru's Body, and while I was still keening in distress, the Guru, riding upon the rays of the sun, spoke to me from the height of an arm span above the ground, answering my questions:

O listen, daughter, Ocean of Talent, Pema Jungne is leaving to befriend and convert demon savages. This skilful act of the totally perfected Buddha's three modes Cannot be compared to the bursting of human bubbles. If you are afraid of birth and death, assimilate the Buddha's teaching,

And when you control your energy flows and creative and fulfilment processes, You arrest the process of birth and death in the most superior way.

O listen, most virtuous, faithful consort, Perna Jungne is leaving for the good of all creatures. All-embracing and indiscriminating compassion Cannot be compared to humanity's veil of delusion. To be with me always, practise Guru Yoga, And idealised appearances will arise as the Lama; There is no better way to avoid meeting and parting.

O listen, enticing, captivating Lady, Perna Jungne is leaving for selfless conversion of others. This supreme, immaculate being in whom matter has dissolved Cannot be compared to human beings driven by bad karma. I have filled Tibet with disciples and siddhas; Meditate upon mahamudra to gain insight into impermanence, And the phenomenal world, samsara and nirvana, is free as it stands: There is no better way to arrest the wind of karma.

O listen, faithful, eternally youthful maiden. Perna Jungne is going to teach in the realms of demon savages. This supreme vajrbody, immune to change, Cannot be compared to disease-stricken human being. I have filled Tibet, above and below, with the Buddha's teaching And if you preach and meditate the teaching will not be lost, Study, contemplation and meditation sustaining the Buddha's doctrine. The good of self and others is spontaneously accomplished; There is no

more profound way to avert change and decay.

O listen, faithful girl of Kharchen, Perna Jungne is leaving for fields of lotus-light. Inspired by the ambition of Sugatas past, present and future, I cannot be compared to human beings hounded by the Lord of Death. You woman, after attaining siddhi, possess a 'super-body';

So ask your superior mind for empowerment and blessing: There is no higher regent of Guru Pema.

O listen, Yeshe Tsogyelma, Pema Jungne is leaving for the place of pure pleasure. This immortal god, dwelling in a body of Emptiness, Cannot be compared to human beings with split body and mind. Tsogyel has been liberated by profound secret precepts; Meditate upon Dzokchen Ati to extinguish corporeality, And through meditative absorption and prayer dispel obstacles and gain inspiration: There is no better way to remove obstacles to the Lama's compassion.

O listen, accomplished Blazing Blue Light, I have given you much advice and instruction in the past, All of which is compressed into this final injunction - Practise this Guru Yoga: One span above your head on a lotus and moon, In an expanse of rainbow light, Sits Pema Jungne, everyone's Guru, With one face and two hands, holding aajra and skull, Wearing a vest, a waistcoat, a skirt and a shawl, An outer shawl and a loose robe, Indicating his perfect completion of the six vehicles of practice, Adorned with a hat, vulture feather and ear-rings, In lotus posture, radiating light, Endowed with the eighty ideal marks and signs, In the midst of shimmering Dakinis of five-fold rainbow light, Shining, glowing, clear as the light of the mind. When this vision is distinct, take the empowerment and remain in absorption; If the vision is unclear, meditate with diligence. Then count the essential and quintessential GURU SIDDHI Mantras, And finally, integrate the Lama with your three doors, Share the merit, and pray to attain the nature of the Lama himself, And bathe in the Dzokchen seed-sphere of pure potential.<sup>29</sup>

There is nothing better than that Tsogyelma. And there is no waxing or waning of my compassion; It is impossible to break my beam of compassion shining upon Tibet; I am always present before my sons

who pray to me; I am never separated from the faithful; To opinionated people I am veiled though physically present; Continuous compassion strengthens my sons with clear vision. Thus in the future on the tenth day of the moon Perna Jungne will come riding on the Lord of the Day, In peaceful, enriching, dominating and destructive forms, During the four successive quarters of the day, To give corresponding siddhi to my spiritual sons. In the same way, I will appear on the tenth day of the waning moon, To accomplish, in particular, all dominating and destructive acts; On the fifteenth of the moon, riding the rays of the moon, I will stir the depths of samsara with my compassionate prayer, Emptying the lower realms without exception, Working perfectly with power for the sake of beings. On the eighth of the moon, after nightfall and before dawn, At sunset and sunrise, riding my all-wise steed, Travelling through the power places of the world, I will bestow various siddhis: In the land of the vicious demonesses I will turn the wheel of the teaching; For all beings of the twentyone barbarian islands And the thirty most savage lands, To pacify, enrich, dominate or destroy, Emanating as fire, wind or water, As sky, as rainbow, or earthquake or thunder, I will despatch a million apparitional forms to guide them to happiness; There will be no interruption to my work for beings.

You, woman, hereafter, will live for more than a hundred years To achieve the happiness of all beings of Tibet. After a hundred years plus one, you may come to Ngayab Ling, And inseparable from Perna Jungne, protect your disciples.

The Knowledge Holder Blazing Blue Light<sup>30</sup> will be your name, And forever your Body, Speech and Mind will be one with me. The process of birth and death arrested, the winds of karma suppressed, You will project emanations for the good of future beings. In the Land of Tibet your emanations will continue forever, Without fatigue or regret, working for the welfare of beings. So be composed, Tsogyelma! You and I will never part. But on the relative plane, Farewell! And through my compassionate prayer, may Tibet be happy.

After he had ceased speaking, the firmament was filled with Buddha Heroes and Dakinis making music and song, carrying canopies, victory banners, pennants, tubular parasols, square parasols, mrdang



drums, silk tassels, double-faced drums, yak tail fly whisks, yak tails, banners, fans, flags, throne canopies, tapestries, cymbals, phem, drums, conches, trumpets, thigh bone trumpets, ddmarius, great drums, lutes, stringed instruments, kettle drums, tingcha, war, tsel and piwi.<sup>31</sup> From the centre of this vast cloud of offerings, this celestial orchestra, shone beams of beckoning light into which the Guru vanished. I was utterly unable to bear his departure, and cried out, 'O Guru Rimpoche! One and only Buddha Exemplar! Our only father and saviour! One and only eye of Tibet! My only heart! You have no pity! Why do you torture me so! Alas! O lack-a-day!' And so on, begging him to return, wailing and lamenting, doing full prostration continually. Then he turned around one last time and gave me his first testament,<sup>32</sup> before again vanishing into the burgeoning fields of pulsating light with his face set towards the SouthWest. And again I threw myself upon the ground, tearing my hair, scratching my face, and twisting and turning, rolling over and over like a baby, and besought him, 'Alas! O misery! Lord of Orgyen, will you leave Tibet in a vacuum? Will you withdraw the light of your compassion? Will you have the Buddha's teaching aborted? Will you shamelessly reject the Tibetan people? Will you leave your Tsogyel without refuge? Be compassionate! Look now!' and I continued to weep and wail until his disembodied voice spoke in response in clear and pure tones, giving me his second testament. Then again the sky was filled with light engulfing the earth in its radiance, and the mass of patterned pulsating light took the form of a Dakini whose brilliance faded little by little until she finally vanished. Again I beat my body on the rocks, tearing off pieces of flesh and letting streams of blood, offering flesh and blood to him as a ganacakra offering, and with fervent tormented prayer I called to my vanished Guru:

Alas! alas! Matrix of Compassion! The Guru's activity is coextensive with space, But today Tibet's Guru's story is completed. The black-topped people have their various destinies, But today all of Tibet has met its inexorable fate. To each being his own private happiness and woe, But today real misery has befallen me. Alas! O misery! Quickly show your compassion!

In response a voice said, 'Tsogyel, look!' and looking round a ball of light as large as my head fell out of the sky before me. Within was the

Guru's first legacy of his parinirvana.<sup>33</sup> Then the light which had engulfed Tibet became concentrated into a ball, which vanished, radiating brilliantly into the SouthWest where the Guru had gone. Again, utterly incapable of bearing my grief, I cried out in entreaty, 'Venerable Orgyen, do not withdraw your compassion! Please do not leave me!' And as before a voice directed me where to look, and immediately a casket of light as large as my fist, containing the second legacy of the Guru's parinirvana, fell down before me. Then the light of day and the light of the sun itself concentrated and was absorbed into the SouthWest. In the remaining half-light I awoke as if in a dream to the memory of the Guru surrounded by his Dakinis, and in extreme agitation of mind, my eyes overflowing with suppressed tears, yearning for my Guru, I sang this song with a distraught, keening melody:

**Alas! O venerable Orgyen Rimpoche,  
Only father and protector of Tibet,  
Now you have gone to Khandro Ling  
And Tibet has become empty.  
Essential jewel, where are you now?**

In truth there is no coming or going,  
But today you left for the realm of Orgyen.  
Behind the head of each man and god a sun has set,  
Who will warm the unclothed and naked?  
From the brow of every man an eye has been plucked,  
Who will lead the blind with their fixed glazed stares?  
From the breast of every man his heart has been torn,  
Who will guide these thinking corpses?  
You came here for the sake of all beings,  
So why not stay here for ever?  
Alas! O misery! Orgyen Rimpoche!  
A time of murk and gloom has befallen Tibet,  
A time when the hermitages remain empty,  
A time when the Throne of the Dharma is vacant,  
A time when the Vase of Empowerment is empty,  
A time when Mind's revelation is mixed with conceit,  
A time to turn to books for instruction,  
A time when we can only visualise the Lama,  
A time to rely upon symbolic paintings and sculptures,  
A time to look to dreams for pure vision:  
These are the portents of this unfortunate time that befalls us.  
Alas! O woe! Venerable Lord of Orgyen!  
Look upon us with compassion, Orgyen, Master of Truth!

After praying like that, a casket of light no bigger than a finger joint appeared at the end of a single ray of light shining from the SouthWest. Within it I found the third legacy of the Guru's parinirvana, and at once I gained indomitable confidence. The nest of hopes and fears hidden deep within me was destroyed; the torments of emotional confusion were assuaged; and an intuition of the eternal immanence of the Lama arose.

Then with the utmost devotion, I revealed the mandala of the Lama's Mystic Communion, and after three months of practice I met with the Guru during the six periods of day and night, receiving from him much visionary instruction, advice and whispered transmission.

Thereafter, in order to allow Dewamo to restore her full vision of the Guru, with the Guru's permission I compiled the liturgical rite called Yang-Phur Drakma,<sup>34</sup> the higher part of which consisted of a liturgy of confession associated with the basic rite of Yangdak and the lower part associated with Dorje Zhonnu, the Remover of Obstacles. It was taught to many of the faithful, particularly Dewamo, and then transmitted through both the lineages of the oral transmission of the pronouncements and the lineage of hidden treasures.

Thereafter I returned to Mangyul, where my former monks and students and the devoted nun Lodro Kyi, with great joy, celebrated my return with a ganacakra feast. They requested me to settle there permanently, but I remained only a month, giving them much ultimate instruction, dispelling obstacles, giving personal advice and developing meditation by leading them to recognition of their achievement. Then I went up to Tsang. Wherever I went in Tsang the country people told me: 'Though Guru Rimpoche went to the land of the demon savages, you returned, and for that we are grateful.' They gave me the same devotion as they had given to Guru Rimpoche himself, blocking the road with their faith. I gave them initiation and instruction, assisting them all without preference or bias.

Then I came to Zurpisa, where I stayed for a year. Nyen Pelyang, Be Yeshe Nyingpo, Lasum Gyelwa Jangchub, Odren Pelgyi Zhonnu the younger, Langlab Jangchub Dorje and Dacha Rupa Dorje who was a child of seven years, I found to be suitable vessels and took them as my disciples, bringing them to maturity and release. From Zurpisa I went to Shang, where I lived in the Pama Gang caves for three years, and worked extensively for the sake of beings. From Shang I went to Zapu, where I remained in meditation upon the reality of the effortless peak (Ati) of the mahayana, and after one year my visionary experience had intensified, and I found vast resources of energy and new strength of commitment. I hid thirteen caches of treasure there. From Zapu I went on to Tidro in Zho where I remained six years. By the end of that six years I had attained optimal Knowledge, penetrating to the core of Dzokchen.

(The story of how Tsogyel served many Dakinis and travelled through sixty-two purelands is concealed elsewhere.)

It was during this period that I performed my final austerity - 'the exchange of my karma for that of others'. The fiendish official, ~antipa, who had previously caused me so much pain, had been reborn in the hell of extreme heat, and energy that grew out of my pity for him extricated him from his hell.

(The exact manner in which Tsogyel emptied the depths of the various hells of their inhabitants, beings with whom she had previous karmic association, and beings for whom she had disinterested affection, must be sought elsewhere.)

Further, I gave my body to ravenous carnivores, I fed the hungry, I clothed the destitute and cold, I gave medicine to the sick, I gave wealth to the poverty-stricken, I gave refuge to the forlorn, and I gave my sexual parts to the lustful. In short, to benefit others I gave my body and life. And because even when my sense-organs were required I gave willingly without attachment or concern for myself, both the god Indra and the naga Ananda sent spies to test me.

Thus it was at Tidro that a lame man, carried by three porters in turn, approached me. 'Where are you from? Why have you come?' I asked them.

'We come from Ombu in Central Tibet,' replied the lame man. 'I have been wrongly punished by the King, and both my kneecaps have been removed. The wise physicians of Tibet have told me that there is a method of transplanting the kneecaps of a woman to a man. Otherwise there is no possible remedy. I have heard that you, Lady, will give whatever is asked of you, and I have come here to beg. Is it possible for you to grant my petition?' and he sighed long and deep.

'I will give you whatever you need,' I replied, with pity welling up within me. 'I promised my Guru that I would assist beings with my Body, Speech and Mind. So take what you want.'

'It is necessary to inflict great wounds to take out the bones,' they said, taking up the knife. 'Can you endure the pain?'

'Whatever happens, do what you must,' I told them.

They cut a cross on each of my knees and tore out my kneecaps with the sound of 'Kak!' 'Kak!', and, finally, they placed the bloody, grisly discs in front of me. At that point my spirit temporarily left me. Recovering consciousness, I told them to take the kneecaps away, and they left happily.

After some time, when my knees had healed, a leper with his disease in a far worse state than other lepers, his entire body dripping with pus and blood, his nose rotted down to its root leaving a gaping wound, a foul odour spreading all around him from between his rotted lips, came to me, just crying and crying.

'Why cry?' I asked him. 'The present is the effect of your previous actions, and this crying will not help. It would be better for you to recite mantras and visualise the Yidam deity. That would be beneficial.'

'To be stricken with disease is indeed the curse of samsara,' the leper replied, 'but I am the victim of something worse than mere disease.'

'What could be worse than that?' I inquired.

'I was stricken with this plague by a pestilential spirit; but I had a wife who like you was the daughter of a god. She fled to the company of another man when she lost her desire for me, and finally she threw me out of my house. So I thought that since you had devoted your entire life to others you might possibly become my wife,' and he started crying again.

'Don't cry!' I told him, compassion welling up within me. 'I will be obedient to your every wish.' And thereafter I lived together with the leper, fulfilling the duties of a model wife.

In similar ways I solved many people's problems. Seven Bonpos came begging for my skin which they said was needed as a ransom for Yang, the God of Fortune. I had myself flayed and gave them the skin. Many other people came begging, and I gave them whatever they required: my eyes, my head, my limbs, my two feet, my tongue and so on. I made a wishgranting prayer of encouragement for each of them.

After some time Indra himself came and presented me with the riches of the gods, the five divine silk robes, a vase of ambrosia and the seven divine precious things, praising me in these words:

Human girl, miraculous, superior being, Acting like the Bodhisattvas of the past, Willingly sacrificing your body and life for others, Compassionate Mother, I take refuge in you. Most marvellous being, I adore you. From now for as long as the aeon lasts, Divine queen, whatever teaching-wheel you turn, I will support and inspire you.

So saying, he vanished, and my body became whole once more. Furthermore, the leper my husband became transformed into the serpent Ananda, who piled before me the inconceivable wealth of the nagas. Folding his hands in devotion, weeping, he said:

Guru Yeshe Tsogyelma! You are the mystic key to Pema Jungne! Through pity you gladly accept others' suffering, You are free of the concepts of 'clean' and 'unclean', Your self love is hidden deep: Mistress of the Teaching, Mother of Buddhas, I bow to you. Guru Pema Skull-Garland Skill is my Lama; So, sister, think of me with kindness. Source of the ocean of teaching, every tantra, Source of the meaning of Pema's profound oral and revealed transmissions, You alone are responsible for their propagation and increase. For as long as I live I will follow you, Sustaining and protecting you, Promoting your welfare and averting aggression.

So saying he vanished into the ground in his true form.

When the God-king heard that I was in Tidro, he invited me to Samye, and I lived in Chimphu for six years. The translators, courtiers, ministers and queens led by the King, Mutri Tsenpo, all paid me honour and served me with humility. Since the previous ordination of monks, the numbers at the meditation centres of Chimphu and other places had decreased slightly, the mahasiddhas who had attained their own enlightenment dispersing in all directions to serve other beings, while others grew old and attained parinirvana. By the King's grace fifteen hundred new monks were ordained at one time, and he appointed the Indian sage Kamalasila as the new Abbot. I gave instruction to the newly ordained monks, and they went to Chimphu to

begin their meditation, which bore nothing but positive results. Many of them attained siddhi and were able to show evidence of their attainment.

It was at this time that the Tonmin and Tsemin;s began to quarrel. The teacher called Hashang propounded a philosophy of false views, and repudiating the orthodox teaching he was bent on its destruction. The monastery at Samye was divided in two, the Master Kamalasila holding the Tamdin Temple (Tamdin Ling) side and Hashang holding the Jampa Temple (Jampa Ling) side.<sup>36</sup> The two factions fought a little. At this point I came down from Chimphu with a retinue of a hundred monks to effect a reconciliation. I met with disobedience, but I demonstrated many supernatural signs of accomplishment and both Tonmin and Tsemin gained faith in me. Thereafter, a religious decree enforced the practice and philosophy of the school of Kamalaşila, and Hashang and his attendants were suffered to return to China, their own land, laden with gold.

The Emperor richly endowed the religious communities of Lhasa, Samye, Trandruk and others. Thirteen thousand new monks were ordained. Living in Chimphu I became the source of instruction and spiritual practice of the Guru's original disciples, the new monks, my own family of disciples, those who more recently had gained faith in Guru Rimpoche, in Ngari, Mangyul, Purang, Bhutan, Tsang, Jar, Loro, Kongpo, the Four Districts of Central Tibet, the Four Northern Provinces, and the Gangdruk of Dokham, and China, Jang, Hor, Minyak and other lands. Thus the sphere of my selfless activity became coextensive with the sky, and the lineages of my disciples embraced and filled the whole world.

The Third Part of Chapter Seven describes in brief how Tsogyel concealed the 'Foot Treasures' of the Guru's teaching: how for the sake of all beings without prejudice she went on foot to the minor power places, the secret valleys and the districts concealing treasures.

Then I, Tsogyel, thought to myself, 'I have now fulfilled my ambition of promoting the teaching and the good of all beings. Half of the lifespan predicted by the Guru has passed. My Knowledge has achieved its optimal potential. My action has reached full maturity.



Therefore I must go into meditation in all the power places previously blessed by Guru Rimpoche to conceal the Foot Treasures, giving benediction and broadcasting my wishfulfilling prayers.'

After determining my course of action, I went first to Tidro where I stayed for one year and seven months, concealing ten caches of treasure, and praying that whoever had the good fortune to relate to the Guru or myself in that place would achieve his end, I gave my benediction. Then I moved on to Sheldrak in Yar Lung where I concealed five caches of treasure, and having lived there for thirteen months I made wishfulfilling prayers. At Yong Dzong I stayed one year, concealing ten caches. At Yerpa I stayed one month concealing ten caches. Then moving slowly eastwards to Tsari Gang, I stayed there for one year and four months, concealing thirty great caches of treasure; in the land of Kongpo I concealed one hundred and fifty caches in all. Then in the south, in the Mountain Range of Central Nepal, I stayed thirteen months, concealing thirty-five caches. In the west, in the Lachi Mountain Range, I stayed four months and seven days, concealing eight caches. In the north, in the Noichin Mountain Range, I stayed three months and five days, concealing three caches. In the south-east, in Kempa Lung in Gyel, I stayed one year and a half month, concealing ten caches. In the south-west, in Draphu Lung, I stayed five months and ten days, concealing seven caches. In the north-west, in Jakma Lung, I stayed one year and five months, concealing nine great caches. In the north-east, in Droma Lung, I stayed eleven months, concealing five caches. In the Yarbu Mountain Range I stayed one month and ten days, concealing three caches. Likewise in the Selje Mountain Range I stayed one year, concealing ten caches. In the Yu Lung Mountain Range I stayed three months, concealing three caches. In the Drongje Mountain Range I stayed ten days, concealing three caches. In the Yul Lung Mountain Range I stayed three months, concealing four caches. In the Jomo Mountain Range I stayed five months, concealing ten caches. In the Nyewo Mountain Range I stayed five months, concealing four caches. In the Dzayul Mountain Range I stayed twentyone days, concealing one cache. In the Nanam Mountain Range I stayed seven days, concealing five caches. In the Lhorong Mountain Range I stayed three months and seven days, concealing thirteen caches. In the Rongtsen Mountain Range I stayed seven months, concealing fifteen caches. In the

Sheldrang Mountain Range I stayed two months and ten days, concealing five caches. In the Gampo Mountain Range I stayed one year and one month and one day, concealing twenty caches. In the Jephu Mountain Range I stayed one month, concealing fourteen caches. In the Bubol Mountain Range I stayed twentyone days, concealing three caches. In the Sengtom Mountain Range I stayed seven days, concealing two caches. In the Tsonak Mountain Range I stayed nine days and half a month, concealing one cache. Likewise, in the east, in Makung Lung, I stayed one month, concealing thirteen caches. In the south, in Bachak Sri, I stayed one year, concealing seven caches. In the west, in Drangmen Lung, I stayed one month, concealing three caches. In the north, in Semodo, I stayed three months, concealing four caches.

Furthermore, in the highland Tsari Dzong, in the mid-land Kharak Dzong, in lowland Gere Dzong, in Phari Dzong in Bhutan, in Buchu Dzong in Kongpo, in Bakyul Dzong in Puwo, in Dorje Dzong in Den, in Nabun Dzong in Cham, in Nering Senge Dzong, in Yari Drakmar Dzong, in Kaling Sinpo Dzong, in Lhari Yuru Dzong, in Pelbar Dzong in Tola, Bumo Dzong in Rekha, in Drakmar Dzong in Ling, in Lhadrak Dzong in Dri, in Kongme Drakar Dzong, and in other places, I stayed some months and days, making a firm connection with each power place, and hiding treasure in every one.

Likewise, I went to the Eight Great Hidden Valleys:<sup>37</sup> the Dremo Shong in Central Nepal, Pemako in Lhoyul, Zapu Lung in Shang, Gowu Jong in Me, Gyelmo Mudo Jong, Lhamo Ngulkhong Jong, Gyellung Jokpo Lung and Budum Lung in Bhutan. I stayed a year in each of them, concealing many caches of treasure according to the importance of the power place.

Thus I went to the Twentyfive Mountain Ranges, the Four Blessed Power Places, the eighteen power places of the Eighteen Great Forts (Dzong),<sup>38</sup> and the one hundred and eight power places where Guru Rimpoche meditated, where I myself meditated for years, months or days, concealing caches of treasure and making wishgranting prayers and benediction.

Again, in particular, in the area of Dokham, upon the eight power

places of the eight names of Guru Rimpoche blessed by the Guru himself, upon the five power places of the Five Aspects of Skull-Garland Skill, upon the twelve power places of miraculous karmas, upon the three power places blessed by prophecies (just as appears elsewhere in extensive manifests) I bestowed my blessing, and there I concealed caches of treasure. Thus Tsogyel hid the Guru's treasures in the one hundred and five major power places and in the one thousand and seventy minor power places of Greater Tibet. Although there are millions of places that could be mentioned, their names, significance and their number would consume too much space in this text. Further, the manner in which the treasures were hidden in Greater Tibet, and particularly in Samye, Lhasa and Trandruk, may be seen in the manifests of treasure and in the extensive biographies of the Guru.

Thus ends the seventh chapter which describes Yeshe Tsogyel's work for all beings.

SAMAYA GYA GYA GYA ITI GUHYA KHA-THAM MANDA  
ZAB GYA!

## CHAPTER EIGHT

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### FRUITION AND BUDDHAHOOD

After I, Tsogyel, had blessed the great power places of the world and concealed caches of the Guru's treasure for future revelation, I returned to Chimphu as the Emperor's priestess. I remained there for some time, working with even greater zeal for the welfare of all beings. In the temple of Karchung Dorying I bestowed many unsurpassable maturing and releasing practices, immense in their profundity, to seven worthy recipients, including the King Mutri Tsenpo, Prince Murum Tsenpo and Ngangchung Pelgyi Gyelmo. I revealed the mandalas of the Communion of the Lama's Mystic Word, the Communion of the Yidam's Mind and the Communion of Dzokchen Ati.<sup>1</sup> Granting the initiates empowerment I brought them to maturity and release.

After I had revealed the mandala of the Communion of the Lama's Mystic Word, we immersed ourselves in meditation, and before dawn on the seventh day, while we were performing the invocation at the beginning of the rite, reciting the Seven Line Prayer' -

In the north-west of the land of Orgyen, Born in the pollen heart of a lotus flower, Endowed with the most miraculous siddhi You, the Lotus Born Guru, appeared Surrounded by a host of attendant Dakinis. So that we may follow in your footsteps We beg you to come here to bless us -

the Guru himself, surrounded by his attendants, appeared from the SouthWest. Accompanied by the sound of music, the smell of incense, sweet melodies, beautiful dancers and the song of mystic experience, shining resplendently, he entered into the middle of the mandala. I told the King to prepare a throne for the Guru, but the King had fainted away overwhelmed by the fervour of his devotion, and the throne was not made ready.

Then the Guru spoke to the King: 'It will not be long now before the

appearance of the Divine Prince's savage nephew, when the Emperor's dynasty will lose its ancestral throne. However, through the power of your faith, you need not take another karmic body. The power to serve other beings through emanation, and your realisation and liberation, will occur simultaneously.'

Prince Murum then prepared many thrones for the Guru and his attendants, and entreated them to be seated. The King Mutri Tsenpo prepared a hundred mandalas of gold and turquoises, and offering them to Guru Rimpoche he made this request:

O Venerable Orgyen Perna, Apparitional Buddha, Only father of all the Tibetan people, We who are ground down by the weight of bad karma And sucked down by the mire of distraction, Through compassion never abandon us, always protect us. Out of your great kindness you are here with us today, Now tell us that you will stay here forever, Turning the wheel of the teaching again.

The Guru replied:

Listen to my words, Righteous King, God-king. Field of great faith, fully endowed and virtuous, Through the Lama's blessing may you mature spiritually; By the opening of Tsogyel's secret door may you find release; Knowing your own mind as mahamudra may you gain realisation; In the matrix' of Body, Speech and Mind, may you gain mastery.

The Guru placed his hand upon the head of the King, and immediately he gained simultaneous realisation and release.

Then Prince Murum Tsenpo performed prostration and circumambulation, and piling up a mountain of offerings including an effigy of a deer made of gold, thirty large copper tubs full of turquoise - the principal piece was the great turquoise 'The Open Door of the Sky' - and much more. Then he made this request: 'I, the mere semblance of a prince, in my great pride, indolence and distraction, I delight in vice, warfare and enforcing the law. Whatever I do is a sinful game. Please give me instruction that is profound and concise, easy to understand and easy to practise, a teaching that confers great blessing

and quickly leads to siddhi, and that will erase my faults and restore my wasted mind. This I beg of you.'

The Guru replied:

So be it! So be it! Conqueror's Son! Your aspiration is pure, your karma is pure, With faith, holding fast, on trial you are firm.<sup>4</sup> After seven rebirths from now You will not take a karmic body But teach others through emanation. Your mind will be one with the Buddhas past, present and future, And after the passing of an aeon You will become the Buddha Starlight.

The Guru then revealed the mandala of Yangdak, the deity who is quick to grant siddhi, and he gave the Prince the special instruction called The Self-liberating Understanding of the Profound Path of the Wrathful and Peaceful Deities,<sup>5</sup> which brought him to spiritual maturity and release. He was instructed to conceal this teaching upon the mountain peak of Dakpo Dar so that it could be of great benefit to beings of the future. Furthermore, the Great Guru granted him the special means of identifying with the Lama called Lama Jewel Lotus Garland and other teaching, instructing that it should be concealed in the Ramoche Rock.

Later, the Guru consecrated the Karchung Dorying temple, and remained there a week before preparing to leave for Orgyen. Before dawn on the seventh day, before the Guru's departure, I made this prayer:

O Lama, in your great compassion draining the bog of emotion,  
Immediately liberating even sinful people Who see you, hear you,  
think of you or touch you, Perna Jungne, Messenger of the Conquering  
Buddhas, Now and forever look upon the Land of Tibet with  
compassion, Now that I have finished my work of conversion I  
implore you, Lord, to grant my prayer To remain with you always,  
never to leave you for a moment.

The Lama replied:

O Listen, Daughter of Kharchen. The ball of fire-crystal blown by the  
wind Creates day and night and the four seasons in due order; Neither

sun nor sky has any control. When the harvest ripens the rice grains spill out; The farmer can do nothing to prevent it. Now that your Awareness has expanded, The residual germs of passion lie impotent; Your limitless body, its impurity dissolved, Cannot remain, though grasped by a finite mentality. You have realised the creative, fulfilment and Dzokchen meditations And you cannot remain, despite the imagination of your disciples. Karma exhausted, reality extinguished, transformation complete, Corporeality consumed, now the five sensefields and the five elements vanish And wondrously you arrive at the state of nirvana. After the passing of fifty years, on the eighth day of the bird month, Tsogyel will pass into lotus light. A galaxy of Dakinis and Buddha Heroes will meet you, But until then, employ your abilities for the sake of others.

So saying the Guru vanished.

Then I, Tsogyel, went to the Phukmoche Cave at Kharchu in Lhodrak, where I inspired Namkhai Nyingpo to reach the goal of his energy control practices, granting him the siddhi of immortality. The Gelong also gained both mundane and supreme siddhi.

Thereafter, I entered into meditation with understanding of the pure potential of Dzokchen, and the vision of reality extinguished arose. Sentient beings, who were to be transformed, identified me as a variety of different appearances emanating for their benefit. To the starving I appeared as a mountain of food, bringing them happiness; to the poverty-stricken I appeared as all kinds of wealth, bringing them happiness; to the naked I appeared as various kinds of clothes, bringing them happiness; to the childless I appeared as sons or daughters, bringing them happiness; to men desiring women I appeared as attractive girls, bringing them happiness; to women desiring husbands I appeared as handsome men, bringing them happiness; to those who wished to perform miracles I granted the eight great siddhis, bringing them happiness; to those afflicted by disease I appeared as medicine, bringing them happiness; to those afflicted by anxiety and frustration I appeared as their inner needs, bringing them happiness; those tormented by the law I brought back into the land of harmony and loving fellowship, bringing them happiness; to those paralysed by fear of wild beasts and spectres I appeared as the various

deterrents of their persecutors, bringing them happiness; those who had fallen into the abyss I rescued, bringing them happiness; to those afflicted by fire I appeared as water, and to those afflicted by any of the five elements I appeared as the appropriate antidote, bringing them happiness; to the blind I manifested as eyes, bringing them happiness; to the lame I manifested as legs, bringing them happiness; to the dumb I manifested as tongues, bringing them happiness; to those trembling in fear of death I granted immortality, bringing them happiness; the dying I set on the path of transference to a pureland, bringing them happiness; to beings wandering in the bardo I appeared as a Yidam deity, bringing them happiness; beings wandering in hell suffering from heat I cooled, bringing them happiness; those suffering in hell from cold I warmed, bringing them happiness; and wherever and from whatever the denizens of hell suffered I transformed myself into the means of assuaging their suffering, bringing them happiness; savage people living an evil existence I turned back from the path of error, bringing them happiness; to beings wandering in the realm of the hungry ghosts I appeared as all sorts of food and drink, bringing them happiness; beings wandering in the jungle as beasts I liberated from the suffering of stupidity, insensitivity and servitude, bringing them happiness; those born as anti-gods and titans I freed from war and strife, bringing them happiness; those born as gods I freed from knowledge of their impending discomfiture, death and ignominious rebirth, bringing them happiness; I saved beings from their torment no matter what their discomfort, bringing them to happiness.

In short, wheresoever is human emotion, there is sentient life; wheresoever is sentient life, there are the five elements; wheresoever are the five elements, there is space; and in so far as my compassion is coextensive with space, it pervades all human emotion. Appearing first as one emanation and then as another, I remained in Phukmoche for twelve years.

Then it was that the former consort of Guru Rimpoche, an Awareness Dakini, the Queen of the Siddhas, the Knowledge Holder Dungmen Gyelmo, known also as the Divine Consort, the Flower Mandarava came from India. Emerging from the sky with her six disciples, she greeted me. She stayed with me for thirty-nine human days, and we exchanged and tightened our precepts, making endless



discussion on the dharma. In particular, Mandarava asked me for the twenty-seven secret precepts, special teaching, which the Guru had not given in India, and I asked Mandarava, who was a Dakini of Longlife, a Lord of Life, for the seven secret precepts upon the Accomplishment of Longlife, and thirty-three further secret precepts concerning Hayagriva and other deities. All these teachings I concealed as treasures to be revealed in the future. Then I offered these verses to Mandarava:

OM AH HUNG! 0 Dakini, you have attained an immortal vajrbody -  
Your body dances in the sky like a rainbow And with skill you move  
unimpeded through concrete form. You have destroyed the devil Lord  
of Death



And conquered the devil Embodiment; You are liberated from the  
bondage of passion And you have annihilated the Godling Devil: You  
are surely a Dakini Mistress of Life. You have attained the Body of  
Pure Pleasure by means of all the best elixirs In the three realms  
beneath the Highest Heaven. Mandarava, Magnificent Symbol of  
Emptiness, Mother of beings, to you I bow down. To human beings  
with the constant karma of rebirth and death, Treading the waterwheel

of continual delusion, You close the door of descent; May this prayer to emulate you be fulfilled. Karma exhausted, worldly pleasure at an end, all taint of delusion erased, The three realms and all of samsdra extinguished, and all fictional projection withdrawn, Sealed by pleasure in the sphere of pure pleasure, May we be one with Kuntuzangpo's pure pleasure.

After this I made many wishfulfilling prayers and requested the various teachings that had not been heard previously in Tibet. The Divine Consort, Queen of Siddhas, Mandarava, replied in this way:

O Sky-dancer, you have mastery of the Tantra; O shape-shifter, you have dissolved your corporeal impurity in immaculate space; You drank the nectar of Pema's precepts, gathering essences: Surely you are the Great Mother of Perfect Wisdom! You entered the path of seeing the truth of the teaching; You repudiated the eight petty preoccupations of this life;<sup>6</sup> You performed the austerity of extracting and consuming essences, And reduced the universe and its energy to sameness: I bow down to you, Tsogyel, immaculate maiden. Through your skill in ascetic yoga you have liberated beings, Sinful beings, blown by the storm of karma and slaves to endless samsdra! You have established the Buddha's teaching,

Destroying Bonpos of demonic form and distorted vision: May I be one with you, Mistress of Powerful Magic. Hereafter, purity suffusing the sphere of purity, In your field of lotus-light, You and I will project emanations of Buddha's karma As lightforms of Guru Perna Skull-Garland's compassion: May we empty the depths of the three realms of samsdra.

Having made this wishfulfilling prayer, she disappeared into the firmament.

Thereafter, I, Tsogyel, with Be Yeshe Nyingpo, Ma Rinchen Chok, Odren Pelgyi Zhonnu, Langlab Gyelwa Jangchub Dorje, Darcha Dorje Pawo, Surya Tapa of Central Tibet, the Bhutanese girl Tashi Chidren, the Nepali Kalasiddhi, Jangchub Drolma of Khotan, Dorje Tsomo of Shelkar, Zhonnu Drolma of Kharchen, these eleven root disciples together with seventy-nine acolytes, went to the Zapu Valley in Shang.

After I had been there for ten years in all, serving my disciples, I composed myself in the samadhi that brings all things to extinction.' But six of my karmically favoured spiritual sons led by Be Yeshe Nyingpo, with the faithful 'Khon and others, implored me to stay to turn the wheel of the teaching rather than to pass into nirvana:

Great Mother Transcendent, endowed with the signs of empty being,  
When your sun and moon's lustre is absorbed into inner space Who  
can we two-footed earth-bound creatures trust? Please stay to reveal to  
us still the mandala of perfect insight. Transcendent Conqueror whose  
visionary being is a provident raincloud, When your ambrosial secret  
precepts are absorbed into inner space Who can we earth-bound  
seedlings and young shoots trust? Please stay to shower us still with  
the ambrosia of your teaching. Tsogyel, our refuge and exemplar of  
apparitional being, When your signs and marks of Buddhahood are  
absorbed into inner space Who can we pathless dependants trust? We  
entreat you for spiritual maturity and release. Take pity on us, exalted  
Tsogyelma!

Thus they prayed to me fervently. I replied, 'Prepare a great ganacakra feast, my sons and daughters, and after I have revealed to you the mandalas of many, most profound tantras, I will give you instruction. After the eighth day of this month only Tsogyel's name will remain here in Tibet.' Then, despondent and somewhat hysterical, they prepared an extensive ganacakra. The disciples, all brothers and sisters on the path, sat down around me with long faces, weeping as they gazed at me. After some time I spoke to them:

Listen carefully, you people of my community, Lend your ear and mind to the sound. There is no need for despond, take heart! Since life is a conditioned state, it is transitory; Since the objective world is lightform, it is insubstantial; Since the path is delusive, it has no validity; Since samsara is Emptiness, it is unreal; Since the mind is its conflicting thoughts, it has no foundation: I have seen nothing whatsoever that is ultimately real.

You faithful brothers and sisters assembled here, Pray unequivocally to me, your Mother, And I will bless you with the pure pleasure of dynamic space. There can never be any meeting or parting - Those

forming karmic connection with me automatically have my guidance,  
And others will be saved by my impartial compassionate emanations.  
Your Mother is free of the anxiety of death and transition So there is  
no reason for sadness, brothers and sisters.

I have completed direct conversion of my circle on this plane.  
According to the prophecy of venerable Sri Orgyen, In this life two  
hundred years were allotted for conversion. Not only two hundred but  
more have passed And I have sustained Tibet for a very long time. At  
the age of 13 I became the Emperor's Queen; At the age of 16 my  
Guru's compassion embraced me; Reaching 20 I gained full initiation  
and practised austerities; At 30 I gained realisation and worked for  
others' welfare;

At 40 I identified with my Guru's mind; At 50 I vanquished devils and  
defended the teaching; At 60 I propagated the scriptures and enlarged  
the community; At 70 I discovered the nature of reality; When I  
reached 80 my Guru departed for the SouthWest; At 90 I saw the face  
of reality as its essence; At 100 my Knowledge reached optimal  
fullness; At 120 I became the Emperor's priestess; At 130 I travelled  
throughout the whole of Tibet; At 150 I concealed treasures and  
worked for others; When I was 160 King Mutri Tsenpo died; And at  
170 I liberated my remaining disciples; At 180 I projected apparitional  
forms in Lhodrak; At 190 I met my only elder sister, Queen of  
Siddhas, And receiving the supreme precept, attaining the siddhi of  
long-life, The marks of rebirth and death spontaneously dissolved.  
Now 211 years have passed; Surely that is sufficient protection for  
Tibet, And surely all the gods and men are grateful, My partners in  
happiness and sorrow. Now when I have gone it will seem that we  
have parted But do not be depressed, my friends; Pray with penetration  
and concentration. Immerse yourselves in the pure potential of  
Dzokchen For there is no other way to transcend the misery of  
existence. Instruction in Dzokchen is the heartblood of Orgyen Perna.  
He gave it to me And now I must transmit it to you. Practise it and  
attain siddhi. You may transmit it to all suitable recipients, But deny it  
to those who lack the capacity to contain it. Swear to keep it out of the  
hands of vow-violators And seal it away from opinionated people.

Then swearing them to secrecy, to my eleven root disciples I revealed

the mandala of Dzokchen Ati, bestowing upon them the hundred secret precepts which are like my heart, and in an instant they gained release. (This was the final propagation of Tsogyel's whispered transmission.)

I was residing in the uppermost cave of Pama Gang when on the third day of the bird month of my 211th year I announced to my disciples that we all should leave for the Zapu Peak to view a spectacle that would take place there on the eighth day of that month, and that we should all stay there on the Coppercoloured Mountain." With my eleven most favoured disciples and about fifty acolytes I started out for the Zapu Peak. On the seventh day of the month, at the waist of the mountain, I found a cave shaped like a namaste mudra, and we settled there for the night. I gave my disciples twenty-nine short teachings, and then, having enjoyed a great ganacakra feast that creates identity with the Lama, my disciples gathered in front of me.

'Mortality is the essential characteristic of humanity,' I told them.

Then Tashi Children offered me a golden plate and made this petition:

Most generous Mother, Lady Tsogyel, Only mother of all the beings of the three realms, When you no longer sustain your spiritual sons, Although those with co-ordinated hand and mouth can survive, How will the clutch of naive idealists manage? O great golden jewel of the firmament, When you no longer enlighten the darkness of beings, Although those with the eye of wisdom can follow the path, Your bubble-eyed dependants will fall into the abyss. O specially qualified regent of the Buddha, When you no longer guard your devout Listeners, Although exalted arhats can protect themselves, Who will take care of the little monks, hard of hearing? O Dakini endowed with the voice of Brahma, When you no longer protect this community, Although the translators, scholars and adepts will survive, Who will lead the masses of common people? Alas! accomplished lady, Still look upon this circle with compassion. If you must leave this community of brothers and sisters We implore you first to grant us the ambrosia of your lips.

Tashi Children prostrated repeatedly, and then sat down. I replied:

Listen, faithful Daughter of Bhutan. I, the Lady Tsogyel, Tirelessly working for the people's welfare, Have sustained the whole of Tibet with my vibrance, And as many as 200 years have passed. Now that my work of conversion is certainly complete, Without means to remain, to postpone my departure is impossible, Just as it is for sentient beings who must pass over at death. However, I will leave behind a few words of testament. Please listen to me, brothers and sisters here assembled.

There are innumerable black-topped people in this world But those who cherish the teaching can be counted; You practitioners of the Community are far fewer, And siddhas are as rare as stars in the day sky, While these days no-one attains Buddhahood. So remember this maxim, 'Live the dharma!' Although it is said that there are eighty-four thousand methods, Innumerable paths that lead to the one goal, In essence they are reducible to the nine vehicles, And the nine vehicles reduce to the threefold Ati;<sup>10</sup> The substance of Ati is contained in this unsurpassable teaching, This teaching upon Vision, Meditation, Action and Goal: Vision is freedom from analytical mentality; Meditation is experiential knowledge of primal purity; Action is characterised by imperturbable relaxation; And the goal is natural expression of the Buddha's three modes. This, then, is the quintessence of the teaching.

When your public behaviour conforms to the strictures of the vinaya, The aberrant strains in others are automatically suppressed. When inner spiritual practice is in accordance with the sutras, Since like breeds like, virtue and merit automatically accrue. When metaphysical vision is in accordance with the abhidharma,

Doubts and over-evaluated ideas are automatically eradicated. Vinaya, sutra and abhidharma are the bedrock of the teaching, And there is no other way to bear the torch of the doctrine.

Purificatory practices performed according to the rubric of kriya Eradicate the germs of negative proclivities. Cultivating the mind according to the rubric of upayoga Automatically induces familiarity with the dharma. Training vision according to the rubric of yogatantra Automatically induces the blessings of compassion. Practice of invocation and accomplishment in mahayoga Automatically produces

Vision, Meditation and Action. Practice of energy control in anuyoga Automatically grants power and siddhi. Purifying seedessence as Ati itself Accomplishes Buddhahood instantaneously.

No more instruction than this is necessary. All who would emulate me Should rely upon techniques described in this biography And the fulfilment of one's own and others' aims - the final goal - is achieved.

After I had finished, the Nepali girl Kalasiddhi performed many prostrations and circumambulations and then made this request:

Mother, when you have vanished into inner space, What should we zap-lam initiates of the Tibetan mysteries do? Who will dispel obstructing spirits and stimulate our meditation? Still sustain Tibet with your compassion!

I answered her:

O listen Dakini, well-born lady, Mantra-born maiden with siddhi, You who show the path of virtue With a well-endowed body's selfless aspiration. This community and future travellers on the zap-lam path,

Must first find a Lama especially qualified, And from the Lama possessing every spiritual sign, You must request initiation and pledge fulfilment of your vows. Then train your energy flows until you gain self-control, And after receiving the three superior initiations," cultivate ensuing desire, To perfect the nature of the four levels of joy, For six months or until signs of achievement appear in the body. Unite male (solar) and female (lunar) energies, Developing the method of mixing higher and lower energies, Female assisting male and male assisting female, The principles of each being separately practised. Intensify and elevate your practice, broadening the horizons of your pleasure; But if pleasure and Emptiness are not identified, Profitlessly you stray from the path of Tantra: Apprehend the intrinsic unity of pleasure and Emptiness. Guard the samaya of Guru and Dakini like your eyes; In various skilful ways enjoy the five sacred substances; Practise to perfection the skill of retaining your seedessence; Be attentive to obstacles and hostile powers; If the samaya is impaired strive to restore it. About the body: do not let it slip into old habits Or



you will become like ordinary men and women; With the confidence of the deity, meditate charged with power And inform your focal points of energy as a principal and his circle of deities. About speech: concentrate upon mantra and energy flows - Without energy control your sexual activity is fornication; Properly execute the exercises of 'drawing up' and 'saturating' And with the nails of your imagination apply an hermetic seal. About mind: identify the conditioned mind with seedessence itself; If seedessence is lost in actuality The karma of slaying a Buddha is incurred; At all costs gain self-control. Absorb yourself intently in the experience of desire, For without it the mysteries have no meaning; Desire as pure pleasure is the goal fulfilled.

Preserve constant cognition of the primal purity of experience; Protect the samaya like your body and life, For if it is broken there is no authority to restore it. The foregoing is advice upon meditation practice. All you initiates into the tantric mysteries Should bury your ambition and conceit in a pit, Pour your sanctimony and pride into a river, Burn your obsessive lust and infatuation in fire, Cast your selfish aggression and perverse behaviour on the wind, And dissolve your shamelessness and deceitful lies in space. Protect your secret sexual practices from prying eyes; Do not be loose with your sexual organs, bind them fast; Do not flaunt your signs of success; Rely upon the Yidam deity as the indivisible three roots;" Maintain regular tormas offerings<sup>13</sup> and ganacakra feast rites; Preserve the seed of kindness for the sake of other beings; Do not break the flow of formless benediction. The foregoing is general instruction upon Action.

With that understanding fixed in your heart, O Siddhi, You and I are essentially one, And through emanation we will give purpose to beings of the future.

Then Be Yeshe Nyingpo made this request:

O Yeshe Tsogyelma! I beg you to give oral instruction For me and those like me. Still with your compassionate waves of grace Never leave us, always protect us.

And I replied:

O listen, Yeshe Nyingpo. Ask your Lord and Lama for his blessings; Ask the Four Dakinis for their powers of magical activity; Then reveal your signs of power at the opportune moment: That is an indication of meditation in action.

Listen further, Yeshe Nyingpo: Through the vinaya, maintain the noble image of your order And others will appreciate it and emulate you. Apply yourself to tantric meditation And you will quickly gain realisation. Strive in your spiritual practice according to the essence of the sutras And the scriptural tradition will become strong. Diligently practise invocation and accomplishment of the Yidam deity And you will quickly attain whatever siddhi you desire. Rid yourself of over-evaluated ideas by reference to the abhidharma And you will become free from hesitancy and doubt. Exert yourself in meditation upon psychic nerves, energy flows and seedessence And signs of success will be quickly perfected. Purify yourself according to the techniques of kriya And unclean habits will be quickly eradicated. Penetrate the reality of Vision, Meditation and Action, And your own enlightenment will be firmly established. Meditate upon the goal, the pure potential of Dzokchen, And reality extinguished, mental processes cease. Offer impartial wishfulfilling prayers And measureless advantage will accrue to sentient beings.

Then Ma Rinchen Chok made his petition:

Lama, Lady Tsogyelma, When you have gone to the Land of Orgyen How should we of this community act? How should we pray? Please tell us how we can remain with you.

And he wept. I replied:

O listen, yogin, You who have gained mastery of the Tantra, Your concern for others is admirable. I, a woman, Yeshe Tsogyelma,

Have been blessed by the Guru's compassion And now my goal is fully realised; Tomorrow I go to the Land of Orgyen. Pray and you will be blessed.

Brothers and sisters of this assembly, Concentrate upon the teaching to serve your highest interest, And without conceit, guard the interest of

others. Liberate yourselves through Vision, Meditation and Action; Mount your prayers on the vibrance of Buddha Speech, And despatch them with bone deep assurance and devotion. Meditate upon the Lama just as the radiance of Knowledge And when the peak experience of immense space dawns, When centrifugal diffusion and centripetal re-absorption are one<sup>14</sup> Remain in that state. If you recognise me, the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness, The principal of the whole of samsara and nirvana, You know that I live in the minds of all sentient beings; I project myself as the elements of bodymind and the sensefields And by secondary emanation I appear as the twelve interdependent elements of existence.<sup>15</sup> Though certainly we are ultimately inseparable, Failing to recognise me, you objectify me as an external entity. But when you finally discover me, The one naked mind arisen from within, Absolute Awareness<sup>16</sup> permeates the universe; Pleasure in primal purity is contained like a lake; And the golden-eyed fishes of heightened perception multiply. Sustain that consummation of visionary experience and pleasure And on the wings of perfect creativity you cross to the other side; Running and jumping in the meadows of visionary appearances You fly into the sky-matrix and vanish. In the immense space of absolute Awareness The seedessence of pure pleasure stands thick like a lake, Pure being and seedessence glister and pulsate

And seedsyllables and light-garlands sparkle and shimmer. The vision of reality manifest expands, intensive visionary experience increases, The castle of optimal Knowledge is seized And reality is extinguished as you vanish into primal space. That is the way to remain inseparable from me.

Then Odren Zhonnu Pel made this petition:

O Yeshe Tsogyelma! When you go to the Land of Orgyen How should we incorrigible common creatures Practise Vision, Meditation and Action? I beg you for a little advice.

In response I gave this instruction:

Listen, faithful Zhonnu Pel. The fledgling Dakini-bird nesting in a crag Could not conceive how easy was flight Until her skill in the six

vehicles was perfected; But her potential realised, wings beating with hidden strength, Breaking the back of even the razor-edged wind, She arrived at whatever destination she chose. It was like that with me too, the girl Tsogyel; Although I longed for Buddhahood I was forced to wait Until I had perfected my skill in meditation practice. Practising to perfection the creative and fulfilment processes and Dzokchen,<sup>17</sup> This corporeal bundle dissolved in light, And now I go into the presence of Orgyen Guru. But I will leave you with these few words of testament.

'Vision' is but a quality of all meditative existence; Yet absorbed in reality, experiencing its nature, You find not Emptiness for there is Knowledge and radiance, Yet nothing permanent for it is intrinsically empty. That essential insight is called 'Vision'. What are the modes of Vision?

When you practise radiation and re-absorption, it is compassion; When you practise the fulfilment process, it is mahamudra, The essence without permanence or flux. Turn your eyes inwards upon your own reality And you see yourself, but you see nothing: That visionary perception in itself, That is what is designated 'Vision'.

'Meditation' is the basis of all meditative existence; When absorbed in reality, experiencing its nature, Intent upon seeing the essential Vision, Focusing an unwavering attention free of any limitation, That is called meditative absorption. And what are the modes of meditation? Whether you practise the creative or fulfilment process Peak experience shows you the ineffable reality - You may practise any of the innumerable modes of meditation. In truth, whatever your technique, the creative or fulfilment process, In a condition free from depression, torpor and mental fog, Registering undistracted silence, If you focus upon universal sameness, you practise 'Meditation'.

'Action' is the dynamic form of meditative existence; When absorbed in its reality, experiencing its nature, Sure in clarity of Vision, Meditation an ineradicable habit, In a state of imperturbable relaxation, You will see yourself perform a variety of actions. What are the specific modes of Action? Whatever the variable form of your activity, Based in primal purity there is no conflict with meditative experience, Which is intensified and elevated. In truth, working,

sleeping, coming, going, Eating, sitting - in the performance of every activity Is the quality of 'Action' Because Action is an integral function of meditation practice - Creative and fulfilment processes and Dzokchen, *etc.* There is nothing else to say.

Although I am going to Ngayab Ling, I leave Tibet saturated with precepts. All you who have faith must pray!

Then Dorje Tso of Shelkar made this request:

O Mother of this entire land of Tibet, And especially lord of this dependant, Because there is no one to replace you Do not forsake me, do not withdraw your compassion, Please take me with you into lotus-light. But if my heavy load of karma Prevents me from following you there, Please give me plenty of instruction and secret precepts.

Choked by her tears, Dorje Tso fainted away with emotion. When she revived I answered her:

Listen, faithful Daughter of Shelkar, Awareness Dakini, Dorje Tso! Your body is a thing of flesh and blood, An inferior body, a slave to matter - Practise energy control and become a Sky-dancer. When you gain control of your energy flows and mind You become nothing if not a siddha.

Your slippery mind, possessed by the five poisons, Orchestrates a coarse personality, An obstinate train of ordinary crass thoughts. If you desire to obtain Buddhahood, purify your mind, Composing yourself in mahamudra. When Emptiness and Awareness are set free, You are nothing if not a Buddha.

This dissimulating corporeal bundle, This body is the seat of all good and bad. If you wish to obtain a rainbow body, dissolve corporeality, Absorbing yourself in the continuous peak experience of Dzokchen Ati. When you arrive at the extinction of reality

There is nothing but the spontaneity of pure potential. There is no other way to dance in the sky.

In the meantime, while you purify your gross body, There is a secret

way to enter lotus-light. So listen to this instruction. Pray to your root Guru; Without even a moment's thought of equality with him, Pray to him with pure vision, devotion, respect and faith, Asking him for the blessings of the four empowerments; Then admitting no separation from him, Visualise him as light radiating from the centre of your heart; Uniting your body, speech and mind with his, Stay in the meditative composure of mahamudra. Then in subsequent cognition along the path, sustain your heightened perception;<sup>18</sup> To inspire your meditation, try to cultivate the play of empty pleasure, And continue on your way detached from objects of desire; With conviction practise Dzokchen And enter the place where Ati ends.

After this, for eleven successive lives, You will show skilful means in training the people of Tibet, And then you will arrive in lotus-light. When you are known as Dorje Dechen Perna Tso, You will project an apparitional form And join with Gelong Namkhai Nyingpo In a union of Means and Insight. Training a billion alienated beings, The vicious hosts at the edge of the world Your selfless activity will be beyond expression. Namkhai Nyingpo will be named 'Ching' (called Che-'jing mir-gon)<sup>19</sup> And you will be his divine consort And live for 130,000 human years. After that, in a nimbus of lotus light, You will become inseparable from your Guru and Lord.

After I had made these prophecies, I gave Dorje Tso much further advice. Then Lasum Gyelwa Jangchub performed innumerable prostrations and circumambulations, and having prepared a plate of seven turquoises, the chief of which was a life-protection amulet called 'A Thousand Blazing Lights', he presented it to me and made this request:

Endowed with an infallible memory, the Keeper of Pema's Secret Word, Mother of Great and Perfect Insight, Voice of Pure Pleasure,<sup>20</sup> Only sun in this dark land of Tibet, Tsogyelma, Now if you are truly leaving for the SouthWest, Please grant me a few concise words that will bestow great waves of bliss, Precepts of profound import, framing a practice sharp and quick, Instructions in the accomplishment of Buddhahood in this lifetime. And please tell me how many rebirths I must take after this, And when I will meet you, the Sky Dancer, the Dakini. Still bathe me in your compassion!

In response to Gyelwa Jangchub's first request, I taught The Heartdrop of the Apparitional Sky Dancer, which was divided into three parts - outer, inner and secret. The outer part was in conformity with the sutras, and consisted of ten topics; the inner part was in conformity with the tantras and consisted of eleven topics; the secret part, in the form of secret instruction, consisted of thirteen ultimate precepts. [The text then lists the topics dealt with in each part of the Khacho Tulku Nyingtik.<sup>21</sup>] Upon the conclusion of this instruction, the seven members of the initiatory circle, Gyelwa Jangchub and his brothers and sisters, having gained the final relief of freedom into the clear light, leaving no mortal remains behind, attained spiritual release. Then I gave Gyelwa Jangchub this advice and prophecy:

Listen attentively, Gyelwa Jangchub, Hear me well, Guardian of a Virtuous Mind. O Buddha Hero of Skilful Means, Ayra Sale, When you were known as Atsara Sale You and I related as Skilful Means and Perfect Insight,

And the requisite constituents of many profound tantras were synchronised. Thereby you were blessed, and you will gain release in this lifetime. However, at times you were over-familiar with me, And sometimes doubting me, you abused me and derided me within. In all future lives, in later incarnations, Although you will have gained mastery of the Tantra, Obstructive influences will certainly impede you, Much malicious boastful talk will haunt you And your attempts to serve others will be fraught with difficulty. Remember that whatever obstacles arise are the result of your past actions, And pray to Perna Jungne and Tsogyel indivisible. Hereafter, for thirteen lifetimes, you will continue selfless service to others, And then you will reincarnate in a rough inhospitable land. To the west of this sacred mountain you will appear as Namkha, In a vajra body, heroic and fierce, called Taksham, And as Taksham in three successive lives You will still the wind of karma and appear in lotus light. Then inseparable from me, in a union of Means and Insight, We will project emanations until the current of reincarnation is exhausted in all beings. Then will powerful aspiration reach its fulfilment; Then will the essences of many profound tantras spread; Then will the fruit of deep meditation practice ripen; Then will the full potential of creative and fulfilment processes evolve; Then will the just deserts of meritorious karma be served;

Then will a great cloud of profound blessings waft across the sky;  
Then will the rain of deep compassion fall; Ayra Salewa will gain  
siddhi, Gyelwa Jangchub will gain true realisation. Now pray with  
fervour, meditate intensely!

Upon the evening of the eighth day the twelve kinds of Devil Dakinisu from the Dakini Land of Orgyen appeared, proclaiming themselves to be twelve million in all (12000000). Around midnight the twelve kinds of man-eating Dakinis arrived - lifesuckers, breath-thieves, flesh-eaters, blood-drinkers, bonechewers, etc., proclaiming themselves to be five million, five thousand, five hundred in number (5005500), so that the earth and sky were filled with carnivores. In the small hours hosts of Mundane Dakinis and Dakinis of the Twelve Divisions of Time, twelve million, one hundred and twenty thousand in all (12120000) announced themselves, coming riding upon lions and various other beasts, different birds such as the Garuda, various domestic animals such as the elephant, and other jungle animals like the deer and the rhinoceros; their forms were of different sizes and shapes and their faces were covered with masks of human beings and various other kinds of creatures. During the hour before dawn more Dakinis appeared, proclaiming themselves as the Dakinis of the Four Directions of Orgyen and as Dakinis of the Twelve Island Continents. These hosts of Dakinis were differentiated by colour into white, red, green, blue-black and yellow legions - of the white legion some were fully white, some partially red, some partially green, some partially blue and some partially yellow, and likewise the red, green, yellow and blue-black legions were particoloured. Accordingly, they held different symbolic emblems in their hands, various kinds of weapons indicating their nature. Wearing silk scarves, bone ornaments, tiaras, mantles covering the upper part of their bodies and skirts covering their lower parts; they carried small tinkling bells, thighbone trumpets, skull drums and any of a million different kinds of musical instruments difficult to classify or enumerate. There were five million, two hundred thousand (5200000) of these Dakinis. Between first light and sunrise the Dakini of the Sixty-eight Mandalas and their principal, the Beautifully Proportioned Queen of the Lotus Dance (Pema Garwong Lhundze), announced themselves. The sky was full of shimmering rainbow light, redolence of incense permeated the earth, and the air in between was full of Dakinis. Between noon and evening all the



Dakinis of the Thirty-two Lands, the Ten Heruka Power Places, the Eight Great Cemeteries, and the Pilava, the Chandoha and their subsidiary power places<sup>23</sup> fully manifest themselves, each performing her particular dance, each demonstrating her personal gesture, each playing her unique musical instrument, each singing her own song and with her own style of entertainment, each with her special skill, each with her different mode of worship and her precious offering, all worshipping and praising me, filling the earth.

Then I gave a vast ganacakra feast for them. Through my magical powers, with a single piece of pure molasses, I fed to satiety all the assembled humans, and to the Dakinis I distributed an even greater amount. Next, with just one full skullbowl of chung, I satisfied both men and Dakinis. Then I pronounced the secret symbol empowerment of the Dakinis,<sup>24</sup> and simultaneously the assembled human crowd became possessed with an intense feeling of consummate intercourse with the Dakinis; I brought them to the level of ultimate irreversibility.

It being the evening of the ninth day, I ascended with my disciples from the Heart Cave at the waist of the Zapu Mountain to the peak, which resembled the Coppercoloured Mountain, Zangdokperi. At the third hour of the tenth day I revealed the mandala of the rite of Accomplishment of the Lama's Mind through a Single Syllable,<sup>25</sup> and simultaneously myriads of savage demons, an inconceivable number, appeared. There was a three-headed faction, a one-headed faction, a headless faction, a five-headed faction, a six-headed faction, a hundred-headed faction and so on, countless factions with any number of heads and feet from one to a hundred thousand. 'Guru Pema has sent us to escort the Queen of the Demon Savages, the Dakini Blazing Blue Light,' they said, gathering around.

At daybreak, after I had celebrated a ganacakra, Gyelwa Jangchub and the eleven faithful, all the human beings, Buddha Heroes, Dakinis, demon savages, gods and demons, devoutly bowed down to me. With tears of grief running down his face, Gyelwa Jangchub addressed me in this manner:

Alas! Awareness Dakini, Human Guru, Yeshe Tsogyelma, You, Tibet's only Mother, are dissolving into space. What shall we intellectual

babies do without your support?



We beg you to sustain Tibet for a long time yet. If you must go, if you cannot remain by any means, Tell us of the future ebb and flow of the teaching in Tibet. Please tell us the names of the torch-bearers of the doctrine. Tell us how the destructive, diabolic emanation will come, And what will augur reversal of catastrophe. In particular, tell us what

your emanations will be, What will be their names, their purpose, their location, Their activity for others, and the nature of their teaching. Without concealment, secrecy or symbols, but clearly, We implore you to tell us this, Omniscient Queen. And particularly, your extensive, abridged and concise biographies, The Heartdrop of the Apparitional Sky Dancer And the set of Higher and Lower, Mother and Son, Whispered Transmission, How should we transmit them? through the oral or revealed transmission? And to what fortunate beings should they be entrusted? Where should they be concealed if they are to be hidden treasures? What treasure-finders will come, and what signs will appear to them? Please give us detailed instruction and extensive manifests. And what should this community of brothers do now? Where should we place our confidence, hope and trust? Who will pray for us upon death and dispel obstacles in the bardo? O take pity on us, and help us quickly!

(For a full account of Tsogyel's answer look into the Great Register of Prophets:26 this is a short summary of her reply.)

Listen attentively, Tibetan men and gods; Listen closely, faithful, fortunate beings. I, this Supreme Being, Yeshe Tsogyelma, I have served Tibet for 211 years, and hereafter King Tri Repachan, the Dharma Protector, an emanation of Vajrapani, Shall universalise the doctrines of sutra and tantra.

His younger brother, the diabolic emanation Ox (Langdarma), will conspire with the ministers, And after assassinating his elder brother, Ox will rule the kingdom And erase even the memory of the monasteries and the scriptures. He will establish a law inimical to the Buddha's teaching, Based upon the ten vices and the five inexpiable sins. The most devout practitioners of the Faith will be killed, The lesser banished, the least enslaved, But the tantric vajra-brothers of the villages will keep the teaching alive, While Lhasa and Samye are despoiled and fall into ruin. When Pelgyi Dorje remembers his Guru's prophetic injunction, He will assassinate the diabolic king and flee towards Mekham. Mar and Yo will restore the pure vinaya teaching;27 Ten monks will assemble at Lang-thang Drolma, in Kham, And the bright light of the doctrine will be re-established in Central Tibet and Tsang. A devout Tibet will promote the teaching, And through the

energy of the sages the Tantra will encompass the earth.

However, much disorderly conduct and some immorality will occur. An emanation of Orgyen's Speech, Santaraksita's final emanation, Called Atisa, will propagate the sutras and tantras. I, Tsogyel, called Jayakara, I will be the attendant of the translator of the Dom Family.<sup>28</sup> When average lifespan is seventy years, the teaching will increase, And the world will be whitewashed by sutra and tantra.

Thereafter, when lifespan has declined to sixty years, Sa,<sup>29</sup> an emanation of King Trisong Detsen, will bear the torch of the teaching; Upon the weakening of his royal line, the Tartars will patronise the Lamas.

Drokmi, an emanation of Pema Jungne's Body, will appear, And propagate The Path as the Goal, re-establishing the scriptural tradition of sutras and tantras; His advent will be comparable to the coming of peerless ~akyamuni.

Thereafter, when the Sakya power disintegrates, Phak's teaching-10 will gain sway, and average lifespan will be fifty years. The Old Tradition re-established, the Law will be as strong as it is today. From Lhorong an emanation of Pema Jungne's Mind will appear, And his name will be Marpa and the teaching of the Tantra will increase. I, Tsogyel, will become Marpa's consort and support. Mila will practise austerity and gain mastery; An emanation of Pema Jungne's Quality will appear in Dakpo; Dri, Tak, Kar and Druk will rush forth like streams from Tise. This ocean of teaching will remain 'til the end to guide beings to happiness.

When average lifespan declines to forty years, the teaching will be fragmented. Sustained by barbarians like the Tartars the teaching will be coarse: The country of Tibet will be divided into small autonomous states And the world will be covered with ulcer-like excrescences. At that time Pema Jungne's Activity will be projected as Karma," And the teaching will spread in Tibet, prolonged for a further thirty years, And the sacred sound of MANI will echo throughout the kingdom.

Thereafter, when average lifespan is thirty years, the Virtuous

Doctrine<sup>32</sup> will appear. An emanation of Pema Jungne's essence will come from Central Tibet,

And Tibet will become a paradise of pleasure and delight. The teaching of the king of the barbarian dynasty of Zahor Will be established in Central Tibet, Tsang and Kham.

[Here the text has a single line in the Dkkinf script beginning with the word 'Thereafter', but otherwise cryptic.]

An unhappy Tibet will fall into anarchy, And everyone will depend upon the Tartars for support. When average lifespan is twenty years, an emanation of Perna Jungne's Speech Will come from Lhodrak to bring happiness to all beings. A king with a mole on his shoulder will appear in Khotan, And his teaching will last until the end. Then lifespan will decrease to ten years, And then at the aeon's turn, through emanation the earth's essence will be reabsorbed, And Black Devil Slayer (Dunjom Nakpo) will reign over a dark aeon called Gyachu Mulkal, Culminating in the advent of Maitreya and resurrection. These prophecies give only general indications. For the means to avert errors in transition consult Pema Jungne's pronouncements; It is not possible for the word of truth to beguile.

In reply to your specific question about my emanations: I, this Supreme Being, Yeshe Tsogyelma, I will never withdraw my compassion from Tibet. Radiating the light of skilful means through emanation, I will guide all beings of the future to happiness. In particular, five emanations of Body and five of Speech, Five emanations of Mind, five of Quality and five of Action - These twentyfive emanations will constantly sustain Tibet. Each of these twentyfive will project five secondary emanations, And each of these will project tertiary emanations, etc., Until all sentient beings are apparitional beings, United with the blissful Great Mother, Gathered into the matrix of delight, Kuntuzangmo's clear sky.

To be brief, five hundred years from now, When Tibet is one vast fort bristling with spears, And the valleys and peaks are covered with castles, An extremist she-devil will lead beings down a false path. When her perverse teaching of Severance (gcod) has beguiled the land,

An emanation of my Body will project an emanation of Speech called Drolma; A Body emanation of my Body called Kunga Zangmo will appear; A Mind emanation of my Body called Pelmo of Central Tibet will shine forth; A Quality emanation of my Body called Spiritual Son will appear in Yeru; And an activity emanation of my Body will appear in Tamyul in Kham. Thus the scriptural tradition of the profound Tantra will be reasserted; The perfect esoteric doctrine of Severance will be re-established; The spiritual sons' Four Leonine Blessings will convert beings.

Thereafter, the Tibetan state is quickly devoured by the Sakyas and Mongols. The Governor of Central Tibet and Tsang is like the fixed eye of a dice; The Buddha's teaching is like the flame of a brimming butter lamp; The malign influences of perversion are like harsh dust storms. At that time the hundred treasure-finders of Peme's prediction will come, And the treasures of the Tantra will bring peace to the world. When spurious revelations, unlike those of the hundred treasure-finders, are forged, And destructive sourcerers' black magical revelations proliferate, A Body emanation of my Speech will appear in Ngari And this famous name will separate true from false revelations; A Speech emanation of my Speech, a nun, will appear in Central Tibet And she will be called Orgyen and found a meditation centre

And evince signal powers of mastery of the Tantra; A Mind emanation of my Speech will appear in Tasho And he will be called Perna, subject to profound revelations, Granting siddhi to karmically related, purposeful people; A Quality emanation of my Speech will appear in Kongpo And this spiritual son will give relief to common people, And remove all hindrances encountered by treasure-finders; An Activity emanation of my Speech will appear in Tsang And known as Jomo she will found a Phakmo meditation centre And the rites of Pig-face will embrace the world.

Thereafter, foreign armies invade, rising like summer lakes; Sakya and Drigung quarrel and curdling spreads from the border; Each holds his own philosophical view; Adherents of the old and new traditions begin passionate factional strife; And the distinction between the religious and the secular becomes blurred. At that time a Body emanation of my Mind will appear from Nyaksa And he will be called Orgyen and

increase the siddhas' experiential understanding; A Speech emanation of my Mind called Sonam Peldren, Affecting a common manner, will appear in the north; Covertly granting siddhi to the fortunate, His intelligent disciples leaving behind signs of achievement at death; A Mind emanation of my Mind called E of Central Tibet Will lead closely related disciples to the Sky Dancer's Paradise, Teaching the path to liberation to many yogins practising energy control; A Quality emanation of my Mind will appear in Lhodrak And whoever relates to his shape-shifting is established in bliss; An Activity emanation of Mind will appear in Central Nepal Where he will establish many people on the path through skilful means.

Thereafter the Emperor's emanations are divided into five; In Tsang the regent is like a firefly;

The forts of Tramo are like illusory villages; Good news sounds like songs of the Celestial Musicians; Bad advice of sages is like sugar-coated poison; The doctrine's teachers are like dying butter-lamps; Hor and Mongolia become priest and patron, their cushions touching. At that time a Body emanation of my Quality, a Dakini, will come from Central Tibet; A speech emanation of my Quality, called Drolma, will come from Kham; A Mind emanation of my Quality, a tulku, will appear in Nyemo; A Quality emanation of my Quality will appear as a teacher in the north; An Activity emanation of my Quality will appear in Tsangrong: Whoever relates to their unpredictable shape-shifting, their miraculous display, And various extra-sensory powers, are led to Pure Pleasure (Sukhavati).

Thereafter, all of Upper and Lower Tibet fragments; The powerful grab the passes, valleys and gorges, and land is redistributed; Families are registered and communal land is restricted; All wealth is concentrated in Hor, and everyone wears Tartar dress; The devout go to war and armies led by monks increase; Monks ride camels in the army; Nuns become coolies, and laymen expound the teaching; The lot of infants is painful labour. Then Lhasa is destroyed by water, Samye by fire, Trandruk falls and the Four Districts are destroyed. At this time a body emanation of my Activity will come to Chimphu; A Speech emanation of my Activity will show form in Ngari; A Mind emanation of my Activity will come to Puwo; A Quality emanation of

my Activity will be projected into Dokham; An Activity emanation of my Activity will appear as a female leader from Central Tibet:

All these, too, through their various manifold forms, Guide beings to the paradise of finite infinity, And lead whosoever relates to them to the Paradise of Pure Pleasure, And project different tertiary emanations into the Hidden Valleys, Serving all those with auspicious karma, and removing obstacles.

Remember that from the present day until samsara is emptied, Innumerable primary and secondary emanations will appear continually. And remember in the future that whosoever practises energy control, The best will see my reality manifest, the average will see signs in vision, And the mediocre will see my form in a dream. Either I will be one with your own nature, or appear as your mudra. For those who maintain the samaya, I will remove obstacles and inspire meditation, So that the warmth of pleasure, together with siddhi, is swiftly generated.

Regarding my extensive, condensed and concise biographies, Hide the extensive version here on Zapu Peak, Conceal the concise version at Namkechan in Lhodrak, And conceal this, the abridged version, in Lhorong Kham. Concerning The Higher and Lower Whispered Transmission and The Dakin's Heartdrop, It is best if you scatter the prophetic manifests separately. The discoverers will be Jangchub and Ma,<sup>33</sup> And they will fulfil separate purposes in the future.

Particularly, about this biography, there are nine sets of auspicious circumstances: First, if it is revealed by one called Chowong, Its fame will travel throughout the kingdom for the good of beings, And, finally, reaching China, converts will appear there.

If that opportunity is missed and the treasure remains concealed, Someone called Tashi will come from Lato, And if it is retrieved by him wearing his hair in a knot, It will embrace converts in Central Tibet, Tsang and Kham for the good of beings, And finally it will enlarge the Community in Central Nepal. If that opportunity is lost and it remains concealed, A man named Dorje, a Pawo,' Will appear in the south in the Lhorong Mountain Range; If he retrieves it, it will become



well-known throughout Dokham, And finally it will make converts in Hor. Failing that, a man called Raja of the Shampo area, A crazy saint, will discover it. Otherwise a certain Dorje of Puwo And a certain Kunga from the east may retrieve it: Each will write half of it for the good of beings. If they fail to discover it, the final opportunity will occur To three women - or it will naturally manifest itself. In this last case it will become known only in the area in which it is found.

When in the future the paths of these nine spiritual beings cross The teaching will burgeon and blossom. In particular, at a place called Katok to the east,<sup>35</sup> The source of the teaching of Guru Senge Dradrok, Where Pema Jungne celebrated thirteen consecrations, There is a mountain shaped like a lion with his head held high, And in the throat of this mountain are concealed the most profound treasures. Two thousand five hundred years hence Certain omens will augur retrieval of these treasures; Pema Jungne and his Consort will enrich this area, serving others; Dampa Gyeltsen and Tsogyel will emanate there; The supreme doctrine of Tantra will remain there to the end, And though sometimes it will degenerate The blessed will appear in due season; The conversion of my last disciple will occur there.

And that ends my advice and instruction to you. Now I am unable to stay much longer. Pray aloud together, and remain composed in meditation. This community and future disciples Must take my advice and my prophecies to heart.

[The remainder of Tsogyel's story is related by Atsara Sale - Gyelwa Jangchub - the scribe, and the origin of the emanation Taksham, who was the treasure-finder.]

Then with her left hand Tsogyel touched the Bhutanese Tashi Chidren, who was transformed into an eight-petalled blue utpala lotus, each petal and the centre marked with the syllables HUNG PHAT, and the lotus was absorbed into Tsogyel's right breast. Then with her left hand Tsogyel touched the Nepali Kalasiddhi, who became a sixteen-petalled red lotus with a vowel sign and the syllable HRI inscribed upon each petal, and this red lotus was absorbed into her left breast.<sup>36</sup>

Late on the eve of the tenth day, an escort of the Four Guardian

Kings leading the outer, inner and secret oath-bound hosts, and the eight and the twelve classes of spirits, appeared. 'The complete escort from Ngayab Ling is now assembled. Please come, O Knowledge Holder Dakini Blazing Blue Light,' they implored her.

The gods and men of Tibet begged her nine times over and over to postpone her departure, just as is described elsewhere, and after their attempt to dissuade her from parting had failed, Dorje Lekpa of Tsang, Machen Pomra from the East, Rongtsen Mebar from the South, Tsomen Gyelmo from the North, Gangzang Hao from the West, Lijin Harlek of Central Tibet and Thanglha Gangtsen of the pestilential demons, and all the Great Lords of the Earth and the pestilential demons without number, each with his own entourage, gathered around her. In particular, she gave them Answers to the Questions of the Tenma Protectors: the Oracle of Gods and Demons,<sup>37</sup> amongst other tomes, the size of which dissuades me from including any here.

As the first flicker of light dawned on the tenth day, a palanquin of the light of four Dakinis in the form of an eight-petalled lotus descended like a shooting star before Tsogyel. And then, transformed into the resplendent form of Vajra Yogini, holding a damru drum in her right hand and a skull-cup in her left hand, Tsogyel mounted the palanquin. At this point the human throng began to weep and wail uncontrollably. 'What can we tell Tibet? What can we do?' they cried. Tsogyel answered them:

For pity! Listen to me, O my faithful Tibetans! Tell the people I am absorbed in inner space, the omnipresent ground, And the aches and pains of corporeality have ceased. Tell them that the mortal Tsogyel has finally attained an immaculate state, And that the agony and ecstasy of embodiment is over. Tell them that the illusory body of flesh and blood has been transfigured, And the need for diagnosis, prescription, moksa, bleeding and hot needles, has gone. Tell them that when the truth of impermanence is finally made plain The seemingly concrete and permanent must vanish. Tell them that the end of the way is a body of light, And this black corpse, this bag of water and mucus must pass. Tell them that Ama Tsogyel has melted into the primordial A, And cries of anguish have ceased. Tell them that outside and inside, mother and son, have united, And the material superfluity, flesh and

blood, has vanished. Tell them that the Lama's compassion never fails; His apparitional hosts of welcome encompass the universe. Tell them that this incorrigible woman, this wanton uninhibited woman, This woman has achieved the impossible nine times over. Tell them that this Daughter of Tibet, this unlovable spinster, Now is Queen of Kunzang's absolute, empty being. Tell them this woman, over-extended in vanity and deceit, Successful in her final deceit, has gone to the SouthWest. Tell them this passionate woman, repeatedly fallen in her maze of intrigue, Through intrigue has vanished into the sphere of inner space. Tell them that this widow of Tibet, rejected by Tibetan males, Has captured the state of Buddhahood. Now do not despair! Pray for waves of grace!

Tsogyel will never leave the faithful! I will certainly appear to you at the time of your supplication. So my friends, return home and pray! May your happiness and good fortune increase!

When she had finished speaking, radiating blinding rainbow light she dissolved into a sesame seed-pod-like sheath of shimmering blue light,<sup>38</sup> and she vanished. The four Dakini lotus petals began to move, and in a blaze of light the lotus ascended, higher and higher, until it vanished from sight. The onlookers with one voice and one strain wailed:

Alas! alas! Yeshe Tsogyelma! How pitiless you are! How little your compassion! If you do not continue to help Tibet In whom can we miserable people trust? You, our Mother, have gone to a pureland, But who will save this deeply defiled land of Tibet? You, our Mother, have entered an immaculate sphere, But who will guide us at the final outcome of our negative karma? You, our Mother, have gone to a Land of Pure Pleasure, But who will guide us wanderers in samsaric suffering? You, our Mother, have vanished into lotus-light, But who will guide us through Tibet's narrow defiles? You, our Mother, have arrived in Pema's presence, But who will save the outcaste who has nowhere to turn? Alas! alas! still show us your compassion! Please leave us a short wishgranting prayer for Tibet's happiness! Please leave a few words of testament for the whole of Tibet! How can we of this community assuage our pain? Mother, Lady, still sustain us with your compassion! Please lead us to the field of all-embracing lotus-light!

After addressing this halfcrazed plaint to our now far distant Guru, we threw our bodies on the ground, weeping and crying out. Then out of an abiding blaze of light a disembodied voice spoke:

O pity! Listen you faithful, sad Tibetan people! This Supreme Being is the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness!<sup>39</sup> My defiled body has been absorbed in immaculate inner space, And I am a Buddha in the lotus-light of dynamic space; I tell you you need not be anxious, be happy! People of Tibet afflicted with infinite anxiety, Laden with behaviour patterned by negative karmas, When you see that your personal pain is self-inflicted, The Three jewels is your refuge from suffering. Pray to a single hope and support!

This Supreme Being is the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness! After purifying defiling elements I have passed into the sky, And now I serve beings through miraculous emanation; Do not make yourselves miserable, be optimistic! When you see this body with its weight of bad habits As the seat of passionate responses, and the cause of negative karma, Knowing Buddha's teaching to be the way to positive, personal evolution, Strive to apply your instruction on the ten virtues.

This Supreme Being is the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness! I have gone to the space which is the white evolutionary goal, Leaving behind an inextinguishable impetus of exemplary activity; Do not despair, be joyful! When you see that your many forms of behaviour, Negative karmas, are leading you eventually to hell, Fasten your body and speech to virtue to purify the lower realms, And integrating body, speech and mind, travel the path of virtue.

This Supreme Being is the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness! I have gone to the unsullied Land of Pure Pleasure,

After teaching the receptive the method of irreversible release; Do not despair, make song! When you become aware of the subconscious tendency towards painful, paranoid vision That is the boundless ocean of suffering in samsara, A Real Lama has the skilful means to release you from anxiety. Finding a qualified, unerring mentor, obey his injunction.

This Supreme Being is the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness! I have vanished into fields of lotus-light, the plenum of dynamic space, To be born in the inner sanctum of an immaculate lotus; Do not despair, have faith! When you have withdrawn attachment to this rocky defile, This barbaric Tibet, full of war and strife, Abandon unnecessary activity and rely on solitude. Practise energy control, purify your psychic nerves and seedessence, And cultivate mahamudra and Dzokchen.

This Supreme Being is the Dakini Queen of the Lake of Awareness! Attaining humility, through Guru Pema Jungne's compassion I followed him, And now I have finally gone into his presence; Do not despair, but pray! When you see your karmic body as vulnerable as a bubble, Realising the truth of impermanence, and that in death you are helpless, Disabuse yourself of fantasies of eternity, Make your life a practice of sadhana,<sup>40</sup> And cultivate the experience that takes you to the place where Ati ends.

O listen, and cease your lamentation! My compassion will never alter. Your behaviour is precisely the response of eternalists. I am not dead, I have not forsaken you, I have not gone elsewhere;

Pray, and I swear I will show you my reality, And to those of single-minded devotion I will give whatever siddhi you desire, From this time forth until the last of the human race.

As Guru Pema's field of conversion, Tibet has matured into the pureland of Loke<sup>9</sup>vara,<sup>41</sup> the Great Compassionate Lord; With Arya Manjuṣri acting as Master of the Doctrine, And through the brilliance and magical power of Vajrapani, Lord of the Mysteries, The ocean of the teaching should remain forever constant. Free from the mischief of fanatical, foreign extremists, All demons and demonic powers laid to rest, The sutra-class academies should hold the torch of the doctrine; And the masters of Tantra attaining magical energy The whole of Tibet should be covered with meditation centres. The people of Central Tibet, in this and later lives, Should keep the Three jewels as witness to their pleasures and pains, Striving to practise the ten virtues, forsaking the ten vices. Question the scriptures about both outer and inner activity; As to right and wrong, obey the Word of Guru Perna

implicitly; About secular and social mores, conform to the laws of the king; Base the secular law of the Four Districts upon dharma. Subdue foreign aggressors with magical power - With compassion the gods and the Three Jewels will certainly force their retreat; Students in the monasteries should study according to the scriptural tradition. Lay men and women should cultivate an ideal vision on the path; With boundless humility and reverence, respect your superiors, And distribute the surfeit of your goods amongst your inferiors; All should tell beads, reciting the Six-syllable Mantra for the sake of others; And confidently pray to Pema Jungne, our Lord.

This community should take the four empowerments with heartfelt devotion; Pray aloud, calling out the name of Tsogyel, And receiving the four empowerments, your mind is united with mine; Without a thought in your head, remain in constant meditative absorption. For the majority of future inhabitants of Tibet, Pema Jungne is the Lama, And everyone should strive to identify with him. All transformed as the body of Guru Pema, Blessings of superlative compassion will arise. Practise according to the extensive or concise rites of Accomplishment of the Lama's Mind, And I promise you Buddhahood in one lifetime. Tell the quintessential GURU SIDDHI mantra; On the 10th and 25th and on the 8th and 15th days of the moon, Celebrate the ganacakra feast and make offerings - A single celebration closes the door of rebirth to the lower realms, And I swear that it will carry you to the level of irreversible release. Take that as a solemn promise. Recited in reverse the GURU SIDDHI is the Lama's essence: HUNG is the vitality common to all Buddhas past, present and future; DHI is the siddhi of all the Yidam deities and the Conquerors; SID is the magical activity of the Dakinis and Oath-bound Lords; MA cuts away the delusions of all beings; PAD is the past, present and future Buddhas' supreme pureland; RU shuts the door on the winds of karma; GU confers the power of Awareness and Compassion; JRA is the indestructible Emptiness of mahamudra; VA indicates the ultimate spaciousness of every specific; HUNG is apparitional being, emanation transforming mankind; AH is the epitome of the consummate visionary richness of the path; OM is absolute, empty being, the primally pure Kuntuzangpo.

If these twelve quintessential seed syllables of Perna Jungne Are

chanted with the tongue in this reverse order, One hundred thousand recitations erase disorders of body, speech and mind; Two hundred thousand recitations extinguish negative karma of the past, present and future; Three hundred thousand bring you to the level of irreversibility; Seven hundred thousand ensure a meeting with Pema Jungne in this life; One million accomplish the four karmas of Buddha; Six million empty the depths of samsdra; Ten million identify you with the Buddha Amitabha himself And indubitably you will gain whatever siddhi you desire; The benefit of further recitation can be known by experiment. The normal order of recitation is the way to obtain nirvana: OM is the epitome of the Five Buddha Aspects and all the Sugatas; AH is the epitome of the Five Buddhas' mantras and all Heart mantras; HUNG is the epitome of the Five Buddhas' Mind and the essentiality of being; VA is indicated by the gesture of indestructibility; JRA is the vajra's compassionate, magical activity; GU is the Lama Herukas of the past, present and future; RU is the drop of elixir of maturity and release; PAD is the entrance to the purelands of pleasure; MA is spontaneous entry into pleasure's womb; SID is the spontaneous play of fully potentiated compassion; DHI is the siddhi that gives you whatever you desire; And HUNG attains the highest level. Thus this mantra is like a wishfulfilling gem; It fulfils whatever wish enters your mind. Further, since it purifies the twelve elements of samsara, It is the Great Mother, the nature of the ten transcendental perfections; If this mantra fulfils whatever wish enters the mind, All those present here and all beings of the future Should practise this Heart Mantra with diligence.

Now, for a while, until your split minds are whole, Parting will seem like separation. Be happy! When your split minds are one, you and I will be reunited. May good fortune and happiness be everywhere!

With this farewell she ended, and light, shimmering, sparkling iridescently in splendid vivid colours, streamed towards the SouthWest and vanished from sight. All of us who witnessed this final departure prostrated countless times after her, praying our wishfulfilling prayers. Then our minds full of grief, our hearts heavy, our stomachs in our mouths, our tears flooding the path, staggering, unable to control our bodies, panting and heaving, we returned to the meditation cave in the heart of Zapu, where we spent the night.

Then Be Yeshe Nyingpo, Lasum Gyelwa Jangchub and Ma Rinchen Chok revealed the mandala of Guru and Dakini, and after applying ourselves to practice for seven months we accomplished the union of Guru and Dakini, receiving prophecy and authorisation.

It was at that time that the Tibetan King, Tri Repachan, the Dharma Protector, promulgated his first decree, ordering the translators to assemble. At this convocation some people reported different versions of Tsogyel's parinirvana. Some people said that at Mutik Pama Gangbuk, Tsogyel attained the vision of reality extinguished and left her nasal membrane, her teeth, finger-nails, hair and body-hair behind her on her bed. These became relics that would give material support to the faithful. Furthermore, these people maintained that when Tsogyel's body vanished, she gained Buddhahood. Others said that on the eighth day of the bird month of the bird year she gave her final testament; on the evening of the tenth she subdued evil spirits; at midnight she turned the wheel of the teaching; after midnight she entered a meditative trance; in the early hours of the morning she gained enlightenment; and at daybreak her body straightened and she passed into nirvana. Her body turned into a heap of relics which could be held in the palm of one hand, and the Dharma Protector, ordering them to be brought to him, put them in an urn. In truth, I, Gyelwa Jangchub and Be Yeshe Nyingpo, Ma Rinchen Chok, Odren Pelgyi Zhonnu, Dacha Rupa Dorje Pawo, Surya Tewa of Central Tibet, Liza Jangchub of Khotan, Dorje Tso of Shelkar, together with not less than one hundred other fortunate beings who observed the scene, corroborate the version that I have described here.

Thus ends the eighth chapter which describes how Yeshe Tsogyel's aspirations were finally fulfilled, and how she gained Buddhahood in the sanctum of dynamic space.

ITHI GUHYA EVAM MANDA<sup>42</sup> SAMAYA GYA GYA GYA!<sup>43</sup>

I, Gyelwa Jangchub, who was blessed by Tsogyel and attained siddhi in one lifetime, together with Namkhai Nyingpo of Lhodrak who is indivisible from the Great Master Perna Jungne, he who is free from the characteristics of birth and death, wrote down Tsogyel's narrative on sheets of yellow parchment without addition or subtraction and



without any exaggeration. Then we entrusted the text to the hand of Chudak Nakpo Tongyuk, exhorting him to deliver it into the hand of a Spiritual Son who Tsogyel herself had foretold, an order which he vowed to fulfil. May this text find its way into the hands of a being of the future endowed with auspicious karma.

DHA THIM ITHI ZAB GYA TE GYA!

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# NOTES TO THE TEXT

## Homage, Protection and Gyelwa Jangchub's Introduction

1 Consult the index for the transliterated Tibetan form. The initial formula of homage, invoking and worshipping the three roots (Lama, Yidam, Khandroma; Guru, Deva, Dakini), is like the quintessential mantric form of the text's meaning. The following verses elaborate that mantra in a mandala form, the mandalas of Guru Pema and Tsogyel's trikayas. Since Dechen Karmo is given primacy, the yogini-tantra is indicated.

2 'Ja'-lus, and rdo-rje lus: these existential modes, the goal of Tsogyel's endeavour (sadhana), indicate that Dzokchen atiyoga is the path herein described. The rainbow body is achieved by realising the impure material body as a body of light.

3 sNgags-'chang Padma thod-'phreng-rtsal. The skill or spontaneous effusion (rtsal) of this mantradharin (sngags-'chang), 'mantra-holder', 'tantric priest', he whose words (mantra) actualise their own meanings, lies in his capacity to realise spontaneously the succession ('phreng) of point-instants (klong or chos-nyid) of experiences as Emptiness (stong-pa-nyid), as symbolised by the skull (thod), or as the mandala of the trikaya.

4 'Og-min, Akanistha: the supreme nirmanakaya Buddhafield where absolute reality is perceived as a multi-dimensional phenomenal panorama. Guru Pema's girls appeared in all shapes and sizes but his most beloved five were Orgyen Dakini Buddhafield emanations.

## Chapter 1: Tsogyel's Conception

1 rTag-ngu, Sadaparudita, 'Always Weeping', the name of a Bodhisattva whose story is related by ~akyamuni to Subhuti in the Astasahasrika-prajnaparamita-sutra, Ch. XXX, illustrating diligence. In the Sadharmapundarika, Ch. XIX, he is called Sadaparibhuta.

2 dbYang-s-can-ma, Sarasvati, is the sambhogakaya consort of Manjuṣri, called Vakiṣvari, 'Lady of the Word', the Muse, the expression of dharma, Awareness of Speech, and as such she is the beloved of tertons, the Revealers of the Guru's Word; she is Goddess of Sound conferring learning, wisdom, memory, musical accomplishment, poetic inspiration, *etc.* As Aksobhya's Consort in the vajra family she is dbYings-kyi-dbang-phyug-ma (Dhatiṣvari), the primal purity of consciousness, the element space, and anger. She may also be the White Cloaked Lady (Gos-dkar-mo) who is the Dakini of the Mystic Heat.

3 'O-rgyan, Oddiyana, is the ancient kingdom of the Swat Valley in northern Pakistan. Before the Muslim invasion it was a centre of tantric practice, and as Guru Pema's birthplace it became known as the Dakini Paradise, a nirmanakaya Buddhafield (O-rgyan mkha' - gro gling).

4 The language of this song mixing concrete imagery with sublime abstraction is specifically 'tantric'; it is the verbal device used to express the inexpressible, the unitary field of nondual reality. The songs simply describe the union of vajra and bhaga (or 'sky'), male and female, on the sambhogakaya level, to conceive a nirmanakaya emanation.

5 With the consummation of the Guru Dakini union the entire mandala of the Five Buddhas and their Consorts is generated, which means that the powers of their psychoorganisms were potentiated to the uttermost, and the realisation of Emptiness was accompanied by ecstasy.

## Chapter 2: Auspicious Omens and Birth

1 Sarasvati, who holds a lute (vina), can mean Vowel (dbyangs-can) Goddess besides Sweet-voiced Maiden in Tibetan, and the Sanskrit vowels invoke the Goddess while the consonants invoke Manju~ri. HRI is the seedsyllable (bija-mantra) of Tara and an exclamation destroying attachment and proclaiming freedom.

2 sTong gsum, lit. '3000'. The three dimensions of microscopic universes containing a thousand worlds each are entered through the lotus in the begging bowl in Sakyamuni's dhyanamudra. In each grain of pollen on each pistil of this lotus are world systems like our own, and in the centre of each sits a similar Buddha with a similar lotus also containing Buddhas and lotuses, to three dimensions, indicating inner space.

3 The 'red and white' appear repetitively in these dreams; they are the colours of the female and the male sexual fluids, and of the 'airs' (dung, pram) that run in the right and left (lalana and rasana) psychic veins. Red connotes relativity, passion and thought, karmically created seed-consciousness (kungzhi rnam-shes) and, when purified, the ambrosial energies of the Dakini; white connotes the absolute, the subjective pole, the life-force (srog-rlung), creative and procreative energies, and, when purified, the ambrosial skilful means of the Guru.

4 The year of the bird was probably AD 757. The 10th day of the monkey month (the 10th lunar month) is the anniversary of the Guru's departure for the SouthWest. The symbology of the bird as the Dakini casts doubt upon the actual year of Tsogyel's birth.

5 Ye-shes rig-pa. Both these nominals denote the nondual field of reality; ye-shes (jnana) is nondual reality, the Dakini of gnostic awareness, while rig-pa describes the same reality stressing the content, the Guru's skilful means. 'Awareness/Knowledge' is the literal translation.

### Chapter 3: Disillusionment and Meeting the Master

1 Thugs-dam = thugs-kyi-dam-tshig. The Bon gods and demons (lha-'dre) pledged their troth to Guru Perna that they would protect the teaching, while those with the eye or awareness (the third eye) pledged the Bodhisattva Vow.

2 Guru Drag-po, a wrathful form of the Guru in samhhogakaya; he holds a vajra and a scorpion.

3 *dKyil-'khor*: besides the common definitions of *maṇḍala* – (1) a simple symmetrical *yantra*; (2) an external, symbolical, ideal representation of the mind; (3) an internal, visualised palace with principal deity and retinue – *maṇḍala* can also denote: (4) the body-mind of the Guru or *Dākinī*, etc.; (5) the female organ (*bhaga*); (6) an offering plate; (7) a globe, sphere or disc. The defining characteristics of a *maṇḍala* are its centre and circumference.

4 *Tshogs-'khor*: (1) a circle of devotees and/or gods and goddesses assembled for an offering sacrament; (2) the essential, tantric sacramental rite of offering itself; (3) the accumulation of offerings for the sacrament. The elements of the rite: (A) the deity is invoked and worshipped; (B) the offerings are blessed, transformed into the nature of the deity as amṛta and offered up; (C) voluntary sarnaya restoration, confession, etc., before the deity; (D) the offerings are consumed by the participants thereby re-establishing the samaya of the deity; (E) remnants of the offerings and the dishwater, etc. are rendered to spirits, pretas, etc. In the context of a yogini-tantra the five ambrosias (pancamṛta) are offered. Various elements of the rite are capable of both literal and figurative interpretation, and in different lineages and cultures, and in various historical periods, one or the other has been preferred. Afiṣa decried the Old School Tibetans for an unthinking literal interpretation; the British of the Raj denounced the ~akta-cult Bengalis for odious sexual orgies; though ritualism dominates in Nepal, literal interpretation was the norm; in Tibet the mode varies according to the lineage, but in general the literal mode is associated with the lower tantras. In The Life it would appear that a feast, or even an ordinary meal, was transformed into a ganacakra rite; and when offerings were to be made it was always an occasion for a gan acakra. The figurative mode of ganacakra shows a striking parallel with the Catholic eucharist; and the literal, non-ritualist, informal mode is

comparable to a Dionysian orgy.

5 Dam-tshig, samaya: vow, commitment, integrity, union. This word is, for some, the single most important word in the tradition; the relative samayas (vows) sustain the absolute samaya (union).

6 The Guru transforms himself into Yama, Lord of Existence (srid-pa'i-bdag-po) or Lord of Dharma (chos-kyi-bdag-po) who holds the wheel of existence (srid-pa'i-'khor-lo) between his teeth and his thighs. The upper part represents the realms of men, gods and anti-gods and the lower the realms of beasts, hungry ghosts and denizens of hell.

7 rDo-rje 'chang: the Guru as Adibuddha, the first or primordial dharmakaya Buddha, arrayed in sambhogakaya ornaments, coloured blue, sitting in padmasana, holding bell and vajra, his arms crossed at his heart centre.

8 Dam-rdzas Inga.

## Chapter 4: Initiation and Instruction

1 Of Tsogyel's preliminary training, the four noble truths (bden-pa bzhi) that Sakyamuni taught in his first sermon at Sarnath are (1) the truth of suffering; (2) the truth of the cause of suffering; (3) the truth of the cessation of suffering; (4) the truth of the path to nirvana. The Tripitaka contains the provisional, indirect or leading truth (drang-don) while the madhyamika teaches ultimate truth (nges-don). The six lower vehicles are enumerated below (n. 4).

2 gSan-yig: many initiates compile a catalogue of their instruction.

3 mNyes-pa gsum: the Guru's satisfactions derived from receiving offering of (1) respect and honour; (2) food and drink; (3) the disciple's meditation practice and accomplishment.

4 Theg-pa dgu: the vehicles (yanas) of (1) gravaka, (2) pratyekabuddha, (3) Bodhisattva, (4) kriyayoga-tantra, (5) upayoga-tantra, (6) yogatantra, (7) mahayoga, (8) anuyoga, (9) atiyoga. 1-2 belong to the hinayana or lesser vehicle; 3-9 are mahayana or great vehicle paths; 4-9 are vajrayana or tantric paths; 4-6 are outer tantric vehicles; 7-9 are divisions of the anuttarayogatantra, the inner, supreme or ultimate tantra. The outer tantric vehicles are stages of increasing introversion and mindyoga and decreasing concern with ritual acts, ritual cleanliness and dualistic worship of a deity. This ninefold division is a Nyingma formulation; the other Tibetan schools count only the first six.

5 mTshangs: here the 'hidden foundation' is the universal ground (kungzhi), Emptiness; but it can also denote a 'nest' of confusion, deceit and limitation.

6 Byang-chub-sems: the thought of enlightenment, the Bodhisattva's aspiration, enlightened mind, the Bodhisattva's Vow; the seed of compassion, semen virile, 'the milk of human kindness'; the red and white elixirs of the left and right channels. Without bodhicitta Tantra easily becomes the manipulation of power, often with a sexual slant.

7 The three kinds of mantra: (1) rgyu ma-nor-ba rtsa-ba'i sngags, the seedsyllable that is the deity's euphonic essence (e.g. Vajrasattva's bija-mantra is HUNG); (2) bskyed-pa rkyen-gyi sngags, the mantric form that is the condition of the deity's visitation (e.g. Vajrasattva's creative mantra is OM VAJRASATTVA HUNG); (3) bzla-ba las-kyi sngags, the karma-mantra recited repetitively to realise the deity's specific powers (Vajrasattva's 100 Syllable Mantra - yig-rgya).

8 The four kinds of mudra: (1) thugs-dam-tshig-gi phyagrgya, samaya-mudra; (2) ye-shes las-kyi phyagrgya, jnana-karma-mudra; (3) chos-kyi phyagrgya, dharmamudra; (4) phyagrgya-chen-po, mahamudra. The first is verbal commitment to sustain the root and branch samayas; the second is commitment to union with the Five Dakinis' modes of Awareness embodied in the Guru's Consort; the third is commitment to practise hand gestures and postures; the fourth is commitment to Buddhahood itself. See also pp. 255f. Mudra (phyagrgya) can be translated as: (1) seal, (2) commitment, (3) symbol, (4) hand gesture, (5) posture, (6) Dakini or consort.

9 The three modes of samadhi: (1) bde-chen samadhi; (2) snang-srid lha dang lha-mo'i samadhi; (3) chu-bo rgyun-gyi samadhi.

10 Six periods of 3 hour meditations (thun) with hour-long breaks (mtshams) is customary.

11 scrub-pa bka'-brgyad: the eight principal Yidam deities of mahayoga treated in bka'-ma and gter-ma literature, introduced into Tibet by Guru Pema, relate to the five qualities of Buddha's being and to three qualities of mantra in mundane tantra: 'Jam-dpal gshin-rjeshed (sku) (Manjusri Yamantaka), Padma gsung or rTa-mgrin (gsung) (Hayagriva), Yang-dag Heruka (thugs), bDudrtsi yon-tan (yon-tan), rDo-rje phur-ba or rDo-rje gzhonnu (phrin-las) (Vajrakila or Vajrakumara), Ma-mo rbod-gtong, 'Jig-rten dregspa, Dregssngags dmod-pa. Che-mchog Heruka, who combines the first five, or Rig-'dzin bla-ma, or sPhyi-dril-snying-po, are sometimes added to the eight.

12 ITa-ba zab-mo *sgom-pa nyam-myong-gi sgo-nas* spyodpa ta-na-ga-na phyi-nang-gsang spyod-rnams-so. These three precepts belong to



the Dzokchen mkhregs-gcod tradition and may be given as the one basic, all-embracing, crucial samaya.

13 sGrub-pa'i grogs: mystic partners, or servants or helpers of any kind in a tantrika's sadhana.

14 The first tantra, the root tantra of all tantras, the Guhyasamaja-tantra, taught the five-fold mandala of the Dhyanī-Buddhas; the correspondences of the Five Buddhas are basic to the entire vajrayana.

### Correspondences of the Five Buddhas

Five Buddhas	Vairocana rNam-par- snang-mdzad	Amitābha 'Od-dpag-med	Aksobhya Mi-skyod-pa	Ratnasambhava Rin-chen- 'byung-ldan	Amoghasiddhi Don-yod- grub-pa
Five Consorts	Locanā Sangs-rgyas spyan-ma	Pāṇḍaravāsīnī Gos-dkar-can	Dhātīśvarī dbYings-kyi- dbang-phyug-ma	Māmakī Māmaki	Samaya Tārā Dam-tshig- sgrol-ma
Five Modes of Awareness	Omnipresent A ( <i>chos-dbyings</i> )	Discriminating A ( <i>sor-rtog</i> )	Mirror-like A. ( <i>me-long</i> )	A of Equality ( <i>mnyam-nyid</i> )	All-accom- plishing A. ( <i>bya-grub</i> )
Five Families	Buddha ( <i>sangs-rgyas</i> )	Padma ( <i>padma</i> )	Vajra ( <i>rdo-rje</i> )	Ratna ( <i>rin-chen</i> )	Karma <i>phrin-las</i>
Five Modes	Body ( <i>sku, kāya</i> )	Speech ( <i>gsung, udk</i> )	Mind ( <i>thugs, citta</i> )	Qualities ( <i>yon-tan, gūna</i> )	Action ( <i>phrin-las, karma</i> )
Five Psycho-physical constituents	Name and form ( <i>rūpa, gzugs</i> )	Ideation ( <i>samjñā, 'du-shes</i> )	Consciousness ( <i>vijñāna, rnam-shes</i> )	Feeling ( <i>vedana, tshor-ba</i> )	Volition ( <i>samskāra, 'du-byed</i> )
Five Emotions	Sloth ( <i>moha, gtī-mug</i> )	Lust ( <i>rāga, gdod-chags</i> )	Anger ( <i>dveṣa, zhe-sdang</i> )	Pride ( <i>agra, nga-bdag</i> )	Jealousy ( <i>irsyā, phrag-dog</i> )
Five Elements	Earth solidity	Fire heat	Sky spaciousness	Water fluidity	Air motion
Five Sense- Organs	Eyes	Mouth	Ears	Nose	Touch
Five Colours	White	Red	Blue	Yellow	Green

15 Particularly Nagarjuna and Candrakīrti's commentaries upon the Guhyasamaja-tantra (recommended by Khetsun Sangpo). See also Lam-rim Ye-shes-snying-po 'grel-ba of bLo-gros mtha'-yas f. 104ff.

16 bKa'-'dus chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho: a gter-ma of Orgyan-gling-pa.

17 gZungs-ma, 'she who supports or holds', phyagrgya (mudrā) and rigma (vidhyā) all describe the Dakīnī as an embodied consort.

18 Atsara, properly acarya, a teacher, was a derogatory appellation of

tantric Indian ascetics (like today's 'sadhu').

19 'Jigs-pa rnam-par brgyad, astabhayatrana: lions, elephants, fire, snakes, robbers, the king, floods, demons (senghe, glang-chen, me, sprul, rkun-po, rgyal-po, chu, sha-za).

20 mTshams-pa Inga: paricide, matricide, letting the blood of the Guru, stealing from the Community, destroying a stupa.

21 Thar-byed dril-bu-lang-mo: a form of sGrol-ma, Tara.

22 brTan-ma bcu-gnyis: the twelve local protectresses guarding the pass-gates to Central Tibet were subjected by Guru Perna at Yanglesho, in Nepal. brTan-ma is often spelt bsTan-ma, guardian.

23 The four modes of being (sku, kayo) subjecting the four devils (bdud bzhi): the rdo-rje Ita-bu'i sku subjects the 'chi-bdag bdud, the sgyu-ma Ita-bu'i sku subjects the Iha-bu bdud, the 'ja'-lus rdo-rje' i sku subjects the pliung-po bdud and the ting-'dzin rtsal-gyi sku subjects the nyonmongs bdud.

24 Udumbara'i me-tog; ficus clomerata, a beautiful blue lotus flower, the Buddha of flowers that blooms once every yuga; the so-called thousand-petalled lotus; an immense blue lotus blossom.

25 The Vase Initiation (bum-dbang) into the Guru's Body (sku) begins with the Guru's radiance (mdangs) purifying the sensual realm, and then the serene union of Guru and Dakini creates the mandala described in Taksham's own terma, the mKha'-'gro snying-thig. The four levels of joy (dga'-ba bzhi) that arise in each of the four cakras of each of them as kundalini ascends the medial nerve are joy, (dga'-ba), supreme joy (mchog-dga'), no-joy (dga'-bral) and innate or spontaneous joy (than-skyes-dga'). Mahavajradhara is the unitary totality in the malidyoga scenario, and the Five Aspects (Amitabha, Vairocana, etc. - see n. 14 above) and their consorts (Panda ravasini, Mamaki, etc.) are the primal purity of the subjective functions and the objective energy forms of the sensual dimension.

26 The chalice or vessel (snod) is the environment, phenomenal appearance, or the dharmadhatu, and the elixir or contents (bcud) is

sensualbeing experienced as the primal purity of its perceptions or stimuli; thus 'chalice and elixir' is a way of saying 'Emptiness and form'.

27 The Mystic Initiation (gsang-dbang) into the Guru's Speech (gsung) begins with the resonance (gdangs) of the Guru's Speech purifying the realms of sense, form and formlessness. dBang-drag Padma Heruka, his vajra termed gSang-rtags-kyi heruka, in compassionate wrath unites with Padma Yum and creates Taksham's rTa-mgrin snying-thig mandala, in which Hayagriva (rTa-mgrin - Horse-neck, or Padma gsung) is in union with Vajra Varahi (rDo-rje phag-mo - the Vajra Sow-faced Dakini), while in their five cakras are the wrathful forms of the Five Buddha Aspects called the Five Herukas or the Five Dkkas (dpa'-bo, Buddha Hero) and the Five wrathful Dakini consorts.

28 rTsa, nadir dung, pram; thig-le, bindu. These describe the sambhogakaya Dakini in the dimension of sound, vibration, subtle energies and feeling. 'Psychic nerves' denotes the energy structure, and 'energy flows' are the 'motions' or 'vibrations', 'airs', 'winds', or energies themselves, while 'seedessence' is the empty nature of such energy. The Guru's skilful means are the modes of Awareness (see n. 14 above) that are the primally pure nature of the five passions. Thus in this anuyoga mandala Varahi is the energy of dynamic space, Hayagriva is the gnostic awareness inherent in passion, and their samadhi is pure pleasure.

29 The precept that Guru Perna gives Tsogyel for her post-initiation yoga practice is instruction in the fulfilment process of meditation in which mantra resounds in the focal points of energy and purifies the passions associated with the various kinds of energy. The Yidam deity describes the grand structure and form of energy, and his retinue describes the details; the bodymind is informed as a mandala of deities. Mahamudra is the absolute truth of Emptiness selfcognised in relativity.

30 Las-rlung-gi 'gyu-ba: karmic energies are emotional and conceptual impulses conditioned by previous experience dependent upon a subconscious belief in a substantial, discrete ego; they are derived from the focal points of energy, each dominated by a passion and

controlling a specific field of activity; the left-hand nerve carries the seeds of these energies as 'seed-consciousness' (alaya-vijnana, kungzhi rnam-shes).

31 RAM (the bija-mantra of fire) lights the Dakini's fire in the gut centre that burns the HAM in the head centre destroying limiting concepts of substance and duality and distilling the elixir that drips into the heart centre purifying the entire body. Here a symbiosis of male and female principles gives rise to the four joys.

32 The five sacred substances (dam-rdzas Inga) that Tsogyel anoints her bhaga are the five amrtas (bdudrtsi Inga).

33 The Wisdom Initiation (shes-dbang) introduces the initiate to the Awareness and pure pleasure of the dharmakaya and the Guru's Pure Being (kaya). The Guru becomes the Wrathful Red Heruka, the Great Lotus Heruka (Padma Heruka-chen-po), and Tsogyel is his Padma family, wrathful Dakini. The Guru's vajra, his Absolute Heruka (Don-dam-pa'i Heruka) is galvanised by bodhicitta withdrawn from his psychic nerves, and his 'seed', or 'nuclear' or 'radiation energy' (dwangs-ma), is then injected into the Dakini's yoni mandala. The resulting mandala (klong-gsal nyi-ma'i 'bar-ma), the mandala of mystic heat (gtu-mo'i dkyil-'khor), is described in terms of skilful means (Pure Being, yab) and perfect insight (Light Seed - thig-le, yum). Pure Being in its four modalities (kayas) comprise the sublime pureland of the Herukas, the nature of which is Light Seed: self-cognitive seedessence in the dharmakaya, seedsyllables in the sambhogakaya, and in the nirmanakaya it is the Light Seed which is described as 'a hundred million suns'.

34 sByor-lam, whose elements, or phases, are 'warmth', 'peak heat', 'acceptance' and 'supreme heat'. The remaining four of the five successive paths to Buddhahood are the path of accumulation (tshogs-lam), path of seeing (mthong-lam), path of utter purity (yongs-byang-lam), and path of liberation (sgrol-lam). See H. Guenther, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us* (pt 1, p. 94ff.).

35 rtes-chags, anurakta. In this yoga 'love', or 'attachment' or 'afterglow', can be conceived as the spiritual partner. After initiation,

since desire has become Awareness (ye-shes), Awareness is the nature of the bodhicitta (or kundalini) as it rises up the medial nerve.

36 mNar-med-pa, avici: the vajra-hell ends only with the destruction of the world system.

37 'Life-force' (srog-rtsol-kyi 'og-rlung) is the procreative and creative energy of the genital centre. Yogins (goms-chen) practising energy control (rtsa-rlung) over a number of years gain enormous stomachs (bum-pa, pot-belly) caused by holding air in the bottom of the lungs.

38 Ngo-bo-nyid-kyi-sku, svabhavikakaya: the integrated trikaya, or 'the existential essence of being', the fourth mode of a Buddha's being relating to the gut centre.

39 bCu drug drug-ldan dal-lus-ma: this line must refer to the positive conditions governing 'the precious human body' (mi-lus rin-po-che); but these are usually enumerated as 18: freedom from rebirth as a denizen of hell, a hungry ghost, a beast, a god, a savage, or a dumb man, and freedom from false views and from rebirth when no Buddha's teaching is known (8); rebirth as a human being, in a central place, all senses fully functional, free of inexpiable sin, with confidence in the dharma (5), and rebirth in a world where a Buddha has lived, taught the doctrine, that has endured, and that can be practised, under guidance of a teacher (5). These constitute freedom from the eight unfavourable conditions and the 2 x 5 conditions of ease; but the 10, 6 and 6 may have different meanings.

40 dPa'-bo, vira or daka: in this context 'consort', a rendering of daka, the male counterpart of Dakini, is more appropriate than 'Buddha Hero'. Like a Dakini, a dpa'-bo can be either embodied or supernal.

41 For references to the holy places of Nepal see K. Dowman, 'A Buddhist Guide to the Power Places of the Kathmandu Valley', Kailash, Vol. VIII (2-3), 1981.

42 Lung-bstan-nas. As a substantive lung-bstan connotes a perfectly clear state of mind in which a vision of the past or future can be reflected. The Guru's vision of a disciple's future is an implied injunction to proceed in a particular way and can be, therefore, a self-

fulfilling prophecy, or 'visionary instruction', 'guidance', *etc.* This unusual verbal form denotes the phrase's literal meaning: 'to demonstrate meaning', 'to instruct'.

43 Kun-tu-bzangpo mkha'-klong-che: the primal space of Kun-tu-bzangpo, the vast sky, vajra-fields, is the reverse aspect of Guru Pema's manifest, karma-less, compassionate being (kdya): the nature of the Guru's compassionate emanation is empty space.

44 Here Tsogyel unequivocally states her motivation. In the dharmayuga passion is slight and peace and happiness facilitate the simple hinayana means to Buddhahood; thereafter, although Means and Insight are always indissolubly united, the nature of mind is veiled by strong passion, and the tantric method alone is efficacious in the kaliyuga. The consort embodies either skilful means or perfect insight, and through this externalisation passion can be employed to illuminate the darkness.

45 'Gro-ba rigs drug: gods, anti-gods, humans, hungry ghosts, beasts, and denizens of hell.

46 Rang-sems rang-shar bskyed-rdzogs zung-du-'jug / phyagrgya-chen-por bsam . . . This context defines the creative process of meditation (bskyed-rim) as perception of phenomenal appearances (snangba) as magical illusion (sgyu-ma), and the fulfilment process of meditation as insight into the clear light of Emptiness (stong-pa-nyid). Mahamudra is achieved by perceiving whatever arises in the mind as illusion and Emptiness simultaneously. The phrase 'the union of creation and fulfilment' could be replaced by 'the union of phenomena and Emptiness' (snangba dang stong-pa-nyid) without loss of meaning, except the implication of a dynamic function. In atiyoga creative and fulfilment processes must be simultaneous; in mahamudra there is no duality of good and bad, night and day, yoga practice and existential praxis. The above precept is repeated in ~akya Dema's reply: bskyed-rdzogs zung-'jug phyagrgya-che - 'mahamudra is the simultaneity of creative and fulfilment processes', and to amplify the next line, 'and the clear light ('od-gsal) and magical illusion (sgyu-ma) are the undivided content of mahamudra'.

47 The syllables A and HAM have the same potency as RAM and HAM (see n. 31 above). Kundalini rises in the life-force (n. 37 above) to the gut centre where her flame arises to melt the HAM in the head centre, elixir dripping to the heart centre. The formula AHAM signifies a symbiosis of male and female principles, clear light and Awareness.

48 See nn. 25 and 34 above, and pp. 41f., 85, 118-19, 155-7, 249f.

49 In this important Dzokchen yoga the seedsyllable A, the euphonic corollary of the pure potential of Dzokchen, or the tathatagarbha, or primal purity of dynamic space, is visualised before sleep, so that Awareness of the clear light is maintained through the dream state until waking. If this practice is sustained in sleep then gnostic awareness is easily maintained as the wheel spins in daily praxis.

50 The six lamps (sgron-ma drug) and the four convictions (gding bzhi) refer to six kinds of insight (shes-rab, prajna) and four aspects of confidence which are a result of togal (thod-rgal) meditation. The experience of reality alluded to here is awareness of the nature of all things (chos-nyid, dharmata), the absolute reality of awareness inherent in the relative field of transforming illusion; the Dakini's nature is this reality and her form is magical illusion.

51 bLa-ma gsang-'dus-kyi dkyil-'khor, Guru-guyhasamaja-mandala.

52 Dung, sahkha. The conch is a natural symbol of the process of emanation of the mandala from the central point of Emptiness to the Emptiness of the circumference, from the conch's point to its empty mouth. Realisation of the Emptiness of this spiral process destroys the threat of every monster (bar-chad); further, it is a Tibetan belief that the mariner best defends himself from a sea monster by throwing a conch into the fish's mouth.

53 gSer-'od; but Sale (gsal-le pronounced sa-le) means 'clear light' and the epithet 'atsara' (acarya) means 'Buddhist sadhu'.

54 Byin-rlab bla-ma'i dkyil-'khor.

55 sKu bzhi: dharmakaya (chos-sku), sambhogakaya (longs-spyod-

sku) nirmanakaya (sprul-sku, pronounced tulku) and svabhavikakaya (ngo-bo-nyid-sku). Although these four are one and indivisible, their specific characteristics are experienced separately in the four superior focal points of energy.

56 gShin-rje e gcig, rta-mgrin dpa'-bo cgig, yang-dag mar-rne gcig, phrin-las phur-ba gcig, bdudrtsi thod gcig, ma-mo khram gcig. In simple bKa'-brgyad mahayoga practices the deity is visualised alone without a consort.

57 bsNyen-sgrub: this term has a general and technical meaning: (a) it denotes the creative stage (bskyed-rim) practice of visualisation and recitation, *etc.* and (b) bsnyen denotes the 'approach' of the deity through visualisation and recitation and sgrub denotes the accomplishment of the deity, identifying with his reality and becoming one with him.

58 Khatvahga: a trident with three heads - male, female and a skull - and crossed vajras (visvavajra) on a shaft. The Guru's song describes the khatvahga as symbolic of inner space (dbyings), empty being (dharmakaya), the realm of Kuntuzangmo, empty delight (bde-stong), and the trikaya, which is evidently Emptiness itself. Iconographically in mahayoga the Guru's khatvaiiga represents his consort, Tsogyel.

59 sGrub-chen bka'-brgyad / ma-gshin-phur-ba *bdudrtsi yang-dag bla-ma dgongs-'dus yi-dam dgongs-'dus sgyu-'phrul zhi-khro yang-dag zhi-khro I padma zhi-khro sogs snying-thig drug-cu-rtsa-gcig dgongs-'dus bye-brag bdun-po bka'-brgyad rgyas-bsdus bcu-gcig thugs-sgrub brgya-dang-rtsa-gnyis mang-ngag bdun-cu-rtsa-drug rgyud-kyi dgongs-pa brgya-dang- sum-cu sogs..... rgyal-la bdudrtsi yon-tan-gyi sgrubthabs rtsa-ba bdun/rnan-ngag nyi-shu . . . . . nam-mkha'i snying-po-la yang-dug marme dgu-pa bgegs-'dul phur-nag nyi-shu Bogs... l sangs-rgyas ye-shes dang rdo-rje bdud-'joms gnyis-la jam-d pal gshin-rje gshed rtsa-ha phyagrgya zil-gnon lha drug-gi sgruh-thabs sogs man-ngag nyi-shu rtsa-ba rgyal-ba mchog-dbyangs dang rgyal-ba blo-gros-la rta-mgrin yang-gsang rol-pa rtsa-ba yoga gsum-gyi sgrubthabs l . . . Bairotsana dang Idan-ma rtse-mang-la dmod-pa drag-sngags-kyi sgruh-thabs dpal-slobs-ldan nag-po rtsa-ba sde brgyad yan-lag dregspa bco-hrgyad-kyi sgrub-thabs... skaba dpal-brtsegs dang 'o-bran*



*dbang-phyug-la ma-mo rtsa-ba'i sgrubthabs phyi-nang-gsang gsum. . . Jnanakumara bajra dang sog-po lha-d pal-la yang-phur gsang-ba 'i man-ngag chig dang phyagrgya-chen-po tshe'i sgrub lung. . . dpal-gyi senge dang cog ro klu'i rgyal-mtshan-la dregspa rtsa-ba sgrubthabs khro-bo bcus brgyan-pa dang yan-lag-gi sgrubthabs dregs-dpon sum-cu'i bskang-thabs las-kyi man-ngag. . . rin-chen bzangpo dang ting-nge-'dzin bzangpo-la thugs-rje-chen-po gsang-ba'i sgrubthabs dang rig-'dzin bla-ma'i sgrub-pa'i thabs dang rig-pa phyag-rgyachen-po mchog-gi dngos-grub-kyi lung. . . lang-gro dang rgyal-ba byang-chub-la byin-rlabs bla-ma'i sgrub-lung dang rta-mgrin gsang-ba kun-'dus rta-nag dregspa'i sgrubthabs... khye'u-chung dang dran-pa nam-mkha-la padma zhi-khro gsang-ba'i sgrubthabs dang rdo-rje sems-dpa' rtsa-ba lha drug dpa'-gcig bsgom-pa'i thabs heruka sum-cu-rtsa-drug bsgom-pa'i lung. . . rma dang g-yu-sgra snying-po-la phyag-na rdo-rje gsang-ba'i sgrubthabs . . . yoga tshe'i sgrub-lung man-ngag.../bdag mtsho-rgyal- la rtsa-ba gsum dkyil-'khor gcig-tu bsgrub-pa'i thabs.*

60 rTen-'brel. This word has a general and a technical meaning: (a) samyoga; 'circumstances combining to found a judgement or prognostic' (C. Das, Dictionary, p. 573); and since every point-instant of experience is a combination of inter-related, portentous factors, every instant constitutes an omen (rten-'brel) from which the past or future can be read; (b) pratityasamutpada: interdependent origination, the field of relativity; this basic doctrine, a pillar of all Buddhist philosophy, affirms that there is no one first cause but that all things in space and time are inter-related and mutually dependent. This field, or better, continuum, of relativity composed of length, depth, breadth and time has the nature of the primal purity of dynamic space (dharmadhatu).

#### **Chapter 5: Meditation, Austerity and Spiritual Accomplishment**

I 'Phrin-las: the Guru's transformative karmas performed by the Dakini, internally and externally, upon herself and others, are pacification, enrichment, control and destruction. Motivated by the loving desire to give the pure pleasure of ultimate siddhi, karmic energies subsided, with utter detachment, and perfect control over the subtle energies of the bodymind, their structure and direction, the Dakini performs her transformative activity.

2 This paragraph describes the results of Tsogyel's meditation upon the three roots. The Dakini is understood as structural patterns of energy (rtsa), the dynamic energies that play within that structure (rlung), and ultimate nondual awareness (thig-le). The Yidam's visitation is a projection and reification of divine qualities; the meaning of his symbolic values are existentially realised. The nature of 'own mind' (rang-sems), which is the seedessence of nondual awareness, is seen as the Lama's dance (bla-ma'i rol-pa) in which his purelands (bla-ma'i rnal-'byor) are the visual appearances of his Body, all sound his Speech and all consciousness his Mind. The external mandala, is that of Mahavajradhara in the Vase Initiation.

3 In this nirmanakaya mandala vision, the symbols of death indicate Emptiness, the skull and bones of existential being. Death is immortality and life on the wheel of existence is a series of deaths from moment to moment. When the wheel accelerates there is an illusion of continuity; when the wheel slows the bar-do is endured at the conclusion of every micro-and macro-cycle. Release from the wheel is immortality in a continuum of metamorphosing illusion.

4 mTshan-ldan bla-ma dam-pa. Sympathy, lack of prejudice, equanimity, knowledge and power are some of the hallmarks of a good Lama; but 'instantaneous compassion' and absolute non-discrimination are the qualities of a 'real Lama', the 'root' Lama, who will become the unconditioned Lama, a ubiquitous reality inseparable from the yogin's mind.

5 Mu-stegs rgyang-'phen, tirthika charbbaka or lokayata: this sect of extremist, self-mutilating ascetics who cursed their bodies for its passion were condemned by Buddhists and Brahmins alike.

6 Me-shel, suryakantamani: a kind of rock crystal supposed to emit heat when exposed to the sun.

7 Gos-dkar-mo, Pandaravasini; Amitabha's Consort, the primal purity of desire and attachment (see ch. 4, n. 14); the Dakini of Mystic Heat (gtu-mo mkha'-'gro), the primal purity of the element fire and the psycho-organic power of heat. White cotton cloth is the garb of the ras-pas, the emulators of Mi-la Ras-pa.

8 Chang kapala. In tantric rites the white bodhicitta (semen) can be represented by white barley liquor; the female receptacle (bhaga) is the human-skull cup (thod-pa, kapala). Thus the relative contains the absolute; Tsogyel quaffs the elixir of life.

9 Rus rgyan: the Dakini's bone ornaments representing the five modes of Awareness are: cakra on the crown (chos-dbyings), ear-rings (sorr-tog), short necklace (mnyam-nyid), bracelets, armlets and anklets (me-long), girdle (don-grub).

10 Khrag, rakta: the red bodhicitta, the essence of the Dakini; it carries the seeds of passion, thought and samsaric action that provide the modes of Awareness of Emptiness.

11 bLa-ma rgyang-'bod mgur: this genre of liturgical song contains fine devotional Tibetan poetry.

12 Ye-nas mi-zad-pa'i dam-pa'i chos-gter. In the first reference to termas (g ter-ma), revealed texts, a clear indication of their mystical nature is given by 'ultimately inexhaustible'. In most passages concerning termas, as indeed in the entire text, literal and figurative meanings are not distinguished.

13 hCud-led mdzad-pa. hCud-len, rasayana; lit. 'the extraction of essence or nectar', hence 'alchemy', both chemical and metaphysical, although again no distinction is made between the two in 'Dakini talk'. Indian rasayana employed psychotropic and regenerative drugs and poisons, and sought (and often found) the ultimate philosopher's stone, also called rasayana.

14 Chong-zhi: a crystalline form of calcium used by naturopaths and ayurveds as a panacea, particularly for throat ailments; it is commonly used by fasting yogins. C. Das (Dictionary, p. 385) has '=cung-zho, soma, the soma plant said to be useful in diarrhoea, in phlegm and fever'. Soma is also identified with the ephedra plant, the amanita muscaria mushroom, the alcohol of fermented fruit, etc. 15 See ch. 4, n. 57.

16 Rigs Inga rigs gsum: for the Five Aspects, the Dhyani Buddhas, see ch. 4, n. 14; the Three Aspects are Body, Speech and Mind - Vajrapani,

Sadaksari Avalokiteṣvara and Manjuṣri, the Bodhisattva protectors of the three doors.

17 Grub-chen brgyad: speedwalking (rkang-mgyogs), the eye salve of omniscience (mig-smān), infallible memory (mi-hrjed gzungs), prescience (pra-se), the power of subjection (dbang-sdud), transformative powers (rdzu-'phrul), the wisdom of unbounded knowledge (shes-bya thogs-med-kyi shes-rab) (from Chos-gling's Lam-rim Ye-shes snying-po).

18 rDo-rje Itar dpa'-bar 'gro-ba'i ting-nge-'dzin, 'the samadhi that is as strong as a vajra'. See ch. 6, n. 4. Samadhi is not concentration; on the contrary the mind is relaxed. Samadhi in most Buddhist contexts can be defined as 'identification with Emptiness'.

19 Lha'i drang-srong-chen-po sde bzhi.

20 Chi-med bdudrtsi sman. Interpreted literally, this medicinal substance (sman) in the form of small, brown coagulated droplets is created by the Lama in a highly controlled, ritual, alchemical process (bcudlen) out of various ingredients prescribed by the formulae that accompany different tantras. The power of the bdudrtsi (amṛta) lies as much in the alchemical transmission of the Lama's power in the ritual process as in the innumerable ingredients. (For a recipe see Dudjom Rimpoche's 'Chi-med srog-thig). 'Immortality' ('chi-med) implies (a) longevity or control of a very long life, and (b) the deathlessness of the dharmakaya.

21 Lus gnad: Vairocana's seven points of posture are lotus posture, straight back, tongue turned up and back, chin down with the neck and spinal column in line, eyes open and focused one yard (approx.) before the nose, hands in dhyānamudra.

22 sNang-srid bya-ha sems-kyi cho-'phrul tsam: cho-'phrul denotes illusions of a low order, or hallucination, whereas rdzu-'phrul (rddhi) is illusion created for a Bodhisattva's purpose.

23 kLo-yul kha-khra dang rkang-kra: the Striped-mouths (kha-khra) seem to have been non-humans (mi-ma-yin) who became humans upon their conversion. Identified by some as the savage hunters of

N.W. Assam, to the Tibetans they are the archetypal border barbarians (kla-klo). See M. Aris, Bhutan, pp. 58, 143. The Striped-feet are not identified.

24 Pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa bcu: moral action, perseverance, patience, generosity, meditative absorption, perfect insight, skilful means, higher aspiration, psychic power and Awareness.

25 bDe-stong zung-'jug thig-le'i dka'-sbyad: this is a Third Initiation yoga. See pp. 249ff.

26 rDo-rje'i sku-la bsgres-rgud-med-pa tshe'i rig-'dzin = tshe'i dbang-la rig-'dzin. The other three of the four kinds of Rig-'dzin (vidhyadhara) are: Knowledge Holder of Manifold Maturity (sna-tshogs smin-pa'i rig-'dzin), K.H. of Spontaneity (lhun-grub-kyi rig-'dzin), the Mahamudra K.H. (phyagrgya-chen-po'i rig-'dzin).

27 Ma-gcig La-phyi sgron-ma (Lab-sgron) was born in La-phyi in Tsang (west-central Tibet) and only moved to Dwags-po (Dak) after she had achieved notoriety by cohabiting with the teacher Thod-pa Bhadra (or 'Ba'-re) at the great monastery of Grwa-thang founded by her master, Grwa-pa mNgon-shes. Her eldest son Grub-pa was a thief until at the age of thirty-two he received his mother's teaching; her younger son Grub-se was ordained young and later became a respected crazy yogin (zhig-po); her daughter was named Grub-chung-ma. Her first teacher was Grwa-pa (1012-1090), abbot of Samye, a famous gter-ston, who revealed the medical works rGyud bzhi, and who died while having lymph sucked from his heart up a golden straw by a disciple. During Lab-sgron's ritual initiation into Dam'pa's lineage she left the temple to receive initiation directly from the Goddesses Mahamaya, Prajnaparamita and Tara. Phadam-pa Sangs-rgyas was her most important teacher. Zab-gcod (profound severance), taught by Dam-pa, is a path to mahamudra through evocation of demons and spirits in terrifying situations, abandoning attachment to the bodymind and identifying with the clear-light. This practice is an example of the homeopathic tantric principle similar similibus curator, 'like cures like', passion is passions' remedy. gCod can also be applied in medicine; provoking the spirits of disease then identifying with their essential primal purity, the disease is destroyed with the spirit. Ma-gcig's

principal gcod practice involved destruction of her four devils - attachment to sense objects and thought, delight in achievement, and egotism - offering flesh and blood to the devils (bdud) to feed on, detached from bodymind. Dam-pa's teaching affected her in a way that motivated her to associate with outcastes, and to renounce her family and wander, living in caves.

28 Pha-dam-pa Sangs-rgyas, born in S. India, ordained young, was taught by many of the famous scholars and siddhas of his day. He travelled to the Eight Knowledge Holders' Sitavana Cremation Ground, to Swayamabhu in Nepal, and five times in Tibet, where he stayed in Kham, Ngari, Central Tibet, but mostly in Tsang and particularly Tingri. His school was called 'zhi-je' (zhi-byed), the Pacifier, and, including gcod, this was based on the prajnaparamita; he also taught the Kalacakra-tantra and karmamudra yoga. He taught the direct method: 'Your best teacher is your own mind!' This story of his disciple, So-chung-pa, illustrates the method. So-chung-pa took his disciple begging. All day, whenever they reached a house, he would say, 'No, this is not the one.' His disciple became angry. Then, later, returning home, he entered first, loudly whispering to a stranger, 'Hide your things, a thief is entering!' The disciple overheard, and enraged he took a knife and rushed at the Guru, who slipped into a locked room, saying, 'Look into your anger at the nature of your mind!'

29 rDo-rje phur-ba'i rgyud Byitotama: a large collection of Phur-ba tantras. The 42 a-khram mandalas belong in this collection.

30 Lha-ma-srin sde brgyad = Ihadang 'dre dang ma-mo dang srin-po dang sde brgyad. The Bon deities, spirits, etc., like earth-lords (sa-bdag), mountain gods (gnod-sbyin), spirits of disease (theu-rang), etc., were classified into three groups of eight, without any apparent method.

31 Nus-pa-che-ba kilaya nyi-shu'i sgrubthabs.

32 Tshe-dpag-med 'chi-med 'od-kyi phreng-balrdo-rje phreng-balgsang-ba kun- 'dus rgyal-ba kun-'dusIha-gcig bum gcigIthe-lha drug-cu-rtsa-gnyis-kyi dkyil-'khor.

1 Evidence of success in meditation (bsgrub-pas rtags) such as the mystic heat, visitation of deities, and ultimately Buddhahood, is described in the first section of these verses; the proofs of mastery (grub-pa thob-nas grub-rtags) demonstrated in her later life, like subjecting the Bonpo, hiding the terma, etc., and showing the eight great siddhis, etc., are alluded to in the second part.

2 Zab-lam: the profound path of coincident Emptiness and pure pleasure (bde-stong zung-'jug) initiated by the Wisdom Empowerment.

3 Byan-tshud-pa: 'through a thorough and profound understanding to have complete facility in'; applied to oneself, with rang prefix, 'to know oneself inside out and to be in total control'.

4 Ting-nge-'dzin gsum: (1) wherein all is seen as magical illusion, or maya-vision samadhi (sgyu-ma'i lta-ba'i); (2) imperturbable vision, or vajra-vision samadhi (rdo-rje'i lta-ba'i) (see ch. 5, n. 18); (3) universal sameness free of evaluation and discrimination, the samadhi of sameness (mnyam-nyid) in which there is no good and bad, no acceptance and rejection (bzang-ngan blang-dor-med-pa phyam-brdal-ba'i ting-nge-'dzin). The three samadhis relate to the three modes of being (see ch. 4, n. 23). See pp. 78ff. for their practical application.

5 'Dzokchen's pure potential' (rdzogs-chen bya-bral) and 'all-pervasive Ati' (ati khyab-gdal) are aspects of the same ultimate reality. 'Ati' is here synonymous with primal purity (ka-dag) and space (dbyings) which is the nature of the trekcho (mkhregs-gcod) realisation, while spontaneous accomplishment (lhun-gyis-grub) is the result of togal (thod-rgal) practice.

6 rTen-'brel zab-mo bsgrigs-nas yod: See ch. 4, n. 60. Synchronicity is the circumstance that makes a situation portentous. Reading the ultimate (zab-mo) significance of omens, or intuiting the nature of the relative field of experience at any given moment, we realise that we are Buddhas and that we do fulfil the Bodhisattva Vow, or that we are siddhas and each moment is a miracle of our own creation.

7 Or, If you do not believe that Emptiness is the key to freedom from your neural disorders, you deny the manner of liberation (tharpa) of

the Buddhas (rgyal-ba) and the mahayana dharma.'

#### **Chapter 7: Establishing, Spreading and Perpetuating the Teaching**

1 dGe-ba bcu: abstention from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct (body); lying, slander, calumny and cursing (speech); and covetousness, malice and opinionatedness (mind).

2 Zhangzhung gsar-brgyud. This must be a late appellation mimicking the terminology of the Tibetan reformers who depended upon the new translations of the Old School tantras and of new unknown scriptures from India. The followers of the New Zhangzhung tradition (Zhangzhung was the home and strong-hold of Bon) were called Inner, or Esoteric, Bon (bon-nang-pa or nang-bon) which I have translated as Reformed Bon; and the persecuted old-style Bon, the Outer Bon (phyi-bon), Causal Bon (rgyu-bon), etc., called by the Buddhists 'false Bon' (log-bon), etc., I have called 'Bonshamans' or simply 'Bon' herein. I have distinguished between the priests of the old religion and Bon cult followers in general by calling the former 'Bon' and the latter 'Bonpos'.

3 mTha'-thul dang ru bzhi. To bind the demoness who is the body of Tibet, spread the dharma and civilise the people, Songtsen built four major temples in the outer borderlands (yang-'dul), four in the provinces (mtha-'dul) and four in the Four Districts of central Tibet (ru-bzhi). (See M. Aris, Bhutan, pp. 1-43, for a very interesting account based on the Ma-ni Ma-'burn.) The Four Districts were the kings' administrative and military regions called 'wings' or 'banners' (ru): from east to west - Yuru (gYon-ru), Uru (dhUs-ru), Yeru (gYas-ru) and Rulak (Ru-lag, 'the reserve').

4 Ci-yan-coed-pa'i gnas, mtha'-yas-pa'i gnas, yod-min-med-min-gyi go- 'phang. These Bon heavens correspond to the upper reaches of the Buddhist realm of formlessness (gzugs-rmed-kyi gnas), and since this entire Bon eschatology employs Buddhist terminology it belongs to Reformed Bon analysis. These three heavens must be the residences of the Bon gods, Mu (dMu), Cha (Phywa), and Yang (gYang), etc., reached by the rainbow dMu-cord that stretches like Jacob's ladder from heaven to earth.

5 Khri'-khor bcu-gsum: divisions of Tibet established in the thirteenth



century by Kubilai Khan and 'Phags-pa during the Sakya ascendancy.

6 Vimalamitra, Santigarbha and Nepali Humkara (Blue Annals); Buddhaguhya (Padma hKa'-thang); Viṣudhi Serlge, Dharmakirti, Jinamitra and Dhanasila (Red Annals): these eight scholars, at least, probably taught at Samye at this time.

7 Khyung-nag dgu-'gros: although khyung-po is seen as Garuda, the vahana of Visnu, he was a principal figure in the Bon mythology where he governed his 'white' creation in constant Manicheistic conflict with the 'black' mKha'-'ding. Much of the rich Bon mythology has been forgotten by the Buddhists but Khyung-po is a direction-guardian on prayer-flags (rlung-rta).

8 Lo-zad zla-zad: lit. 'year-spent, moon-spent'.

9 bDe-gshegs-kyi-gdung and chos-sku'i-tshab are the stupa's dharmakaya designations, and mchod-rten is its nirmanakaya name.

10 rGyalpo sku-rim: (a) the ancient Bon rite affirming the contract between monarch and subjects; and (b) a Buddhist rite performed for the well-being of the king (or any layman).

11 The rTa-mgrin gling is probably in the east (see n. 36). The eight small temples representing the eight satellite continents in the mandala of the universe lie one on each side of the four major temples in the four directions. The Jo-mo gling is unidentified.

12 Shag-thong: unexplained by Taksham, the nature and importance of this riddle contest remains unclear. The function of the Bon priests called ldeu centres around riddles; perhaps the riddle-priests were sooth-sayers or diviners. Riddles still appear in Tibetan culture on various occasions. See G. Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, p. 238.

13 Padma Sambhava is the Guru as a pandita, a scholar, depicted wearing a pointed red hat and a simple robe. rDo-rje gro-lod is a wrathful deity, depicted riding a pregnant tigress, enhaloed in flame, carrying a vajra and scorpion. Both are counted amongst the eight names of the Guru (Guru mtshan brgyad).

14 bKa'-'gyur ro-cog: a canonic compilation of Sakyamuni's sermons.

15 Sre-mo-gis spos thu/khyi kha-zan bor/mar-me khrag bsnub/ko mthu nag-pol btsan 'gyed danglbud 'gyed. This could be Taksham's parody.

16 Nga ni zag-med rdo-rje'i sku/rtsi-nyid rtsir gyur. Here for the first time Tsogyel expresses her goal achieved. Through the alchemy (bcudlen) of extracting the absolute, pure essence (rtsi-nyid) from poison, she has gained an immortal vajrabody. The impure, material body (zag-bcas) with the nature of primal purity (ka-dag) has dissolved into its own purity and has become immaterial (zag-med), outflows ceased.

17 'Gro-don nus-pa. Although nus-pa (sakti) can be rendered as 'ability' it is also the Dakini's power to raise the Guru's kumialini. Certainly this phrase means more than 'the ability to help others'.

18 bKa'-brgyud. At this time the kama (bka'ma) doctrines (pronouncements) would have comprised the mainstream tantric teachings transmitted from the Indian masters by Guru Pema, Vimalamitra, Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, *etc.* Both bka'-brgyud and snyan-brgyud are names of the school to which Marpa, Milarepa and Gampopa belonged.

19 bsDu-ba bzhi = bsdu-ba'i dngos-po bzhi: bestowing necessities, speaking sweet words, concurring in mundane matters, acting to benefit neophytes. Such actions bring the Guru disciples.

20 Zab-la rgya. This phrase, or zab dang rgya, is a formula indicating the atiyoگا union of duality in the dharmakaya, Kunzang yab-yum. It may be inferred here that the Word is to be embodied in the Dakini so that she may reveal it to treasure-finders (gler-ston) when the time is ripe.

21 bLa-ma dgongs-pa'i 'dus-pa'i dkyil-'khor.

22 'Mind Accomplishment' (thugs sgrub) and 'Heart Drop' (snying-thig) texts are two widely discovered genres of terma. The former are mainly Guru-yoga sadhanas, texts of mahayoga meditation liturgy, and the latter, belonging to the Dzokchen Nyingtik lineage, cover every

aspect of theory and practice.

23 Kha-byang, yang-byang, snying-byang, lung-byang: types of terma manifests to assist tertons.

24 'Phrin-las bzhi: the Guru's Four Karmas or transformative activities: pacification (zhi-ha), enrichment (rgyas-pa), control (dbang-ba), and destruction (drag-pa).

25 If this date is not apocryphal, it is the tenth day of the tenth moon (Dec-Jan) of the year 790, or possibly 802.

26 rDzogs-chen ati khyab-gdal-kyi dkyil-'khor. Taksham does not describe this mandala; he emphasises the dangers of the path.

27 'Gras-bu chos-zad-kyi dbyings-su 'ub-chub bya-ba. The adjective 'dynamic' (or 'pure' or 'inner') merely distinguishes this 'space' from interstellar space, or the interval between objects. dbYings (dhatu) can be conceived as a field of pure meaning or ultimate value, or the field of primal purity (ka-dag), or the sphere of Emptiness. Further, although 'continuum' is more precise than 'field' or 'sphere', experientially there is a sense of timelessness and stasis in 'space' a sense of 'utterly pure and pristine from the beginning', although what defines space - illusory form - is in constant metamorphosis. But at least 'continuum' implies the indivisibility of 'space' from experience and being. Lastly, perhaps 'space' is best defined by paradox: 'the ineffable plenum of polar opposites united', 'the nondual plenum of duality', 'the field of nonduality of samsara and nirvana'.

28 Chos-nyid mngon-gsum: the first of the four togal visions (snangba bzhi): (2) intensive visionary experience (nyams-s nang gong-'phel); (3) optimal Knowledge (rig-pa tshad-phebs); and (4) reality extinguished (chos-nyid zad-pa or chos-zad-chen-po). These are four stages in the dissolution of the material body into light; four stages of increasing recognition of reality (chos-nyid) until finally there is no question of reality or non-reality - only Knowledge and Awareness.

29 rDzogs-chen bya-brat thig-le ngang-du zhog. This short, concise mahayoga meditation liturgy of Guru-yoga (Lama'i rnal-'byor) results in rainbow body, Dzokchen's ultimate goal. Here reality is experienced

as pure potential, or non-action (bya-brat), and as 'seedessence' or 'cognitive seminal nuclei' (thig-le).

30 Rig-'dzin Thing-'od 'bar-ma.

31 In this list of highly auspicious ritual instruments, of those untranslated, phems could be a mis-spelling, tingcha (ting-ting-shag) is a small cymbal struck with a short horn, and war ('ur) tsel (tshal) and piwi (phi-wi) are instruments with onomatopoeic names.

32 Zhal-chems dang-po: the Guru's three testaments are not described. Such testaments are customarily verbal messages.

33 'Das-rjes dang-po: the Guru's three successive non-verbal legacies of his passing are the three essential experiences of his three modes of being.

34 Yang-phur bsgrags-ma. Consisting of a rite of confession before the Yang-dag mandala and a rite of removing obstacles by rDo-rje gzhonnu (Vajra Kumara), a form of Phurba, this meditation re-establishes the integrity of the samaya of Guru and Dakini.

35 sTon-min, rtsad-min: properly, touen-men-pa'i and tsien-men-pa'i (sudden and gradual schools), the Chinese faction of Hwashang Mahayana propagating quietistic ch'an and Kamalaṣila's Indian faction teaching the Bodhisattva's gradual path.

36 Since the Byams-pa gling (Maitreya Temple) was on the west side of the Samye complex, the rTa-mgrin gling (Hayagriva Temple) was probably the bDud-'dul gsang-sngags gling in the east.

37 sBas-yul brgyad: these hidden valleys throughout Tibet (three in the Himalayas) were indicated by Guru Pema, and described by tertons, as places of refuge in the final conflagration of the kaliyuga and other times of trouble. In the centre of each valley-mandala is an indestructible vajra-spot.

38 rDzong: both an administrative district under a fort and the fort itself. In Bhutan the rdzongs are fortified monasteries.

## Chapter 8: Fruition and Buddhahood

1 bLa-ma bka'-gsang 'dus-ba, yi-dam dgongs-pa 'dus-ba,rdzogs-chen ati 'dus-ba.

2 Tshig bdun gsol-bdeb. The Seven Line (or Syllable) Prayer, is at the essence of Guru-yoga. Its commentaries on three levels treat the entire anuttarayogatantra, but its plain exoteric meaning makes it a popular prayer for laymen.

3 kLong = dbyings, vast expanse, dynamic space. kLong can also be rendered as 'point-instant', since the centre of the mandala can be anywhere, even on the circumference. This 'matrix' is also the manifestation since there is no coming into being or cessation in this reality. kLong, like dbyings, has no ontological status; it is indeterminable (spros-bral), incapable of definition by any of the eight classical 'extremes' of Buddhist ontology (mtha'-brgyad).

4 Sad-na legs: sad-na = 'on trial', or 'when tested', and legs means 'good', 'firm', *etc.* Thus KhrilDe-srong-btsan's common name means 'Strong-when-tested', *etc.*

5 Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol. The principal of the mandala of the Wrathful and Peaceful Deities is one of the Eight Logos Deities, Phurba or Chemchok (Che-mchog).

6 Tshe'i 'di chos brgyad: loss and gain, notoriety and fame, praise and blame and pleasure and pain.

7 Chos thams-cad zad-par bya-ba'i ting-nge-'dzin: in this final samadhi which induces the fourth of the total visions, 'the extinction of all things (dharmas)', the final vestiges of the ego are destroyed, corporeality dissolves, and 'life' as we know it ends. Thus it is the ultimate metaphor for death.

8 Zangs-mdog-dpal-ri: Guru Pema's paradise afterwards created on the S.W. island continent of Nga-yab gling.

9 Sems-can mi-rtag bya-ba gdul-bya'i mtshan-nyid. gDul-bya: lit. 'what is converted or transformed' into Buddha, hence 'disciple', 'convert', or 'humanity'.

10 The threefold Ati refers to the three incisive precepts (Tshig-gsum-gnad-brdeg) which follow (with the fourth, the goal); Vision (Ita-ba) Meditation (sgom-pa), Action (spyodpa). These precepts belong to mkhregs-gcod practice.

11 dBang-bskur gong-ma gsum: the Mystic, Wisdom and Word Empowerments.

12 rTsa gsum: bLa-ma, Yi-dam, mkha'-'gro; Guru, Deva Dakini: the Buddha's three modes of being reified anthropomorphically. Experientially they are indivisible.

13 gTor-ma, ball: sacrificial cakes made of the five sacred ingredients offered to the deity as a representation of the deity and consumed to attain samaya, in separate rites, or as part of the ganacakra.

14 Phar-bsre tshur-bstim gnyis-med klong/nyams-myong skyes-na: in atiyoga, in order to achieve the resolution of duality, and consummation in an inconceivable field of space (klong), creative and fulfilment processes must be simultaneous, and radiation and re-absorption of light, efferent and afferent energies, must also be coincident. The method given here is to watch the nature of the Lama's nonreferential Knowledge (rig-pa).

15 sPrul-pas khams dang skye-inched 'gyedlyang-sprul rten-'grel bcu-gnyis shar. The elements of bodymind are the qualities of the five elements (solidity, fluidity, heat, motion and spaciousness) and the elements of perception (six consciousnesses, organs and sensefields); the sensefields are composed of the six internal and external sense-objects, and the twelve interdependent, functional elements of existence are ignorance, volition, consciousness, name and form, six senses, contact, feeling, grasping, clinging, birth, rebirth, old age and death.

16 Ye-shes-chen-po, mahajnana: the cognitive primal purity of the mind, inseparable from phenomenal and noumenal appearances. The

suffix chen-po (maha, 'great' or 'ultimate') makes 'Awareness' the allinclusive, sole constituent of the unitary field of reality. It is represented as the dharmakaya Dakini alone.

17 bsKyed-rdzogs rdzogs-chen: all three of these yogas (maha-, anu-, and atiyoga) are formal meditation practices, but Dzokchen is the goal as well as a path, and, therefore, is experienced informally in the stream of existential praxis.

18 Lhag-mthon\$, vipagyana: the yoga of guarding the doors of the senses, taught by Sakyamuni and employed in various contexts in tantric practice.

19 Che-'jing mir-gan is probably the Mongol king Qoricar Mergan who lived ca. tenth century and whom the Tibetans considered an incarnation of Guru Perna (see Blue Annals, p. 57).

20 bDe-chen dbyangs-can ma: a name of Sarasvati.

21 The text of the mkha'-spyod sprul-sku snying-thig is in three parts. The outer part conforms to the sutras: mkha'-'gro sku gsum rkyang-sgrub/spyod-yul 'dul-ba dkar-po/thog-'bebdrag-spyod rnamgsu m/bla-ma sku gsum rkyang-sgrub/byin-rlabs dbang-gi sgo-mo/gzer-'joins lta-ba cig-chodl rtags-tshad so-pa dgu 'dyes/gnad-kyi me-btsa' rnamgsu/rdzas-sngags dmigs-yul brgya'-rtsa/rjes gcod lcam-bu gzer-them sogs spyi tshan bcu/The inner part conforms to the tantras: bla-nia mkha'-'gro zung-'jug-tu sgrubthabs/bsgom-pa sgyu-ma 'phrul 'gros/rtsa-rlung 'gog-don *man-ngag gcig chog zab-mobsgyur-sbyang spel-ba* rnamgsu/mkha'-'gro'i bang-mdzod mig gcig/mkha'-'gro'i dmar-pa snying gcig/mkha'-'gro gnyer-po srog gcig/man-ngag sngags-kha gsum sprell'od-zer zhags-pa rnamgsu/dpa'-bo gyad stobs rnamgsu spyi tsham bcu-gcig/The secret part is like secret precepts: bla-ma mkha'-'gro rang-lus dbyer-med-du sgrubthabs/lta-ba phyagrgya-chen-pol'bras-bu rdzogs-chen chig gchod/man-ngag gtum-mo sum sbrel/gdams-ngag thos chog rnamgsu *nyams-len bsgom-pa rnamgsu* gcig-chog mun chos rnamgsu/las phran dgos-pa rnamgsu/rten- 'brel me-long rnamgsu/rgyab-chos dgos-pa rnamgsu/bka'-srung myur-mgyogs rnamgsu/drag-sngags gnad-kha rnamgsu sogs mthar-thug- pa'i chos sna bcu-gnyis sogs. This

sNying-thig text was one of Taksham's principal terms.

22 mKha'-'gro-gling-gi nyal-le bcu-gnyis: all the Dakinis enumerated possess the 'wisdom heart' (shes-rab snying-po), but their forms and activities can appear fiendish. Tsogyel's wheel is an Ocean of Awareness, whereof the waves' appearances are both peaceful and wrathful.

23 'Thung-spyod tshan-rdo-nye-ba'i gnas. The 32 or 12 power places (pithasthana), places of pilgrimage and also focal points (cakras) and veins (nadi) in the human body, are divided into categories such as pilava ('thung-gcod), chandoha, and upa-chandoha (nye-ba'i chandoha). These words appear to denote different kinds of meeting places but their meaning is obscure. See B.A. pp. 980, 983.

24 mKha'-'gro gsang-ba'i brda'-d bang. This initiation empowers the initiate to intuit the meaning of secret Dakini languages (brda'-yig) and symbolic tantric terminology including the twilight language (sandltyabhasa).

25 bLa-ma-thugs-kyi sgrub-pa 'bru'-gcig-gi dkyil-'khor.

26 Lung-byang-chen-mo.

27 sMar Sa-skya senge and gYo Rinchen 'byung-ldan were the two monks who fled from Tsang to Amdo ca. 840 during Langdarma's persecution and maintained the mulasarvastivadin lineage of ordination. The lineage was restored to Central Tibet by the Six Men of dbUs and gTsang a century later. The Blue Annals has three monks (Bod-kyi mkhas-pa mi gsum) fleeing for the East: gYar-stod ~akyamuni (gMar), gYo dGe-'byung of Drang-chung mdo (gYo) and Rab-gsal of Gya-rab in gTsang.

28 The chief disciple of the Abbot of Vikramaśila, Atiṣa, who came to Tibet in 1042 to reform monasticism, was Dom-ton ('Brom-ston). He founded the reformed bKa'-gdams-pa sect, building sNye-thang and Rwa-sgreng monasteries, and he translated many texts with Atisa. However, he was a monk and no mention of a consort, Jayakara, appears in the Blue Annals; but there was a Nepali scholar called Jayakara who translated in Tibet in the eleventh century.



29 'Sa' must refer to 'Phags-pa, the Sakya sect's hierarch (1235-79) who initiated Kubilai Khan and received Tibet as the initiation price. The hierarch of the eminent 'Khon clan who built the Sakya monastery was Kun-dga'-rgyal-po, a disciple of Drok-mi ('Brog-mi) who in mid-eleventh century was sent by the King of Ngari to Vikramasila. Drokmi was initiated into the lam-'bras system by Virupa and Dombi Heruka. Lam-'bras (The Path as Goal) is a nondual system akin to mahamudra, an anuttarayogatantra, stressing the absence of a foundation to reality (rtsa-ba-med-pa); it is the Sakyapa's height of achievement.

30 'Phak's teaching' could indicate the precepts of the lineage of Vajra Varahi (Phag-mo), the Dakini of Marpa, Mila, Gampopa and Phagmo-gru-pa, or it could mean the teaching of the latter who was the Guru of the founders of seven of the eight Kahgyu sects including the 'Brig-gung (Dri), sTag-lung (Tak), Karma (Kar) and 'Brug-pa (Druk). Marpa Lotsawa's consort, the incarnation of Tsogyel, was named Dakmema (bDag-med-ma, Nairatma); Gampopa (sGam-po- pa), born in sGarn in Dwags-po (Dak), was Guru Pema's emanation.

31 'Karma' could refer to Karma Pakshi (1204-83), or Karmapa Rangjung Dorje (Rang-'byung rdo-rje, 1284-1359), successive Karma Kahgyu hierarchs. While both were Old School initiates, the latter was a tertan who meditated for a long time in Chimphu, and since Tibet was politically stable during Pakshi's reign, Rang-'byung rdorje is probably here intended.

32 The Virtuous Doctrine or Method (Geluk, dGe-lugs) is the name of the bKa'-dams-pa sect after Tsongkha-pa reformed it. Its political power grew out of its allies, the Qosot Mongols, after the 3rd Dalai Lama converted Altan Khan and invited him to pacify strife-torn Tibet. Under the Great Fifth (1617-82), a Dzokchenpa and tertan, Tibet was united with the aid of Gugri Khan, and the administration at Galden Monastery lasted until Mao's Chinese destroyed it. The Great Fifth's family had a link with the Zahor royalty.

33 'sBe Ye-shes snying-po, La-gsum rGyal-ba byang-chub (Atsara Sale) and rMa Rinchen mchog will discover the bsNyan-brgyud gong-'og the mKha-'gro snying-thig and the mTsho-rgyal rnam-thars,

extensive, condensed and concise, in later incarnations.'

34 This passage is an example of a condensed 'prophetic manifest'. 'rpo-rje of Lhorong' is sTag-sham nus-idan rdo-rje. The first in this list probably refers to Guru Chos-dbang (1212-70).

35 The great rpo-rje-ldan monastery of Ka-thog in Kham was founded by Dam-pa bDe-gshegs in 1039(?).

36 The blue eight-petalled lotus blossoms in the heart centre, and the red sixteen-petalled lotus in the throat centre.

37 brTan-ma bcu-gnyis dang bcas-pa'i zhus-len lha-'dre'i lung-bstan.

38 The sphere of blue light is not as significant for its shape as for what it contains; the sesame seeds are a metaphor for 'seed essence' (thig-le). None of the accounts of Tsogyel's parinirvana speak of 'rainbow body' per se.

39 Ye-shes mtsho-rgyal-ma. rGyal-ma (Queen) can also be rendered Conqueror, a female Buddha (jina).

40 sGrubthabs: (1) a liturgical meditation text; (2) a cycle or regular and frequent practice, of any yoga or meditation; (3) aspiration, methods and experience of existential praxis - life is a sadhana.

41 The three Bodhisattvas, Protectors of the Three Doors (body, speech and mind), and in this context, Sangha, Dharma and Buddha, respectively, are also Protectors of Tibet.

42 At the end of each chapter are symbols in the Dakini cypher (mKha'- 'gro brda'-yig), Here four Sanskrit words can be discerned: ithi (thus), guhya (secret, mystical, bhaga), evam (thus, in this way), manda (cream, liquor, essence) or manda(la). Ithi (ITI) and EVAM lend themselves to non-semantic interpretations; EVAM is a mantric word evoking the union of opposites - E is the Dakini, perfect insight, and VAM is the Guru, skilful means. The Dakini language functions chiefly on a non-discursive level; the intellectual scalpel destroys mantric efficiency, and analysis keeps the Dakinis at bay.

43 On a mystic level, the evocation SAMAYA rGYA rGYA rGYA can be rendered: Union! Kun-bzang yab-yum are united in the dharmakaya; Hayagriva and Vajra Yogini are united in the sambhogakaya; and Guru Pema and Tsogyel are united in the nirmanakaya! On an internal level it may be rendered: I vow to practise the Guru's teachings with body, speech and mind! And on an external level it means: the word of the Guru is sealed with the threefold bond of secrecy.

# COMMENTARY



## **THE PATH OF THE INNER TANTRA**

The Dakini cypher and the Guru's mandala, a lotus flower and a flaming vajra, a shooting star and a rainbow body: during this period of absorption in the Tantra, its terminology, premises and concepts should be taken to heart. In this semantic game of enlightenment, it is expedient first to clarify meanings and then to approach tantric formulae as if they represented absolute truths. There is little joy in the mere intellectual exercise of comparative study of meta-psychological systems, but a great deal to be gained by bathing the mind in a sublime vision that has a psychotropic effect. The purpose of this essay is to evoke a vision, the existential vision of the Inner Tantra (the Buddhist anuttarayogatantra consisting of mahdyoga, anuyoga and Dzokchen atiyoga), and further, to describe the methods of inducing this vision and the functions of the psychoorganism under its influence. This vision is not an escapist paradise or a means to obfuscate the harsh realities of a mean life, or to replace the vicissitudes of happiness and suffering by a narcotic hallucination; on the contrary, its core is the naked, basic fact of existence.

This vision is not only existential in so far as it pertains to existence; it accords in part with philosophic existentialism. Objective values are subjected to gnostic experience arising from within; the individual is recognised as master of his fate capable of casting off the ties that bind him in an authoritarian social and moral strait-jacket, and overcoming the intellectual and emotional obstacles that restrict knowledge of himself as a being capable of freedom of action and expression. Man's greatest potential for power, realisation and pleasure lies in the present moment, in his actual state of being; personal recognition of the human condition is the first step to potentiating the fullness of the moment. Suffering is accepted both intellectually and emotionally as an unavoidable fact, an integral part of life, to be used rather than avoided. Action is an absolute statement of being rather than a means to an end like behaviour conforming to social or moral mores or actions dictated by a manipulative ego. Thus this existential vision of the Inner Tantra is not merely a way of thought to be assimilated intellectually; it is a way of being aware that automatically affects

thought-forms. Indeed it affects the full range of a human being's potential: his understanding of who he is and the world he lives in; his aesthetic appreciation and his communication with people and things; the breadth, depth and intensity of his awareness (consciousness); his moral being and his talent; and the motivation and efficacy of his activity from sex to singing a song. Although madness or a strange life-style may result from opening the doors of perception, there is not necessarily a radical external change in a person - it takes a Buddha to recognise a Buddha. And what or who is a Buddha? In the mahayana, Buddhahood is defined as the state of recognition of Emptiness in oneself and in phenomena. Thus recognition, an utterly intangible quality of awareness, is the key to tantric vision, meditation and action, and the means to attain this recognition is through initiation and sustaining the experience of initiation through tantra-yoga and meditation.

Formalistic exposition of tantric metaphysics and psychological description of tantric yogas and practices are no aid to realisation of our Buddhanature, neither is an explanation of the stages of the path relevant to an initiate's personal practice. The image of a ladder reaching from ignorance to wisdom can be a misleading idealisation. The mind will not follow the logical pattern of development laid out by optimistic guides. Even to generalise about methods of yoga practice can be counterproductive. Each individual has his own path, each mind its own peculiarities and needs, and it can be destructive to squeeze different minds into the same mould. Each mind reacts differently to the same stimuli; every individual has his own karma, and karma is so complex, its ramifications so diverse and subtle, that it is difficult to isolate clear-cut cases of moral cause and effect. The virtuous man, like the biblical Job, is often afflicted by unaccountable troubles, and the vicious man is often rewarded with wealth and sensual pleasure. The monk or yogin who practises the letter of the Buddha's law may become a stereo-typed religious fool, while the lay existentialist who maintains his tantric samayas (vows) may fortuitously find himself a siddha or saint. Thus in this attempt at conveying the nature of the Inner Tantra, I have rejected the formalistic method; but by defining the concepts and elucidating aspects of the Tantra that arise in Tsogyel's Life and erecting sign-posts along her path of practice, I hope to have sketched a useful picture of

the Inner Tantra and its processes and functions. In general, it is written from the standpoint of the Dzokchenpa, the yogin practitioner (sadhaka) of Dzokchen atiyoga; but it is a personal picture subject to the limitations of a personal understanding.

The practitioner of the most formless Buddhist practice, the Dzokchen yogin, travelling the fastest vehicle traversing the path to Buddhahood, will generally discipline himself in the practices of some of the eight lesser of the nine vehicles.' There is no contradiction here, as his sphere of activity is as broad as human experience. Since Tsogyel was to become a nun and teacher of both the theory and practice of many skilful means, before she received her tantric initiations she studied the rules of monastic discipline (vinaya), the hmayana and mahayana scriptures (sutras) and their commentaries, and metaphysics (abhidharma). If her philosophical studies were directed by ~antaraksita (the abbot of the newly erected Samye monastery) her tuition would have stressed the epistemology of the svatantrika branch of the madhyamika school. But certainly she would also have studied the yogacara Mind-Only (sems-tsam-pa) philosophy with its practical psychoanalytic terminology to which Nyingma tantric expression has some affinity, and also the dialectic of the madhyamika-prasaingika school that was still a relatively new and vital philosophy in India. In particular she studied the concepts fundamental to all Buddhist thought, such as the notion of karma, the laws of causality in the moral and mental spheres: certain actions cultivate specific states of mind, and certain meditations produce specific cognitive modes and psychic powers. And the notion of Emptiness (stong-pa-nyid, sunyata), basic to the entire mahayana, is the crux of all theory and practice: through Emptiness all things have only a relative existence, and, therefore, individuals, gods and the universe itself is empty of a substantial, eternal principle of existence, such as a soul or the Judeo-Christian God.<sup>2</sup> Experientially, perception of Emptiness is coincident with realisation of all phenomena as illusion. With the radically changed outlook that such perception implies, the priorities of being alive are revolutionised, and the conceptual function of mind arrested, the universe is perceived as lightform: thus, 'enlightenment'.

Apropos of Tantra mahayana is a rich well of ideas, metaphysics,



yogas and meditation practices that are adapted for use as skilful means in the preeminently pragmatic and syncretic tantric tradition. The theory and practice of mahayana provides the basis of practice of the Inner Tantra; the slow, graduated spiritual evolution effected by the mahayana primes the mind for the highly efficient means provided by the tantras, which can effect Buddhahood in a single lifetime, although they do not provide a sudden method of release in principle. Thus in Tantra, the six perfections,<sup>3</sup> for instance, are given an added dimension. Generosity is the 'impartial dispensation of every requirement'. Morality is the automatic function of continuous, immediate Awareness 'free of public and private vows', though not, of course, free of the tantric samaya (see p. 227). Patience is the acceptance of the good with the bad, the sadhaka being based in the sameness of all experience. Perseverance is the 'flowing river samadhi', cultivating empty pleasure. Meditation is simultaneous creative and fulfilment processes of meditation 'with fixation upon mahamudra'. And perfect insight is inseparable from service to a consort of skilful means (for a yogini). In that manner Tsogyel explained her practice to another of Guru Rimpoche's consorts, Sakya Dema, in Nepal (see pp. 54f.).

On the Bodhisattva path no Guru is needed, but as soon as the complex but enriching elements of enigma, paradox and twilight language (sandhyabhasa) enter into the expression of the dharma, the aspirant needs a Guru preceptor, a Lama, to make the appropriate meaning quite clear and to convey the empowering oral transmission and authorisations (lung). Although the sadhaka may be well aware of the multi-levelled possibilities of the injunctions implied in many passages of Tsogyel's Life, it is essential that he knows whether to practise a literal or figurative interpretation. The Lama's example and explanation will be quite explicit. Many traditional stories warn the neophyte of the karmic results of practising upon a level of interpretation in which he is unskilled or to which he is unsuited. The layman who received nondual precepts such as the Twentyfive Branch Vows and practised fornication and killing, stealing and lying, was reborn as Rudra, the personification of egoistic immorality. For many other reasons, too, the Lama is the key to the Tantra. Since the 'real Lama', a fully endowed Buddha incapable of selfish motivation, an emanation of Guru Rimpoche himself, contains within himself the

Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), the three roots (Guru, Deva and Dakini) and the Buddha's three modes of being (nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya and dharmakaya) he is considered to be an object of refuge superior to the Three jewels themselves. In the basic formula of all tantric Buddhists' conviction - the refuge - the first line is 'I take refuge in the Lama'. The Lama's pronouncements and precepts are the dharma, and his word assumes the sanctity of absolute truth. In the maze of the mind after all supports have been discarded during the early phase of practice, some unfailing point of reference is needed: that touchstone is the Lama's precepts. This remains true even after the disciple has attained the status of Guru himself. Obedience to the Father-preceptor remains of primary importance even after the Guru's parinirvana. So long as the sadhaka has a conditioned mind that can comprehend relative truth, so long is the Lama's word sacrosanct. Even when he reaches the level of realisation of the unconditioned Guru, and the Guru's word becomes the song of the birds, the tears of children, the wind in the trees, etc., the preceptor's word is still not superseded.

The importance of the Lama is succinctly expressed in the song that Guru Pema sings to Tsogyel upon her return from Nepal (p. 57). In the metaphor of the boat crossing the ocean of samsara, the Lama is the captain of the boat called Oral Transmission; the great sail of secret precepts is provided by him; instructive advice received from the Lama is a guide to the other shore, like a land-bird sailing with the ship constantly seeking landfall; the Lama's example inspires the faith of fair winds; leaks in the samaya are plugged by the Lama; and the Lama (or the Dakini Lama) gives maturity and release through post-meditation initiation and instruction. With the arsenal of techniques provided by the tantras, with judicious prescription the Lama can effect instantaneous release from samsara. Even in Dzokchen where a basic precept is that nothing is to be added to, changed or eradicated in the mind, the single imperative factor is the Lama's introduction of the initiate to the inherent primal purity of his own mind.

Tsogyel's great devotion to her Lama, Guru Pema, and also her conviction that from the first the dynamics of Buddhahood have been functioning unrecognised, is expressed in her prayer in extremity when her practice of the austerity of bone ornaments has brought her close to

death: 'From the first this body is the citadel of the Yidam; the nerves and energy flows are the Dakini's courses; and seedessence is the nature of the Sugatas - you know the entire nature of my being, Lama!' Two aspects of the Lama are implied here. The Lama is both the omniscient apparition, the incarnate Guru Pema (rupakaya), and also his unconditioned, unstructured metaphysical body (dharmakaya). Faith in her Lama is the condition sine qua non of the success of her austerities. When Guru Pema is leaving for the SouthWest her emotional songs and histrionic antics, like rolling on the ground and banging her head against rocks, are indicative of her mountain-moving faith.

At this point it is necessary to explain the terms employed in the description of the Buddha Lama above. First, 'the Lama is the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha'. The Three Jewels need little explanation: the Lama embodies the Buddha, his Word and the Community. In so far as he is the Buddha, the Lama possesses the Buddha's three modes of being, the indivisible trikaya (three bodies). These three modes of being are essential, empty being (dharmakaya), visionary being (sambhogakaya) and apparitional being (nirmanakaya). There is a simple formula in atiyoga that defines these three modes: essence - empty; nature - radiant; compassionate manifestation - all-embracing.<sup>4</sup> They may be conceived as three interpenetrating spheres of being, or as three aspects of the Ineffable, as ice, water and steam are aspects or modes of H<sub>2</sub>O. Although 'essential, empty being' is the totality, it is also individuated Emptiness, the empty primal space inherent in all sentient beings; in terms of the mandala it is the all-pervasive centre; it is indeterminable because no proposition whatsoever can formulate its ontological nature; it is Emptiness because nothing substantial exists in experience of it; it is nonreferential, nondual awareness because no subject experiences it and no objective reference can be isolated in it; it is pure pleasure because it is known through ecstatic union with the Dakini; it is personified as Kuntuzangpo or Vajradhara. 'Visionary being' is the radiant nature of the Buddha in variegated rainbow colours in meaningful patterns that instruct and delight; it is instructive because the Buddha's manifestations are intended only to lead beings out of samsara; it is aesthetically delightful because it is completely free of emotional taint; it is consummate enjoyment because it is infinite and unimpeded; in terms of the mandala it is the space between

the centre and the circumference; it is the realm of the Five Buddhas - the Five Aspects of the Adi-Buddha - and the Wrathful Buddhas; it is the realm of the Yidam. 'Apparitional being' is the all-embracing sensibility of being manifesting compassion as illusory appearances in response to the need of all sentient beings; it is 'incarnate being' because the principal form of emanation is human form; it is all-pervasive because all of nature and all artefacts created by man are emanations of compassion; it is idealised human form because its phantom beings are characterised by the Buddha's eighty ideal marks and signs; in terms of the mandala it is the circumference; it is represented by Guru Rimpoche in the robes of the nine vehicles.

The three roots are intimately related to the three modes of being. In fact they may be conceived as divine personifications of the three aspects of the Buddha's nature, of the Buddha's Body, Speech and Mind, and of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The three roots are the Guru, Deva and Dakini in Sanskrit, and the Lama, Yidam and Khandroma in Tibetan. In general, regarding the function of these three, the Lama confers empowering blessings, the Yidam bestows siddhi (power and realisation) and the Dakini performs the Buddha's karmas (pacifying, enriching, controlling and destroying); the Lama bestows the Mind to Mind transmission of the Buddhas, the Yidam instructs through visionary forms and gives authorisation, and the Dakini gives pleasure dancing the illusory cosmic dance. The relationship of the three roots differs according to the point of view. As essential empty being, the Lama may be conceived as the totality in which arises the instructive visionary realm of the Yidam and the apparitional realm of the Dakini dancing the Lama's karma. The Lama and Dakini may be viewed as a union of skilful means and perfect insight, while the Yidam is the product of their union. Each is also the totality of reality, and all three possess the three modes of being. The importance and nature of the Lama has been described already; the Dakini is of no less importance, since she can perform the Lama's function as a preceptor when she incarnates like Tsogyel, and she can also be taken as a Yidam, a personal deity, guardian and instructor.

In translation I have preferred the evocative, mantric sound of the Sanskrit word 'Dakini' to the Tibetan word Khandroma, although the latter contains more significant meaning. Khandroma (mKha-'gro-ma)

means Sky-goer or Sky-dancer. To the Old School, Dakini is virtually synonymous with Tsogyel herself, for Tsogyel was the Consort of Guru Pema who is every Nyingma Guru. Every initiate of the Nyingma Inner Tantra takes Tsogyel as his Dakini, so the nature of Tsogyel is the nature of every Dakini. First, Tsogyel's empty being is the naked, blue Kuntuzangmo who is the personification of a plenum of Emptiness, Awareness, primal space and pure pleasure.<sup>5</sup> Secondly her body of aesthetic, instructive, enjoyment is Vajra Yogini or Vajra Vahahi (rDo-rje Phag-mo) who with her hooked knife cuts away all ignorance and attachment, sometimes raging and sometimes benign. Kuntuzangmo's radiance may also take the form of Tara, the compassionate Seven-Eyed Saviouress, whose instruction is to serve all creatures in every way necessary. In her previous rebirth Tsogyel was Sarasvati, the goddess of learning and the arts, a celibate maiden but the Mother of the Buddhas. Thirdly in her apparitional form Tsogyel performs the deeds of the incarnate Buddhas, actions that release her from the wheel of rebirth and result in union with Guru Perna in the Buddha's essential, empty being. The nature of this union is lotus-light, where as Kuntuzangmo she emanates the apparitional forms of the world of sentient beings. In her life as described herein, Tsogyel is Kuntuzangmo. 'Failing to recognise me, you objectify me as an external entity,' she tells her disciples. Believing each man to be an island, a discrete isolate, unable to see other people as incarnations of the Buddha's three modes identical to our own empty self, we make distinction between self and other, and the Dakini appears to be an ordinary woman. Failing to see Tsogyel as Kuntuzangmo, failing to see the unity of absolute and relative, her disciples were in ignorance of the universal Dakini projected in primal space as a field of Absolute Awareness (mahbjridna), a cosmic dance of pure pleasure, that operates through the delusory functions of mind.

After the refuge, the most important preliminary commitment is the Bodhisattva Vow (sems-bskyed), known otherwise as 'the thought of enlightenment' or 'production of an enlightened attitude'. Both formally in meditation practice, and informally on the path of personal evolution, the Bodhisattva Vow not only determines the aspirant's direction and motivation, but it reveals the well-spring of energy through which the goal can be achieved. The word that implies both motivation and energy is bodhicitta (byang-chub-sems), a key term in

Tantra and on the Bodhisattva Path. In Tantra the Bodhisattva Vow can be defined as the will towards universal happiness, with the onus on 'will', because the energy of dynamic aspiration is employed in various tantric yogas. This will is not a drive derived from the intellect that has concluded by deduction that one's own happiness is impossible amidst the suffering of others; it is not derived from altruistic sentiment; and it is not imposed by the Guru or the doctrine. Rather, it is life-force itself and the basic creativity of the mind, innate 'nuclear' energy released by the intuitive insight that the alienation of oneself from others is a function of karmic conditioning performed by a now redundant part of the mind. The greatest possible realisation of human potential is effected by the cultivation of this energy. The tantric texts are peppered with the word 'release'; it is this energy that is released. The Path should not lead to a quietist backwater where self-created visions can be enjoyed at leisure, or where various trance states can be indulged in at whim, although the temptation is strong to avoid the intensity of immediate experience and the Buddha's karmas and to take refuge in such paradisiacal purelands. The release of energy, which is dramatically and poetically described in Tsogyel's initiation and empowerment, is at once power and awareness.

In Tantra the word bodhicitta also denotes sperm and female juices, and the injunction to retain the bodhicitta for the sake of others therefore possesses a powerful dual meaning. 'The milk of human kindness' is one possible translation of 'white bodhicitta'. The power derived from retaining the bodhicitta and retracting it up the medial nerve is the power of the mind that permits the ambiguous facility of walking through walls, flying in the sky, chewing rock and other proofs of siddhi demonstrated by the Twentyfive Siddhas of Chimphu, and actual powers of shape-shifting, memory, concentration, verbal persuasiveness and physical prowess, *etc.* The Awareness which is concomitant with the release of energy will be examined below.

The source of this energy, however, is highly elusive. The selfless, altruistic will of the Bodhisattva, with which most human beings are familiar, comes and goes without rhyme or reason in ordinary minds. There are yogas and meditations of many kinds to stimulate this energy. For instance, in the meditation upon the four stations of Brahma,<sup>6</sup> which is a preliminary exercise in even the most advanced

yogas, the sddhaka will envision all beings as his mother and empathise with his enemies, etc., and the compassion that is effected is not so much pity for the less fortunate as an energy burst that is the driving force in the succeeding meditation activity. Meditation upon impermanence (mi-rtag-pa) is another stimulation of creative energy. If the mind is well-lubricated it is effective merely to recall that life is short, death may be imminent, minutes are passing, and that the enormous creative potential of 'the precious human body' can be the source of immense pleasure and power. If the mind is heavy and dull then a penetrating exploration to discover what appears to be the permanent basis of torpor and anxiety reveals the essential relativity of all states of mind, and if the analysis is thorough it can result in a great wave of creative energy and pleasure in the perception of Emptiness.<sup>7</sup> According to temperament and personality type, such discursive meditations, or simple breathing exercises, or both, will be effective in stirring the energy of the Bodhisattva Vow.

Samaya (dam-tshig) is of paramount importance. It lies at the heart of the tantric mysteries. It is the key to the mysteries. With the samaya we leave behind the firm ground of metaphysics and enter the realm of pure mysticism. Some Lamas will say that the samaya is the beginning and the end of the path; that seeking samaya and maintaining it is the entire dharma. Certainly nothing can be achieved without maintaining the samaya. So what is the samaya? The ultimate samaya is union with the Buddha Lama as the three roots: Lama, Yidam and Dakini. Thus in the context of ultimate samaya it can be defined as 'union'. The union is achieved at the moment of initiation and is then sustained by the relative samayas which are the vows of Body, Speech and Mind. Thus in the context of the relative samaya it can be defined as 'vow', 'pledge' or 'commitment'. Tsogyel explains the vows that sustain the ultimate samaya in Chapter 4 (pp. 27f.). Indications that the samaya has been broken can be found in loss of integrity in fulfilment of the Bodhisattva Vow through selfishness; any loss of integrity in speech through failure to fulfil verbal commitments; and any loss of integrity in the nonreferential nondual Awareness of the Knowledge Holders through discrimination. Thus samaya may be defined as 'integrity'. When the samaya is complete it is the source of boundless and spontaneous energy capable of extra-sensory perception and certain spiritual powers (siddhi), and, indeed, Buddhahood itself. When the

samaya is broken it can be restored through the remarkably efficacious ritual meditation called Kangso (bskang-bsos) which is a discretionary part of the ganacakra rite. The principal function of the ganacakra offering ritual is to achieve union with the Lama, Yidam and Dakini.

In the same way that it is counterproductive to follow moral laws blindly, performing 'good' deeds with hatred in the heart, it is futile to practise the relative vows and rules of the tantric samaya without ultimate samaya. The ultimate samaya gives meaning and purpose to the relative samayas and the relative samayas maintain the ultimate samaya. Different Lamas and lineages have different notions of the relative samayas. In Dzokchen some Lamas will reduce the vows to the maintenance of the Mind samaya. Some will make the relative samaya very simply, resting it upon a single Dzokchen precept that can sustain the ultimate samaya. However it is done, to do it is imperative. Not only is initiation the origin of the ultimate samaya, but samaya is the root of initiation and empowerment. Thus Tsogyel can say, 'Since I realised that initiation and empowerment are the key to the tantric mysteries and that samaya is the source of empowerment, I have maintained the samaya unbroken.'

The twentyfive branch samayas can be the cause of dangerous misunderstanding and a demonic departure from the path. In the manner that they are set down by Tsogyel they need an explanation 'in the light of extended commentary from other sources'. Concerning the five actions that should be practised, for instance, it is imperative to recall that these actions are expressions of the relative bodhicitta, the will to universal happiness and the means of selfless service to others. Interpretation of these vows should come from a Lama, but, for example, the vow to fornicate can imply constant maintenance of the congress of (male) immanent Knowledge and (female) mahamudra, resulting in a dissolution of obstacles into immutable bliss. 'Killing' may be practised in exceptional circumstances, when, for instance, the loss of one man's life may save the lives of many. The Buddha Sakyamuni's death by poison was caused by the karmic effect of the murder of a bandit chief about to slaughter a band of pilgrims. Also, 'killing' means 'to take the life' of dualistic conceptions with the Awareness implicit in Knowledge, and it implies arresting the karmic energies by binding them in the belly by means of the yoga of



kumbhaka, *etc.* It is true that no action of body, speech or mind is categorically forbidden in practice of Tantra, but far from initiation offering a *carte blanche* to indulge in any whim or passion, every action is derived from the Bodhisattva's motive energy. On the other hand, no action of which human beings are capable is excluded from the mandala of the Inner Tantras. Thus the tantric path is said to be superior to all other paths to Buddhahood in that it is the path of unlimited skilful means. Therefore, in theory, the Tantra offers a way of salvation to people involved in polymorphic perversion of any of the basic passions, no matter what degree of manifestation has been achieved. Further, since skilful means are infinite in quantity and quality, in so far as deities and their consorts represent a splendid diversity of conditions of being (male) and insight into their empty nature (female), the pantheon of the Tantra is at present immense and in the future capable of infinite expansion as existential modes of other cultures are assimilated.

Tsogyel's initiations are verbalised in the highly technical language of anuttarayogatantra. The mechanics of the lineal tradition of teaching do not allow the neophyte verbal definitions and explicit logical explanations. He or she is enjoined first to experience the results of meditation, and then, perhaps, he will study the literature and the conceptual vocabulary and symbolic imagery of the tradition in order to express realisation in mystic songs or to compose instructive works for students. As it is neither desirable nor necessary to examine in detail the nature of the meta-psychotherapeutic transformations effected by these initiations, I will classify the initiations and indicate some meanings that are not apparent in the translation.

The Inner Tantras are approached through four initiations: the Vase Initiation, the Mystic Initiation, the Wisdom Initiation and the Word Initiation. The first is also an initiation into the Outer Tantras; the other three are known as the superior initiations. Generally, I have translated the Tibetan word for initiation (*dbang-bskur*) as 'initiation and empowerment', for although the concept of a new-comer's 'initiation' into the mysteries is relevant, the Tibetan word means 'bestowal of power'. The Guru bestows the power to practise a certain yoga upon an initiate who experiences the climax of that yoga, in the Vase Initiation, in a rite that parallels the coronation of an Indian prince by his father

the king. The Vase Initiation is an empowerment to practise mahayoga and the creative process of meditation. The meditation to which Tsogyel is introduced transforms the dualistic universe, the prosaic environment inhabited by sentient beings, into a divine palace, an immeasurable abode of gods and goddesses, Dakas and Dakinis. This is the sphere of apparitional being (nirmanakaya), the Guru's Body. The central concepts are 'the chalice' and its 'elixir', which bring to mind the Holy Grail and the elixir of Arthurian legend. The chalice is the inanimate world of appearances and the elixir is the life that it contains and which animates it. The essential transformation here is from a dualistic to a nondual reality; a dualistic, egocentric world in which the 'knower' relates to his object of perception as a discrete isolate, is recognised as the Buddha's reality. In this universe the Dakini's manaala of Emptiness and Awareness (elixir-bcud) and the Guru's mandala of form (snangba), sound (grags-pa) and mind (thugs) (the chalice-snod) form an integral unity (zung-'jug) and divine beings relate through mudra (posture and gesture), mantra (the quality of sound) and samadhi (an intuitive understanding of their essential sameness).

The language Tsogyel uses to describe the mechanics of her initiation is called 'twilight language' or 'intentional language'. We do not know whether Tsogyel and her Guru are engaged in actual sexual dance and consummation or whether the sexual content is metaphor describing the symbiosis of polarised spiritual qualities and a subsequent blissful catharsis and inner transformation. There cannot, however, be any doubt as to the effectiveness of such language. Whether or not sexual congress is a part of tantric practice, it is the essential genius of Tantra that the most basic and most powerful of human instincts is used as a skilful means to stimulate, or expand, awareness and create insight into the nature of reality, and to generate the will to selfless service. In the Vase Initiation, at the height of sensual pleasure the red (female) and white (male) bodhicittas interfuse, and retracted up the medial nerve in the spine, the focal points of psychic energy (cakras) are charged; the sun and moon of each focal point is irradiated with light, and the entire psychoorganism is vitalised by a current of energy so strong that 'concrete reality', the product of our normal dualistic mode of perception, dissolves, and the vision which is described in terms of Mahavajradhara, the Adi-

Buddha, overwhelms the initiate in his gnostic trance. Mahavajradhara is the Sixth Buddha; he represents a unitary field of nondual perception of insubstantial appearances, a plenum of dynamic space in which phenomena float as gossamer lightform. The Five Buddha Aspects and their Consorts are contained within Vajradhara. They represent the five psychophysical constituents (form, feeling, ideation, volition and consciousness), while their Consorts represent the phenomena of solidity, fluidity, heat, motion and spaciousness (earth, water, fire, air and sky) (Chapter 4, n. 14). This symbology of deities is an attempt with hindsight to analyse the unitary vision. At the moment of experience there is no analytic differentiation whatsoever; but by naming the deities, we are enabled to recreate the mandala in subsequent meditation practice, and by recalling the nature of the initiatory experience it is possible to make that experience a continuous mode of perception.

When Tsogyel offered her 'mystic' mandala to the Guru as the prerequisite of the Vase Initiation, initiation into the Outer Mandala, the Guru's reaction is described in terms of the head centre. 'The radiance of his smile' destroys the defilements of the sensual realm. Thus whenever the Guru smiles his radiance (mdangs) can be understood as the pureland of the head centre. When Tsogyel offers her mystic mandala for initiation into the mandala of the Guru's Speech, the Inner Mandala, a mandala of pure vibration, sound and energy, the abode of the Yidam, the Guru's laughter (or resonance-gdangs) emanating from his throat centre purifies the realm of aesthetic form. While the Vase Initiation was received in an ambience of serenity and peace, the Mystic Initiation is charged with a ferocity that is no less terrible for the essential compassionate nature of Wongdrak Pema (dBang-drag Padma) Heruka, who is a form of the Yidam Hayagriva representing the logos of the throat centre. Again the initiation is described as an immense orgasm that vitalises the five focal points of psychic energy. Each of the five centres is characterised by one of the five passions, and each of these mental poisons is realised as its own pure nature, which is an aspect of Awareness. Thus each union of Heruka and Dakini (Hayagriva and Varahi), one in each of the five focal points, represents a pureland and an aspect of Awareness: jealousy becomes all-accomplishing Awareness; pride becomes the Awareness of universal identity; ignorance and sloth

become Awareness of the nature of mind; lust becomes all-discriminating Awareness; and anger and hatred become the mirror-like Awareness. Tsogyel's song to the Nepali bandits elaborates the meditation which transforms the five passions into the mandala of the Five Aspects of the Buddha and the five aspects of Awareness.

Since the Mystic Initiation empowers the sadhaka to practise anuyoga, which includes hathayoga practices to control the vital breath and the subtle psychic energies of the psychoorganism, the central concepts employed in elucidating these practices are 'psychic nerves', 'energy flows' and 'seedessence' (nddi, pram, bindu; rtsa, Hung and thig-le). These psychophysical realities are defined, identified, and realised through visualisation, in certain fulfilment processes of meditation. The Mystic Initiation is an authorisation to practise fulfilment process yogas. Tsogyel however, has no need to perform the involved hathayoga exercises of fulfilment meditation because the results of such yogas are inherent in the accomplishment of nonreferential, nondual Awareness indicated by her identification with Vajra Varahi in union with Heruka. First: the karmic energies that are derived from mental impulses conditioned by past action are suppressed; the focal points of energy draw these karmic forces from the infrastructure of psychic nerves into the right and left nerves (lalana and rasana), and these in turn drain into the medial nerve, leaving the body in a state of divinity under perfect control and a highly tuned instrument to respond to the dictates of the Bodhisattva Vow. Second: each sub-centre (rtsa- 'khor) in the system of psychic nerves, which is parallel to, though not identical with the system operated upon in acupuncture, is identified by a specific vibration represented by a seed syllable (yig-'bru). After purification of the subtle body these syllables resonate to mantra, which is, therefore, the key to the control of this sheath of sound and vibration. Third: the level upon which seedessence is described as mahamudra can only be penetrated by an intuition based in experiential understanding of nondual reality. When there is complete absence of a sense of self, where the faculty of apperception is in abeyance and sense organ, object and consciousness are an integral unity, the field of sense perception is a field of Awareness composed of seedessence (thig-le). This field of seedessence is mahamudra, the female aspect of unitary Awareness.

The Vase Initiation has revealed Tsogyel's apparitional being; the Mystic Initiation has revealed her visionary being; with the Wisdom Initiation Tsogyel attains essential, empty being, the Pure Being of the Buddhas. The subtleties of the description of this initiation in *The Life* almost defy translation. It begins with light emanating from the Guru's heart centre purifying the formless realm, which indicates that Tsogyel is entering the mandala of the Guru's Mind. The invocation RAM HAM dissolves propensities to think in logical and concrete terms; what we are accustomed to conceive of as an objective, stable and predictable external universe 'melts' and 'drips' into the all-consuming flame of Awareness, and the resultant mode of perception is defined in terms of Pure Being (kaya, sku) and Seedessence (bindu, thig-le). The yoga implied by the two seedsyllables RAM and HAM is a simple fulfilment process of meditation complete in itself, and also a paradigm evocative of the succeeding practice. Then a key term is introduced that replaces the word bodhicitta that was used in the Vase and Mystic Initiations. The mandala of Pure Being and Seedessence is created by the infusion of the Dakini's mandala of dynamic space by the Guru's seed. 'Seed' is a translation of the Tibetan dwangs-ma. It denotes the distilled essence of a liquid (such as the spirit distilled from wine). The word is also used in descriptions of the alchemical process (rasayana) of distilling nectar from poison, and can be translated as 'essence' or 'juice'. Functionally, as the Guru's seed, it is the 'nuclear' energy that is released and suffuses the entire body at initiation, maturing and releasing the conditioned mind. It has also been rendered as 'radiation energy'.<sup>9</sup>

Before the complex universe of Pure Being and Seedessence is described in *The Life*, Tsogyel excels herself in an ambiguous, witty vignette of an ideal tantric initiation. The translation fails to convey the sublimity of this encounter between Guru and Dakini, which must be entirely free of any taint of gross human sexuality. The passage achieves its desired effect by mixing metaphysical and concrete imagery. The union of Tsogyel and her Guru creates the Mandala of the Blazing Sun of Radiant Inner Space, which is a poetic synonym for the mandala of mystic heat. Since this mandala, both as an existential reality and a symbolic model, is a nondual gnostic experience, the terms Pure Being and Seedessence must necessarily refer to the 'male' and 'female' aspects of the same reality, for again we are looking at the

'internal' plenum of phenomena rather than a dualistic situation wherein a conscious sensor perceives an alienated 'other'. 'Pure Being' is the Buddha with four all-pervasive and interpenetrating existential modes described as the four purelands of the four Herukas of the four focal points of psychic energy. 'Seedessence' is the self-aware, 'rainbow nuclei' of which these purelands are composed. Each lightseed has a constant centre (an inchoate plenitude) surrounded by four identical pin-points of light, and as such has a parallel in the atom with its fixed neutron and orbiting electron. Clusters of lightseeds form what are apparently concrete objects in ordinary consciousness. Each seed has a euphonic corollary in the form of a seedsyllable; the primal seedsyllable is A, while clusters of seeds resonate complex sounds. Thus seedessence can be experienced as both light and sound. Perhaps the phrase 'molecular consciousness' is applicable to this mode of perception.

The dynamic of this mandala is joy. As Tsogyel's joy increases through four levels the four focal points expand into complete mandalas. In the meditation that this Wisdom Initiation empowers Tsogyel to practise, and in which she is instructed by her Guru after the initiation, joy is created by the ascent of the blended red and white bodhicittas up the medial nerve from the sexual centre through the gut, heart, throat and head centres in turn (although the most intense feeling of joy is in the gut and the least intense in the head). The rising bodhicitta is kundalini. Guru Rinpoche lays great stress on the necessity to retain the bodhicitta within the body - initiation is one of the few occasions when it is permitted to release the bodhicitta. Retention of semen is a samaya impressed as an imperative upon the neophyte in anuyoga. In Tsogyel's practice the motive force which drives the bodhicitta up the medial nerve is the desire riding on life-force (srog-rlung), stimulated by memory of her initiation; that desire is love, the afterglow of desire, renewed desire for consummation, all of which has been 'sublimated' into Awareness at the time of initiation. As the bodhicitta or Awareness ascends, a thorough process of purification occurs. In brief, the five stages of the path of the Bodhisattva (the path of accumulation, etc.), the ten levels of the Bodhisattva's progress to enlightenment, and the four levels of joy, are traversed as the bodhicitta rises through the eight focal points at twelve junctures or moments, purifying the five poisons, the twelve

interdependent elements of existence, the three doors (body, speech and mind), the four impure states of mind (lust, sleep, dream and waking) and the five psychophysical constituents (name and form, feeling, etc.), while the four colours, the four Herukas and their Consorts, the lotuses of varying numbers of petals, and the varying numbers of world spheres, are used to describe the Buddha's four modes of being which are the goal achieved. Precepts governing the yoga into which the Wisdom Initiation has given entry are given in Chapter 8 (pp. 155-7) and the zap-lam meditation, which is another name for this Third Initiation practice, is mentioned below (pp. 249f.).

The Word Initiation, the Fourth Initiation, is the third of the superior initiations. It empowers the yogin and yogini to practise Dzokchen atiyoga, the highest of the tantric paths, and initiates them into the Buddha's fourth mode of being, which is 'self-existent being' or 'the existentiality of being' (svabhavikakaya). Guru Perna refused to initiate Tsogyel until he was about to depart, and even then, despite Tsogyel's obvious spiritual maturity, he was loath to do so, enumerating the dangers and inadequacies of such a path. Dzokchen practice is characterised by its formlessness, its speed of effectiveness, its need for a very solid foundation and its unique result, amongst many qualities that mark it as an extraordinary Buddhist vehicle. It belongs solely to the Old School although many great yogins of other schools practise it, often in secret. The Dalai Lamas of the school most opposed to the Old School have held a Dzokchen lineage for generations and have often considered it with the same high esteem as the Nyingmapas themselves. It has been damned as a Hindu *~aivite* school and as a Taoist school, a path of immoralists and heretics, but without doubt it contains the most potent and efficacious yogas, precepts and metaphysical formulations, of the entire Buddhist dharma. Guru Rimpoche points out to Tsogyel that once Dzokchen initiation has been received and practice has begun, there is no way to prevent the inevitable result of dissolution of corporeality in a rainbow body or similar mode. If initiation and instruction had been given too early the relative dharmas of Tsogyel's austerities of teaching, service to others, *etc.* would never have been fulfilled. He enjoins secrecy upon her, and Tsogyel does not describe the Word Initiation.

The Dzokchen path has two stages, although these two stages can be

practised as separate paths. These paths are trekchod (mkhregs-chod) and Tegal (thod-rgal). Trekchod can be rendered as 'exploding solidity' or 'cutting through', and trekchod precepts are given under the heads of Vision, Meditation and Action (p. 160), their capital letters indicating the highly specific, extraordinary qualities of these three terms. 'Primal purity' (kadag) and 'dynamic space' (dbyings) are the keynotes of the path: 'immersed in primal purity all things are dynamic space.' Tegal can be translated as 'direct crossing'. Certain short-cut yogas accelerate experience of the four visions which Tsogyel seeks in her final periods of retreat. The keynote in togal is 'spontaneity' (lhun-grub). Its result is dissolution of corporeality and absorption in lotus-light. Besides the trekchod and togal paths, the Mind, Space and Secret Precept (man-ngag) classes of precept represent three different approaches to Dzokchen, with slight differences in details of vision and in practice. Further, individual preceptors teach their own distinct methods transmitted by their lineages which cut through all formal categories. The spontaneity of the togal path does not imply that Dzokchen is a 'sudden school' like Zen, with which it is often compared. On the contrary Dzokchen atiyoga is preeminently the middle path which steers between the concepts of gradual and sudden schools. In so far as it is possible to say of Dzokchen that 'the starting point is the path is the goal' - the finger pointing at the moon is the moon itself - the concepts of gradual and sudden enlightenment do not apply.

The implications of the precept 'the starting point is the goal' are immense and profound. Extending the mahayana principle that the Buddhature is inherent in all sentient beings, in trekchod Vision every human experience whatsoever is cognised as primal purity, and that includes mental events, suffering, emotion and conceptual and discursive thought, since defilements are not separate from their source. We are all emanations of Guru and Dakini conceived in a Buddhafield; the Fourth Initiation introduces us to that Awareness, and thereafter the samaya is the key to sustaining it.

The good and the bad, pleasure and pain, all emotion and passion is the path itself. The greater the intensity of pain or passion the greater the potential of creative expression (rtsal) and pure pleasure (bde-chen); but although pain and passion are not to be rejected, neither are they to be cultivated. If excess is an individual's karmic destiny then



the path of excess will surely lead to wisdom, not through an eventual understanding of passion's futility, or the hedonistic pleasure of indulgence, or the hiatus of exhaustion and childlike ingenuousness, or a reactive swing to puritanical repression, but through immediate, spontaneous Awareness. The traditional metaphor for this Awareness is a lotus redolent of compassion growing uncontaminated in a putrid swamp. The middle path is maintained in the experience of excessive passion and over-indulgence by practising the precept 'neither cultivation nor rejection but identification with the nature of being'. Such practice dissolves karmic propensities to passionate response, and keeps the yogin on the middle path of indeterminable 'suchness'. Likewise Tsogyel's austerities on the snowline, where for three winters she lives virtually naked and without food, is consistent with the middle path because she neither cultivates nor rejects her pain. She is not practising self-mortification or Calvinistic masochism out of guilt, a sense of sin and the hope of a happier hereafter. 'Turn whatever suffering arises into pure pleasure,' the Guru instructs her, and in the yoga of the mystic heat her physical pain is the causal means of her pure pleasure.

Thus, in general, the method of the Inner Tantras is not to suppress emotion (as in the hinayana) or to transform it into its opposite (as in the mahayana), but to transmute it into its real nature and use its inherent energy. When incisive insight into the nature of mind, from which emotion is inseparable, removes the sting of passion, passion becomes an inexhaustible source of energy, power and awareness. Following the middle path, emotional feeling is the sadhaka's best ally. In Tsogyel's song to the punk Nepali youths who threaten to steal her gold she instructs them unambiguously upon using passion as the path. Jealousy, for example, the greener the better, must be cognised not by an objective examination of its marks and qualities, but by allowing the mind to relax and by identifying with the nature of mind that constitutes the syndrome. Then the greys of existence become scintillating rainbows and emotional energy becomes all-accomplishing Awareness. 'Perfect as you are' is the key precept, and denial, rejection or repression of any emotion cuts off an energy source. When Guru Pema finds Tsogyel close to death on the snowline in her third year of solitary meditation he upbraids her for hypocrisy, pride and deceit. It appears that the yogini was caught up in the vision

of herself as a saintly nun and a disciplined ascetic unable to admit her human feelings, her pride and her desire; suppressing her emotion and thus breaking her samaya, she could not even keep herself warm. The Guru tells her to release her guilts, selfdeceits, and hidden secrets, her passion and its accompanying neuroses that are the emotional rubbish, the flotsam and jetsam of the mind, so that it can be utilised on the path as a form of Awareness. Further, such 'hidden secrets' constitute a personality core with which one can identify, and with the dissolution of this 'ego' the sense of 'I' disappears. When the mind has been emptied of its secrets what is left is the naked, sky-blue Adi-Buddha Kuntuzangpo sitting in the heart centre.

Uncontrolled emotion (nyonmongs, kleṣa) and thought (rnamrtog, vikalpa) are the yogin's chief demons. We have seen how Dzokchen deals with emotion; thought is a different problem. Thought is the devil that distracts blissful concentration. Thought moves in peregrinations around and about objects hindering direct perception of them. Mixed with emotion it bombards us with poisonous, neurotic information which is the stuff of paranoid vision. Furthermore, although thought will finally lie down when it has exhausted its potential or when another powerful sensory stimulus has become the cause of another run of ratiocination, as premises, arguments and conclusions, preconception, belief and dogma, it will hide in the subconscious and repeat itself later, bringing its boring judgments and evaluations to bear on the same subject when it next arises. When thought is emotionally satisfying and, sometimes, logically sound, it will arrogate itself the status of conviction, and influence all other thoughts that arise. Such convictions have the tendency to become stronger and more assertive with repetition. The further thought extends from the existential reality at its inception, the more inflexible and dogmatic it becomes. Coupled with imagination or logic, thought is so subtle, potent and persuasive that 'thinking people' gain greater pleasure from it than from immediate sensual experience. Impregnated by mental constructs in childhood we are bound by the implications of such conditioning throughout our lives. Our concepts of 'truth' for example, are determined by conditioned constructs. Emotionally satisfying structures of speculative thought built upon these mental constructs can control our lives. Anuyoga in particular effects the eradication of mental conditioning, the destruction of systems of

belief, the destructuring of the mind, loss of conviction in relative truths, and finally the cessation of thought; in Dzokchen what thought remains is a Dakini.

It is very difficult to stop thinking. However, suppression of thought is possible, and the meditation that induces thoughtless trance is called samatha (zhi-gnas). Tantra spurns the condition of utter peacefulness, the paradisiacal trance, that samatha induces; the life-style and concentration its constant practice requires are consistent with hinayana principles. In Dzokchen atiyoga, the Fourth Initiation introduces the yogin to the primal purity of all thought, and bound by samaya, thereafter, thought is a dance of the Dakini - Awareness and pure pleasure. But uncontrolled, mental chatter, rigid convictions, deep-seated thought patterns, preclude the possibility of obtaining the Fourth Initiation, and some preliminary meditations and yogas are necessary to loosen the mind and slow down the pace of thought. An accomplished Guru can do much of the neophyte's work for him, but it is painful to have one's cherished beliefs demolished, and it requires a great deal of faith on the part of the disciple to permit the Guru to tamper with the thought that is inseparable from his ego. The Dzokchen Guru is the man or woman who with a word, a gesture, a game, or even a powerful samadhi, can induce his disciple to transcend his thought, to laugh at his projections and paranoias, to abandon his convictions, and then, either formally in a ritual situation or informally in direct rapport, introduce to him the nature of his own mind.

The ocean of consciousness that is the nature of mind is likened to a mirror, and thoughts to the reflections in a mirror. When the yogin is at one with the nature of mind there is no attachment to thoughts, they arise and fall like fishes jumping out of the ocean; and they leave no trace behind them, no residue in the subconscious to crystallise as preconceptions and karmic propensities. Thoughts are the mental counterparts of the karmic energies that run in the psychic nerves of the subtle body, and when thought has subsided after the cultivation of detachment, karmic energies are also less potent. Vice versa, when the bodhicitta is ascending the medial nerve, and when at each focal point of psychic energy all karmic energies are cut off, thought ceases. After the Fourth Initiation the practitioner of Dzokchen in meditation will watch thoughts arise: at first he will recognise the nature of the thought

and greet it like an old friend, the thought immediately dissolving; second, the thoughts will release themselves like snakes uncoiling their knots; and finally, with application, thought arises like a thief entering an empty house. Even in Dzokchen thoughts are likened to thieves and snakes. However, these snakes and thieves are also Dakinis, Dakinis dancing in the unitary field of reality with the same inherent pleasure as the Dakinis dancing in the visual field or the audial field.

Meditation upon pain, emotion and thought implies experiential knowledge of primal purity, which is virtually synonymous with Emptiness. To the epistemologist Emptiness is the quality of experience that gives perception its vivid, immediate, hereand-now flavour, provoking perhaps a frisson of delight or a touch of ecstatic omniscience, while for the ontologist it is primal space (dbyings), which is the all-pervasive, fundamental 'building block' of reality. It not only pervades all things as water pervades milk, but it is all things. There is nothing but space in our lived experience, according to the Vision of Dzokchen, and since its nature is radiance (gsal-ba), or clear light ('od-gsal), it is impossible to obstruct it. This is the reason that siddhas can walk through walls. Since primal space composes the unitary field of reality, it has an inherent cognitive capacity, and as such it is Knowledge (rig-pa). This Knowledge is nonreferential; in other words it is not knowledge of something or about something - it is the Knowledge of the Buddha. Primal space, like Emptiness, cannot be separated from our sensory fields. A sensory consciousness, an organ of sense perception, and an object of perception, form a unitary field of primal space that is self-cognisant. Viewed as pure consciousness this field is Awareness (ye-shes, jnana), a dance of the Awareness Dakini; and for the sake of analysis, to pull apart an indivisible gnostic situation, the 'objective' element is Knowledge. Since Knowledge is ever nonreferential and lacks the 'negative' association of Emptiness, critics have accused the Dzokchen metaphysicians of the heresy of eternalism. With 'Knowledge', they say, you are positing an eternal absolute, and because some of your yogas are very similar to those of the Saivites, you are actually Hindus masquerading as Buddhists. It is a moot point whether 'the middle' is an absolute or not, and indeed whether Emptiness itself is an immutable substance; this ontological question has been argued in debate for centuries and nothing that either proponents or antagonists have said has made the slightest difference

to the efficacy of Dzokchen practice or to its outcome.

It is difficult to translate the Vision of Dzokchen into the English language. To do so the translator must endow ordinary English words like 'space' with profound meaning. 'Space' (dbyings) is not the interval between objects and it is not spatiality; it is better conceived as an all-pervasive, all-penetrating, sub-atomic plenum." This notion is basic to the understanding of Tsogyel's sadhana (her spiritual practice). Her aim in life was to reduce, or rather expand, her reality to primal space. The four visions which she begins to cultivate after her Fourth Initiation refer to four degrees of increasing intensity and duration of the experience of primal space. Guru Rinpoche calls the goal, 'total immersion in the dynamic of empty reality where all realities are extinguished'. 'Total immersion' could be more loosely rendered 'stuffed head to toe', indicating a certain violence and directness to a process which is fraught with danger. The yogas that induce the vision of dissolution of corporeality into primal space are togal practices.

The four visions of togal are 'reality manifest', 'intensive visionary experience', 'optimal Knowledge' and 'all reality extinguished' (Chapter 7, n. 28). When the space in experience is intuited 'reality manifests'. As reality becomes increasingly illusory with the loss of any fixed point of reference, visionary and extra-sensory experiences occur. Unified on a psychic plane with other beings' minds and all natural phenomena, living in a dream-like state where the impossible is a matter of everyday occurrence, visionary experiences intensify. With the achievement of optimal Knowledge nothing arises in the mind, or in the sphere of the yogin's activity, which is not cognised as primal purity. Individualised being is identified with universal being. In a state of complete equanimity where pleasure and pain are of one taste, and passions arise with only a distinction in their colour and the purpose for which they are intended, it would be a boring existence except for the feeling tone of pure pleasure which is likened to the quality of feeling in sexual consummation. When all reality is extinguished, corporeality has dissolved, and the siddha attains the capacity to manifest in whatever form is necessary - shape shifting; but Tsogyel's practice is consummate now, and at will she can vanish from the human world and become united with her Guru on the plane of lotus-light. Thereafter she can project emanations in human and

inanimate form to enlighten others.

Tsogyel's secret precepts (man-ngag), given to Ma Rinchen Chok before she lost her apparitional reality and became Vajra Yogini in visionary being, string together several metaphors descriptive of the total visions. She begins by implying that the adept's recognition of Yeshe Tsogyel (the Ocean of Awareness) as the universal Dakini, who lives in all our minds projecting the psychoorganism and the sensory fields, is like an initiation into this total vision. 'The one naked mind arising from within, the absolute Awareness of primal purity (which is the sameness of all phenomena) is all-pervasive, and dammed like a lake the golden-eyed fishes of heightened perception multiply. Sustaining the consummation of visionary experience and pleasure, on the wings of perfect creativity, running and jumping in the meadows of visionary appearances, you fly into the sky-matrix and vanish. In the immense space of absolute Awareness the seedessence of pure pleasure stands thick like a lake, Pure Being and SeedEssence glisten and pulsate, and seedsyllables and light garlands sparkle and shimmer, the vision of reality manifest expands, intensive visionary experience increases and the castle of optimal Knowledge is finally seized.' This is not only a poetical expression of the four visions; it is a metaphysical statement, and also precise instruction on the practice. Unfortunately the precision of the terminology is lost in translation, as only the superficial meaning is rendered into English. It should be noted that there is no mention of extra-sensory perception and mundane siddhi. The purpose of practice is Buddhahood, gnostic perception and pure pleasure. Various powers may arise on the way, but they are incidental to the final goal.

In this description of total visions our feet are no longer on the ground. Indeed, the ground has dissolved into space, our bodies are immaterial lightform, the laws of karma no longer apply, 'there is no good or bad karma, no superior or inferior beings, no youth or age, no acuity or dullness'; we have entered a mystical pureland that is described in terms reminiscent of the ravings of an habitual user of the psychedelic LSD. Good karma may have given us glimpses of this pureland at moments of extraordinary intensity, lucidity and concentration, or our meditation may have produced short periods of such heightened experience, but without doubt those who have

experienced the effects of psilocybin, peyote and mescaline can find clear descriptions of their own 'trips' in the literature of Dzokchen. This reality is certainly far removed from our everyday experience, but it is the norm for the Dzokchen yogin and yogini. As all appearances are transformed into lightseed, 'corporeality dissolves'. As dualistic perception becomes direct, immediate sensory awareness, 'the mind is extinguished'. As the intensity of gnostic awareness burns away all our habitual action patterns and thought patterns, 'karma is exhausted'. When 'all reality is extinguished' there is no language left. When Guru Rimpoche exhorts Tsogyel to 'bathe in the seed-sphere of pure potential', he introduces the concept descriptive of the Dzokchen yogin's mode of action, which is 'noaction'. But rather than employ the paradoxical term noaction, I have translated bya-bral as 'pure potential'. In the nondual realm of Dzokchen Ati there is no 'birth or death', 'creation or cessation' 'beginning or end', and, further, there is noaction. This does not imply that there is no movement, and although it does imply that there is no busy-ness, involvement in worldly concerns and neurotic hassles, that is not the chief thrust of its meaning. Rather, the term suggests the transcendence of both action and stasis. Thus we have 'spontaneous noaction' in the Dakini Sky-dancer's Paradise (mKha'-spyod), or better, 'spontaneous pure-potential'. Since nothing ever comes into being or ceases to be there is constant transformation of one form into another in a spontaneous movement of flux which is pure potential. The term 'noaction' is probably derived from the Taoist notion wu-wei; Taoist concepts arrived in Dzokchen metaphysics via the Chinese ch'an school.

Tsogyel's parinirvana, her final release from the wheel of rebirth, is simultaneous with the dissolution of her corporeality and the attainment of her equivalent of rainbow body. At the yogin's attainment of rainbow body, the body dissolves into light, and leaving hair, finger nails and the nasal septum behind, spirals up into the sky. This is the ultimate goal of Dzokchen. But she did obtain Buddhahood in her human form as Guru Rimpoche promised her. With 'the extinction of all reality' she was able to manifest in whatever form the needs of sentient beings required and still require. In The Life death is the metaphor for the attainment of Buddhahood. In Tantra samsara and nirvana are terms descriptive of the mind attached to its own forms, and the mind in a state of stasis respectively. Mahanirvana, the Great

Nirvana, or the Ultimate Nirvana, is the nondual state which is the Dzokchen yogin's aim. Tsogyel uses a variety of metaphors to describe mahanirvana. She is absorbed into primal space, the omnipresent ground (kungzhi); her mortality has become immaculate (zag-med), or all her outflows have ceased; her illusory body has been transfigured into a body of light; she has melted into the primal syllable A; mother and son, the outside and inside, have finally united. Further, she has vanished into the lotus-light of the plenum of primal space (dharmadhatu); she has gone to the land of pure pleasure; she has passed into the sky; she has attained the 'white' evolutionary goal, united with Pema Jungne. Dzokchen yogins and yoginis all become one with Guru Pema and Yeshe Tsogyel respectively after attaining their goal. Thereafter, with the Guru and Dakini, they manifest multiple apparitional forms in the continuous process of transforming, or converting, beings until all sentient beings have achieved Buddhahood and the Buddha's ultimate goal is attained.

Through the practices of togal we have arrived at the end of the path to Buddhahood. Trekchod atiyoga practices alone can be the preliminary, purificatory stage on the path to rainbow body, but in most teachers' methods of approach to Dzokchen, mahayoga and anuyoga, or one or the other, are essential preliminary yogas. Both mahayoga and anuyoga can take the yogin or yoginf to the end of the path, but usually they are practised in sequence. In general, the practice of the creative process of meditation is stressed in mahayoga and the practice of the fulfilment process of meditation is stressed in anuyoga. In terms of the mandala, an internal, ideal, three dimensional model of psychophysical reality, creative processes cultivate centrifugal or efferent energy, and fulfilment processes cultivate and utilise centripetal or afferent energy. Centrifugal energy can be characterised as sexual energy in so far as it is creative desire; it tends towards structure, rigidity and concrete manifestation. Centripetal energy is the dynamic of the 'death wish', tending towards inchoate essence, deconstructurisation and dissolution. In Dzokchen this duality is not tolerated, and rather than practise the cultivation of these energies in sequence they are practised simultaneously. Thus 'simultaneous creative and fulfilment processes' is an oft repeated precept in atiyoga. Likewise, referring to the creative process yoga of emanating and reabsorbing light, in Dzokchen, when the Lama is conceived only as



the lucence of Knowledge, 'When the peak experience of vast space dawns, centrifugal diffusion and centripetal re-absorption are one' (p. 159). Such statements should clarify the relationship between mahayoga and anuyoga on one hand and Dzokchen atiyoga on the other. However, mahayoga contains elements of fulfilment processes and anuyoga contains elements of creative processes. For example, the rite of visualising a mandala (creative meditation) concludes with dissolution of the mandala into Emptiness (fulfilment meditation); and in the fulfilment process of realising the psychic nerves and energy flows, they must first be visualised in a creative process.

The creative process (bskyed-rim) consists chiefly in the creative visualisation and realisation of a mandala with its principal deity and his entourage, and then modifying the mandala in various ways to effect changes in the quality and form of the yogin's psyche and perception. 'Approach' and 'identification' (bsnyen-sgrub) are two stages in the creative process. The deity is invited to approach and take his place in the mandala by means of visualisation and recitation - visualisation of the deity's form and qualities and recitation of his mantra. Mudra, mantra and samadhi co-operate to effect identification of the sadhaka with the deity. Mudra implies certain ritual hand gestures, and also the posture of the body; mantra is the audial form of the deity; and samadhi is the empty state of mind. Guru-yoga, a liturgical ritual is included in The Life in Tsogyel's final instruction to her disciples, is a creative process yoga, involving invocation of the Buddha Lama, recitation of his mantra and identification with him. The basic practices of the Sublime Accomplishment of the Eight Logos Deities (scrub-pa bka'-brgyad) are mahayoga meditations in which the mandalas of these deities are realised through the creative processes of visualisation and recitation. The creative process rites of these deities are highly sophisticated.

Anuyoga and the fulfilment processes of meditation form a vast area of ignorance in academic study. The Life provides crucial clues and insights into the language of the yoga, its techniques and metaphysics. As little as possible should be said here to prevent preconceptions that would inevitably cloud the mind of a student approaching a Guru for anuyoga precepts. The following are some of the fulfilment processes of meditation (dzok-rim, rdzogs-rim): dream yoga, mystic heat, bardo

yoga, mahamudra, apparitional body purification, resurrection, the clear light yoga and 'the seedessence of empty pleasure'. Virtually all fulfilment processes involve visualisation of psychic nerves, energy flows and seedessence, and some definition of this terminology will give perspective on anuyoga; and since the yoga of empty pleasure is Tsogyel's chief practice, an important approach to Dzokchen and the crux of sexual practice, something more should be said of it.

The system of nerves, energy flows and their focal points has a parallel in the body's physiology and also in the mental sphere, for the subtle, the gross and the mental inter-relate. The word for psychic nerves (rtsa, nadi) is the same as for veins and arteries, and for tendons and muscles. In Tsogyel's physical purification the gross body was to be brought into top condition in order for the subtle body to function effectively. Just as sinews, veins, nerves, and psychic nerves or pathways, are denominated by a single word, so wind, breath, vital energy, nervous energy, and mental energy are also implied by one word - clung. Thus the term rtsa-rlung (the yoga of energy control, or hathayoga) does not specify whether the plane of 'pathways' and 'energies' indicated belongs to the physical, subtle or mental bodies. There are no single verbal equivalents of rtsa and clung in English, so that when rtsa is translated as 'psychic nerves', and clung as 'energy flows', it is important to remember that a whole spectrum of meaning may be implied; in particular clung often implies both 'breath' and 'subtle energy', like the Sanskrit word prana. The implications of the multi-levelled denotations of clung are central to anuyoga practice: breathing controls subtle energy, and subtle energy controls thought; and conversely, when thought subsides, the physical body becomes an instrument capable of immense responsiveness.

The focal points of energy (cakras), the medial nerve, which is described as running down the spine, and also the left and right psychic nerves, the rasand and lalana, may be conceived as neuro-physiological phenomena that may be scientifically verified when science has improved its techniques. Undoubtedly kundalini has a physiological aspect, as energy can be felt rising up the spine in kundalini yoga; and in theory the principal glands can be related to the five or eight focal points of energy. But when in fulfilment meditation the yogin is directed to mix the psychic energies of his right and left

nerves in the medial nerve and retract the red and white bodhicitta mixture up through the energy centres, his visualisation will function on a purely metaphysical level and the result will be unification of subjective and objective poles of his sense fields in a unitary plenum of reality. Moreover, no purpose is served by analysing and comparing different systems of rtsa-rlung, and attempting to formulate a coherent metaphysical system. Each tantra has its own correspondences and symbology, and often it is the relationship between symbols that is significant rather than the relation of the symbol to its meaning. To attempt to rationalise anuyoga precepts is to invite insanity, or, finally, to transcend conceptual thought and stop thinking. However, the fact remains that anuyoga precepts and practices are eminently efficacious; fulfilment process yogas are a high-speed short-cut to Buddhahood.

The same qualities of supra-logic, multi-levelled meaning and effectiveness characterise precepts concerning 'seedessence' (thig-le, bindu). The gross form of seedessence as defined in *The Life* is 'lymph',<sup>11</sup> the clear white viscous liquid that in Tibetan medicine is considered one of the basic constituents of the body. Stored at the joints, when 'lymph' is purified it becomes the seedessence that is to be conceived as particles, or mandalas, of light and consciousness. Just as 'lymph' pervades the body, so seedessence forms a dimension of Awareness (ye-shes, jnna) inherent in the psychoorganism. Seedessence (thig-le) is also semen virile, and purified 'semen' is Awareness. This following theory of the generation of semen and its concomitant gnostic awareness should be judged by its effectiveness in provoking recognition of the hierarchical relation of body and mind, the gross and the subtle, and the all-pervasive cognitive element in the nature of all things, and not as a scientifically verifiable medical thesis. 'The nutrition extracted from food in the stomach passes through the "vein which seizes the distilled essence" to the liver, where it is assimilated by bile, phlegm and air (the three humours). Refined nutrition forms blood, and refined blood forms flesh while the unrefined blood forms bile. Refined flesh forms fat, and unrefined flesh is excreted through the nine orifices. The distilled essence of fat forms bones, and unrefined fat forms grease and sweat. Refined bone forms marrow, and unrefined bone forms nails, teeth and hair. Refined marrow forms semen or menstrual blood (conceived as female creative seed), while the unrefined marrow forms the flesh around the anus.

Refined semen is stored in the heart centre as "radiance", which produces long-life and gives a shine to the complexion. Unrefined semen is excreted during sexual intercourse and is, of course, procreative seed. The refined semen in the heart centre permeates the body as Awareness; "heart centre" is here a metaphor for the all-pervasive sphere of essential being (dharmakaya). Loss of semen, by any means, causes lifespan to be shortened and causes a pallid complexion.'<sup>12</sup>

In anuyoga, though not in Dzokchen atiyoga, loss of semen is equated with killing a Buddha. Semen, seedessence and bodhicitta are synonymous. After initiation, intensity of desire is essential to force the bodhicitta up the medial nerve; not only is desire vitiated by orgasm, but the will to enlightenment itself is temporarily lost. Once practice is perfected, and on the level of atiyoga the one value of all things (ro-gcig) is perceived automatically, retention or non-retention of semen is no longer a pertinent issue; but directly after the Third Initiation and immersion in practice, release of semen utterly destroys the samaya. 'Absorb yourself in desire,' Tsogyel instructs, 'for without it (this) Tantra has no meaning - desire as pure pleasure is the goal fulfilled.' Desire has become Awareness at initiation, and the feeling quality of Awareness is pure pleasure. Desire has lost its external reference and become empty desire and empty pleasure: thus 'the seedessence of coincident Emptiness and desire'. To understand the nature of the experience subsequent to initiation, as 'the bodhicitta rises up the medial nerve', it is essential to overcome the formal, conceptual limitation of regarding the 'medial nerve' merely as a tube connecting the genital centre to the fontanelle. The medial nerve is also a metaphor for individuated primal space, and as desire-Awareness intensifies it is a sphere that is increasingly pervaded by pure pleasure; or it could be likened to a balloon that is inflated as the bodhicitta ascends to the head cakras where it finally bursts, primal space dissolving into more primal space.

The particular fulfilment process yoga practised by Tsogyel in Bhutan with her two yogin partners, practised by Sakya Dema in Nepal, and stressed by Tsogyel in her final instruction to her disciples, is called 'the yoga of coincident Emptiness and pleasure on the profound path'. 'Profound path' is zap-lam. It is also a practice on the

'path of skilful means', because sexual energy creates the motivation and supplies the wherewithal. Strip the yoga of its arcane terminology and there is a simple meditation technique: stimulate desire and then use it as the object of meditation and it becomes Awareness - a field of Emptiness and pure pleasure. From the Guru's point of view, the Dakini herself is this dance of reality, both as an individuated being and as pleasure inseparable from gnostic awareness of phenomena. From the Dakini's point of view all form is the Guru's Body, all sound is his Speech and all Mind is his Mind, and his Knowledge is Emptiness and pure pleasure. Whatever the denomination of the energy in the ascendant (rjes-chags), call it lust, love, the afterglow, or 'memory of desire', it is nonreferential and therefore totally free from personal association; whether or not an embodied 'mystic partner' is present to intensify desire and stimulate the bodhicitta, there is no trace of hedonistic indulgence. Sexual pleasure as erotic play, intimate dalliance, orgasm or even coitus interruptus has no place in this yoga. The equation of sexual indulgence and the Buddhist Tantra has been formed by misguided, commercially motivated individuals pandering to the prurient neuroses of the sexually jaded seeking titillation in the arcane sex of obscure religious cults. 'Do not be loose with your sexual organs,' advises Tsogyel. 'Bind them fast.' And 'Preserve the seed of kindness for the sake of other beings.' No zap-lam sexual yoga can be accomplished without attaining control of energy on every level - a traditional metaphor compares the muscular control of a yogin or yogini sucking up the blended bodhicittas, and retracting the elixir from the sexual centre, to a duck drinking water. If such proficiency is lacking the practice should not be undertaken.

In general, the precept governing sexual activity is the Bodhisattva Vow, the will towards universal happiness. Tsogyel married a leper and performed the duties of a model wife, and in so far as selfless sexuality and heightened sensory awareness are the keys to sexual satisfaction, and in so far as the female partner is a Dakini, that leper must have been a very happy leper. We may all marry Dakinis, and lepers; but aspiring to the reality of a Dzokchen yogin in which the one-taste of every sensual perception is pure pleasure, and no situation whatsoever has a higher Emptiness content than any other, to indulge in promiscuous sexuality is generally counter productive. The only motivations for sexual intercourse prescribed by the tradition are to

project an apparitional being out of lotus light as an incarnation of Guru or Dakini, to initiate a neophyte in the Third Initiation, or to effect certain other alchemical transformations that involve blending the white and the red bodhicittas.

A most remarkable example of the use of sex for the benefit of others is provided by Tsogyel when she initiates the rapists who successively abuse her. Much wisdom can be extracted from the song she sings to them (pp. 118-19). (1) In the first place, she shows what great power the Dakini possesses over men, and in their dependence upon her how their need can be used for their own good. The desire that arises upon apprehending an attractive woman in the visual field can transform a man into a god if his desire is penetrated by insight into Emptiness; divine confidence creates a divine environment populated by gods and goddesses. The woman, or rather, the Dakini, transforms the man who lusts after her into her Guru, the man of her dreams. (2) In this context, as in many other passages in *The Life*, mahamudra has a technical meaning distinct from its usage in the Kahgyupa School where it denominates the goal of practice synonymous with Buddhahood and virtually equivalent to Dzokchen. Here mahamudra indicates the totality of the unitary field of reality in its female aspect. (3) It is the Dakini's nature of complete receptivity, empty space, that assuages male aggression; and it is the female organ's 'empty space' that is receptive to the symbol of his aggression. The mandala is completed as the Yidam deity takes up residence in his palace; and joy and pleasure, serenity and peace, are the hallmarks of the Guru's experience of mahamudra after the Mystic Initiation. (4) Through 'involuntary exertion' ('noaction') desire reaches its climax, and it is at the moment of climax that pure pleasure is understood as Emptiness; insight into Emptiness is achieved in the union of the male and female aspects of the mind and of being itself. The experience of Emptiness is a function of the unitary field of reality, which in this case is a result of sexual consummation. (5) Even the uninitiated can gain intimation of pure gnostic awareness in the post-coitus hiatus, when our 'mystic partner' and all external phenomena seem to float in space, and sound has a clarity and timbre unrecognised in ordinary perception. The samaya of the Fourth Initiation is to sustain this experience of 'the natural purity in the world of appearances', and the samaya of zap-lam is to sustain recognition of the Emptiness in the

desire that has been transformed into Awareness by the intensity of pure pleasure. Thus whatever arises in the fields of perception is cognised as primal space, and desire itself is the path so long as it is recognised as Emptiness: this is Maha Ati, Dzokchen, the starting point, the path and the goal.

In the final stanza of Tsogyel's explanation of the four levels of joy to the enlightened rapists, she stresses the crucial element of spontaneity in the initiation that they had just experienced. Seeking makes the path grow darker; trying to grasp the nature of mind stimulates conceptual thought; clutching at some little success it vanishes, and trying to perpetuate passing intimations of immortality in meditation guarantees the loss of them. Therefore, the only precept concerning Action in trekchod practice is 'imperturbable relaxation', for in that lies the potential for spontaneity. 'Inasmuch as the Guru appears only for an instant, there is only an instant to enter the door of the mysteries,' the Dakinis instructed Tsogyel in the pureland of the Orgyen Dakinis. 'In so far as we have obtained this precious human body for a moment, only a moment exists to celebrate the path.' In the transcendental metaphysics of Dzokchen a 'life' is also a moment, so the promise that the Inner Tantras will effect Buddhahood 'in this life, in this body' is given added meaning. 'Release from the wheel of rebirth' now implies that identification with the omnipresent, universal foundation (kungzhi), that is primal space, is achieved, and in every instant of existence there is spontaneous release from both samsara and nirvana. There is no possibility of deliberating upon the method and the aim, the mind is too slow, and therefore redundant. In each instant is a flash of spontaneous creativity emanating our personal reality in the form determined by bodhicitta. This vision depends upon the emphatic, basic premise of Dzokchen that all things are in reality dynamic space, primally pure from the beginning and through eternity. 'All things' include the rape of Tsogyel (and all rape in general), but it requires a Dakini, or Guru, to initiate recognition of our premise existentially. Imperturbably relaxed, Tsogyel was capable of the requisite spontaneity.

Some brief description of the terminology of the fulfilment process and a general elucidation of zap-lam is all that can be included here of anuyoga. The practices of the creative and fulfilment processes of

meditation are the result of the combined practical wisdom of generations of yogins, scholars and monks of Greater India and Tibet, with some help from the Chinese, obsessively analysing human beings in the laboratories of hermitage and monastery, and through experimentation arriving at a transcendental psychology consistent with Sakyamuni Buddha's precepts and goal. A large descriptive and prescriptive literature, much of it translated from Sanskrit, elaborates this psychology, and liturgies of meditation (sgrubthabs, sddhana) and manuals of yoga (khrid) elucidate the practices and formally re-state the oral precepts of the Guru. A tiny fraction of this knowledge has been translated into English and very few western practitioners have experience of fulfilment processes. At the moment it is impossible to evaluate comprehensively and objectively this science of the mind that has been formulated, refined and augmented by a hundred and eight Buddhas; but from Tsogyel's life, and from personal experience, it is clear that the meditations and yogas of the Inner Tantra (anuttarayogatantra) comprise a vast wealth of psychotherapeutic technique that can provide the remedies to many of humanity's anxieties.





# WOMAN AND THE ḌĀKINĪ

'Do not question woman. Adore her everywhere. In her real nature she is Bhagavati Perfection of Wisdom; and in this empirical world Bhagavati has assumed the form of woman.' Tantric metaphysics are derived principally from the Prajnaparamitasutras, and this prajnaparamita sloka clearly states the tantric view that there is no distinction between the ultimate metaphysical nature of woman and the relative human reality. Woman is the Dakini and is to be worshipped as such. Further, the Prajnaparamita gave Tantra the concept of woman as the Perfection of Wisdom, perfect insight (shes-rab, prajna), which is defined as 'awareness of all phenomena as Emptiness'. However, in Tantra, since 'Emptiness is not separate from form, nor form from Emptiness', this Awareness that is the Dakini is the nondual, gnostic awareness of which the male principle manifest as form is an aspect. Thus the totality of reality as Awareness can be represented by the Dakini alone, or it can be indicated by the inseparable union of male and female principles. In the latter case the Dakini's perfect insight into Emptiness is in contradistinction to skilful means (thabs, upaya), the Guru's evercompassionate, dynamic motivation that manifests as phenomenal appearances. When the Dakini alone is all-embracing Awareness (mahajnana, ye-shes-chen-po), she is the blissful cosmic dance of illusion. The existential experience of the Dakini is one, but the multiplicity of means to attain that experience,' and the different ways of conceiving the inexpressible, create a seemingly complex metaphysics.

After that attempt to clarify basic concepts, it is relevant to ask the question, has woman been arbitrarily assigned these existential values, or do Emptiness and Awareness relate to her essential nature? According to the metaphysical systems that frame the psychological insights of numerous ancient cultures, the physiological-sexual and psychological nature of woman is receptivity. The quality of receptivity, 'an enveloping openness', is evident in tantric symbols of the goddess: the lake, the well, the empty vase, and most graphically and ubiquitously, the yoni (vagina).

In so far as Tantra takes sexual processes as analogous to spiritual processes and relates sexual principles to mystical principles, if the essential nature of woman's anatomy and of her sexual response is receptivity, then receptivity can define the female principle. Receptivity is a condition of awareness of empty form. Practically, in the yogin's meditation upon Emptiness, receptive relaxation is imperative; in total mental relaxation, consciousness perched at the doors of the senses achieves perfect insight into the forms of perception (vipasyana meditation). These forms of perception, into which perfect insight is achieved, are the compassionate forms of the Guru's skilful means. In the same way that the female's sexual receptivity invites the male's creative sexual activity, the Dakini's mental receptivity facilitates her perfect insight into the Guru's dynamic forms, and the resulting union is of Emptiness and form, perfect insight and skilful means, Awareness and compassion.

Expressed in terms of receptivity, Awareness and Emptiness, the female principle may appear irrelevant to woman herself conscious of her human condition. But it cannot be sufficiently stressed that in the realm of tantric practice there is no distinction between woman in her everyday reality and the allinclusive divine female archetype that permeates her being and dominates her mind (the Yidam Vajra Yogini, for instance). Every woman is the Dakini. Her third initiation is the empowering recognition of that fact, and her post-initiation practice is the sadhana (spiritual practice) of maintaining and substantiating the Dakini's Awareness. Whether or not woman knows herself as the Dakini, the Guru and yogin see her only in her divine form. A yogin can evaluate the maturity of his practice by judging the constancy and depth of his vision of woman as the Dakini. That is not to say that he should see every woman as Tara, the goddess of devoted service (although he should be able to discern that syndrome in every woman to some degree), for there are innumerable types of Dakini, even as many as there are psychological types of woman. The tantric pantheon includes eldritch blood-sucking, flesh-eating and child-devouring Dakinis, binding, beating and destructive Dakinis, besides the sublime consorts of the Bodhisattvas. The constant in the adept's vision of them all is their empty dance of Awareness, whereas the mutable forms of their dances, and their functions, are like make-up and ornaments.

It is already clear that 'Guru' and 'Dakini' are internal metaphysical realities. Evidently each human psyche contains both male and female principles; the male principle and its qualities are recessive in woman and the female recessive in man, even as the Dakini's dominant Emptiness cannot be separated from the recessive skilful means, which is ever present but unstressed. In the symbology of anuyoga, both the white and red elixirs run in the psychic veins of both men and women, although the Guru's complexion is white while the Dakini's is red. In atiyoga, when the recessive and dominant are nicely balanced, the elixirs are blended and the complexion of the Dakini is 'blushing fair'. When an anchorite or a monk or nun describes his or her state of being as a union of Guru and Dakini obviously there is no equation of Guru with man nor Dakini with woman. But when yogin and yogini are described as Guru and Dakini cohabiting in perfect awareness and pure pleasure in a Buddhafield, this lay tantrika couple are projecting their recessive principles upon their partners. Or to formulate it in another way, when man and woman, yogin and yogini, recognise he the Emptiness of her and she the compassion of him, their relationship is a union of Guru and Dakini. The emotional vicissitudes of their personal relationship, the love and hate, the pride and jealousy, are the Dakini's fine ornaments, while the gamut of response that she inspires in him are reflected in her face and in her stance.

In relation to the yogin practitioner the female principle may be conceived in four modes which are known as mudras (Chapter 4, n. 8). Maintaining the integrity of union with these four mudras sustains the samaya of the Guru's Speech which is identity with the Yidam. These mudras are best conceived as lovers with whom the yogin must retain an unbroken intimate, intense and true relation wherein no trace of doubt or infidelity arises. The first is the samaya-mudra, the verbal promise to keep the root and branch samayas. The second is the Guru's Consort herself in whom is embodied the five Dakini modes of Awareness. A consort is a Dakini by virtue of her involvement in a moment, or rather an unbroken succession of moments, of integration and enlightenment. In fact, rather than define the Dakini as a human being, she is better understood as a moment's intuition of the Emptiness and purity in passion when perfect insight and skilful means integrate. The third mudra is hand gesture and posture, and the relationship with her is maintained by practising according to the

Guru's instruction. The fourth is mahamudra; she is inconceivable, since she is an anthropomorphic representation of Emptiness - transforming, magical illusion, pure, allinclusive sensual Awareness.

It can be useful here to distinguish between the siddha-adept's view of the Dakini and the neophyte or yogin-practitioner's experience. To the former, a woman is the Dakini, but even in a sexual situation she is of no higher order of Dakini, or source of visionary instruction, than any other complex of sensory stimuli. This is no slur on woman but rather a manner of evincing the constancy of a siddha's feeling tone of pure pleasure no matter what the content of his perceptual situation. There are no degrees of Emptiness for him. For the initiate on his way to the centre of the mandala, however, a woman as a karmamudra of Awareness is a guardian of the mysteries, a guide through the doors of the mandala, a bestower of initiation, and the object of the initiation itself. She provides the first glimpses of a nondual reality; she reveals what is the Emptiness of phenomenal appearances; she demonstrates the dance of magical illusion. Such experiences may be related to a particular woman until the initiation is complete, or knowledge of the Dakini may be limited to a succession of encounters with many women, or the Awareness Dakini may never embody herself in a human woman, and in the latter case experience of her need be no less intense or efficacious.

Thus it should be clear that although woman is the Dakini, it is not woman as a discrete isolate in time and space. It is not the concept 'woman' that men usually project upon the Dakini-woman who is a total experience of empty form, taste, touch, smell and sound. Due to our conditioned craving for the security of the concrete, our desire to possess something or someone tangible, and any of a welter of causes derived from uncontrolled emotivity, the mind fabricates an objective delusion and reifies it as woman, or at least all women are perceived through this screen of delusion. From the point of view of ignorance where the Dakini is not recognised at all, woman is a symbol of the Dakini, and further, if the aspirant cannot achieve the samaya of union with a Dakini and know her directly he can project his vision of the Dakini upon her and worship her, adoring her as a goddess. This last is the way of kriyayoga-tantra, in the Outer Tantra.

Finally, in the nondual reality of Buddhahood all phenomenal appearances are space and Emptiness on one hand and magical illusion, fairyland, and the reflection of the moon in water on the other hand. Understanding this, following Tsogyel, a yogini-practitioner will know that her bodymind is empty of a substantial, discrete 'ego' and that her individual personality is an integral part of a dynamic field of relativity encompassing all living beings, embodied and disembodied, in all time and space. And detached from that field, identifying with the constant 'suchness' of experience, dynamic primal space, with Tsogyel she can then say 'I am the principal of the whole of samsara and nirvana... I live in the minds of all sentient beings, projecting myself as the elements of the bodymind and the sensefields, and by secondary emanation projecting the twelve interdependent elements of existence' (p. 159). Or, identifying with the empty ground of her own being she discovers the universal ground of relativity that spontaneously emanates the universal illusion. This universal illusion is her Guru: his body is phenomenal appearances; his speech is all sound; and his Mind (thugs) all Mind.

These visions of Guru and Dakini are quite different from the dictionary definition of Guru as a spiritual teacher, and the current occidental notions of a Dakini as an embodied goddess, or as a nubile, sexually available cult-follower. The exoteric meanings and connotations of the word Dakini in the common parlance of India, Nepal and Tibet cast another light upon her. Originally, it appears that the Buddhists borrowed the word from the sktatas, where in the cult of the Devi the Dakinis were flesh-eating attendants of Kali, who is the destructive aspect of Siva's consort. In the Hindu Tantra Kali vanquishes Siva and consumes him; the inert yogin beseeches the Goddess to cut out his heart, representing his ego, and to unite with him so that his passive consciousness is vitalised by her power (sakti) and awareness. As a popular cult goddess Kali bestows boons and favours upon those who make blood sacrifice to her; she is a blood-drinker. The fanatical devotees known as the thugs offered her human sacrifice until the Raj virtually eradicated the cult last century. Thus from the beginning the Dakinis were associated with the meta-psychotherapeutic function of ego destruction and the initiation of yogins into the mandala of purebeing, consciousness and ecstasy (satchitananda). Like the retinue of Kali, Vajra Yogini still carries the

hooked knife (gri-gu, karttari) aloft in her right hand to cut away belief in an ego and to rend the blinds of emotivity. In her left hand she holds a skull-cup to catch the blood of her victims.

As embodied beings the Dakinis were known as malicious witches performing no positive function, feared by all but siddhas. In contemporary India the word seems to be seldom used, and those who know it attach the same negative connotations. Similarly in Nepal, on the level of the uninitiated, the word dankini is used as an expletive or slur on a vile woman. It is also applied to a witch, an enchantress, a manipulator of the spirit world and a seductress who abuses her sexual powers. There are only a few Newari vajracaryas who know the esoteric meaning of the word. In Tibetan the word Khandroma (dakinr') is reserved as an epithet for the consorts of Lamas, esteemed yogins' consorts or for realised yoginis and tulkumas (female incarnations). In Tibet it is also a personal name.

A further important classification of Dakini is the fourfold personification of the Guru's karmas (or functions). These four activities may be conceived as the functions of the Dakinis in enlightening the initiate, in which case they may be performed by karma Dakinis (mundane or human Dakinis - rjig-rten-kyi mkha'-'gro), or they may be seen as the personifications of the Guru's enlightening skilful means. These four activities are pacifying, enriching, controlling and destroying. These karmas are employed only for the conversion of sentient beings, in their spiritual evolution, and for spreading the tantric doctrines. Pacification (zhi-ba) implies the calming of aggression or anger. Enrichment (rgyas-pa), or growth, development, potentiating, etc., is a function of a woman's motherliness, and its effects are a sense of security, optimism, strength and confidence. Then control (dbang-ba) is the function of the wrathful Dakini who firmly restrains futile emotivity and ratiocination. Destruction (drag-pa) may be performed by an aggressive woman who can undermine a yogin's conception of an objective reality, destroy his fixed beliefs, eradicate his pride and even crush his ego so that his way of being is radically and irrevocably changed. Destruction can also imply death. But these powers are all relative siddhis; the functions of the Dakini pall into irrelevance when compared to the intuition of her essential nature which leads to the ultimate siddhi, Buddhahood itself.

'Without karmamudra no mahamudra.' The nature of the yogini ideally suited as the Guru's consort is described by Guru Pema like this: 'she must be of good family, faithful and honour bound, beautiful, skilful in means, with penetrating insight, full of generosity and kindness; without her the factors of maturation and release are incomplete and the goal of tantric practice is lost from sight.' The phrase 'good family' may imply that this ideal Dakini should belong to one of the five principal Dakini families - lotus, jewel, vajra, karma or Buddha, rather than to a lower class of Dakini, such as 'ashen' or 'flesh-eating' types. But it also implies that she should be of high caste, or, in Tibet, of high class. The ladies who accompanied the Twentyfive Siddhas of Chimphu in their principal initiations were all highclass women. This injunction that the yogini should be of high caste conflicts with the prescriptions of some root tantras, and Indian practice, where low caste or outcaste women were preferred, a Candali, Dombhi or Savari, *etc.* When the Indian initiate belonged to a twice-born caste there is obvious motive for the Guru to employ an outcaste woman in the initiation rite; destruction of social conditioning, reduction of pride and cultivation of the wisdom of equality may result from such an association.' But practical considerations also necessitated the use of low-caste women. Rigid caste rules chained all but the most karmically-favoured high caste women to orthodox Brahmanism, while the moral and sexual prejudices of high-caste girls ill-fitted them for the role of Dakini in tantric ritual. On the contrary, outcaste girls were more promiscuous, uninhibited by Manu's laws, and further, since they would probably be of non-Aryan or Dravidian stock they could already be familiar with the Mother Goddess tradition from which Tantra sprung. In Tibet Tantra had the novel status of established religion, and was thus deprived of the negative social pressures that in India were conducive to the growth of the cult and the development of the individual.

Both in India and Tibet there was a custom for the initiate to offer the Guru a woman at initiation. Sometimes the woman would play a role in certain initiations.<sup>3</sup> For Naropa the act of giving his woman to Tilopa was in itself an act of self-denial, yet he said, 'Bliss is to offer unhesitatingly the mudra as fee to the Guru who is Buddha himself.'<sup>4</sup> Here the act of offering the karmamudra to the Guru is a skilful device provoking the emotional attachment that has as its real nature the



discriminating Awareness of Amitabha. Figuratively, the initiate is offering the karmamudra of perfect awareness of empty form to the Guru of skilful means to attain the bliss of spiritual wholeness. As the yoginis sing to Tsogyel when she marvels at their apparent stupidity at offering their physical body to Vajra Yogini, 'In so far as your perception of ultimate truth is instantaneous, it is as fast as a flash of genuine faith; if you fail to offer Awareness (the Dakini) to the Guru the moment it dawns, procrastinating, merit is lost.' And, finally, the disciple is offering to his Guru what is most dear to him as an act of worship and a demonstration of his devotion, and also as some small recompense for the Guru's great generosity in bestowing the initiation upon him. Trisong Detsen gave Tsogyel to Guru Perna as part of the initiation price.

When Naropa proves his blissful detachment to Tilopa, Tilopa praises him and then gives him instruction in mahamudra. 'You are worthy of eternal bliss, Naropa, on the path of infinite reality. Look into the mirror of your mind, mahamudra, the mysterious home of the Dakini.' Here the mirror of mind is the cognitive aspect of the universal plenum of nondual reality, and the Dakini is the flux of insubstantial reflection in the mirror. Mahamudra can be defined in the formula: nondual Knowledge (rig-pa) and pure pleasure (bde-chen) in a primal existential state of being (dharmakaya). An instant's experience of that naked existential reality as instructive, visionary lightform is Vajra Yogini (sambhogakaya); and if a karmamudra embodies the experience, she is the apparitional body (nirmanakaya) of the Dakini. Developing this thorough-going nondual (advaya) analysis further, since union with the karmamudra creates the pure pleasure of the dharmakaya and ultimately mahamudra, because all women are Dakinis, an intense, integral sexual encounter or relationship is a means to attain siddhi. Then sexual practice is tantra-yoga.

After Guru Perna had accepted Yeshe Tsogyel from the King Trisong Detsen, she was thoroughly instructed in the ontology and epistemology of the mahayana before he initiated her into the Tantra. Before he bestowed the three initiations he explained the nature of his desire, 'I am free of every germ of desire whatsoever; the aberrations of lust are absent.' Another Dzokchen Guru, the first and greatest of

the lineage, taught this precept and statement of the nature of his desire. 'Have no desire for what you see. Desire not; desire not. Desire; desire. Have no desire for desire. Have no desire for desire. Desire and freedom must be simultaneous.' It is in the third initiation rite and post-initiation practice that the karmamudra plays her part in formal tantric training; but in the space that the initiation reveals to the initiate, the nature of the Dakini is equivocal and ambiguous, never localised as a woman as conceived in dualistic ignorance.

The treatment of woman as an object that can be 'used' in tantric practice, and 'given' by disciple to Guru, and vice versa, and the language that describes woman as 'an ingredient of Tantra', may appear inconsistent with the admonition to 'adore woman everywhere'. However, such phraseology is merely semantic convention and does not reflect the Guru's attitude. In fact the woman is worshipped as the Dakini in rites in which she participates, and this worship should not stop when the rite is over. Lamas customarily treat women with great respect, in an exemplary fashion. Their treatment of women compares favourably with that of the hinayana bikkus who should disdain contact with women in obedience to their vinaya vows. Sakyamuni adamantly refused to ordain women until the last years of his life, fearing that they would bring the entire community into disrepute. His favourite disciple Ananda, who consistently fought the women's case, finally persuaded him to establish an order of nuns; their disciplinary code was even more rigid and extensive than the voluminous strictures governing the personal and social behaviour of the monks. We can only surmise that it was the very quality that Sakyamuni felt to be an impediment on the nuns' path that Guru Perna considered a valuable aid on the path of Tantra when he said, 'The gross bodies of men and women are equally suited (as temples of the Yidam), but if a woman has strong aspiration her potential (for existential realisation) is greater' (p. 86). A woman's greater capacity for sensation and feeling, her innate receptivity and her greater powers of intuition are obvious qualities that can define 'greater potential'. If a woman has a strong karmic propensity to selfabnegation, or sufficient lust to overcome instinctual desire for security and motherhood, if her aspiration is clearly defined, strong and constant, her natural capacity for Awareness can be potentiated with less difficulty than a man's. Even though she limits her options by choosing motherhood, she can still

utilise that karmic situation to attain the aim of Buddhahood; the stronger her attachment the greater potential energy to be directed as gakt► (the energy that vitalises and galvanises the yogin's kundalini). Further, motherhood can quicken her social virtues (the four stations of Brahm5),6 and cultivate compassionate skilful means, although in general, anuyoga characterises woman as passionate rather than loving, and it is a male Bodhisattva who symbolises compassion. Finally, in the mahayana it is said that woman should be considered pure as she is, and in the view of anuttarayogatantra both men and women are Buddhas from the beginning, through eternity; but with application of the Guru's skilful means, with a minimum of formal meditation, passively relaxing into her own receptivity, it is easier for a woman than a man to recognise our pristine existential condition: such is Guru Pema's implication.

Although the yogini may possess a few constitutional advantages in the Tantra, she is constrained by some severe handicaps. Tsogyel begs her Guru for initiation into the Dorje Phurba mandala, so that terrific deity may protect her from the stresses and strains, the demonic and aggressive forces, that her receptive nature naturally draws into her mandala. Social disapprobation, thieves and fornicators are Tsogyel's bane. In eighthcentury Tibet, Tsogyel would have been wandering in a predominantly Bon society, and it is certain that many Bonpos were hostile to the Buddhists. In Taksham's eighteenth-century Tibet, and throughout the sub-continent until the present day, hostility arose from disingenuous peasants incredulous of the nun or yoginis motivation, and believing that the robe was merely a cover for sloth and a trick to exploit hard-working people's charity. A Sanskrit adage has it, 'A woman is a thousand times more lustful than a man.' Consorting with her Guru, or a yogin, the yoginis motivation was in constant doubt, and ignorant of secret tantric samayas but knowing that nuns were pledged to celibacy, and aware of the notoriety of some nunneries, the layman was quick to cast aspersions upon an indiscreet female tantrika.

There is little evidence of suppression of women in the period of the kings. In fact the palace women, the queens and princesses, appear to have carried some weight in politics, in which they played an active part. But in an era of heroic warfare it is easy to conceive of a degree

of machismo prevalent in the menfolk. 'Even a woman can defeat you!' shouted the crowd at the Bon magicians after they had been discomfited by the Buddhists, Tsogyel amongst them. We do hear of Bon priestesses, however, and Tsogyel herself is proof of female participation in the most sacred and significant of her society's activities.

Tsogyel does not stress the danger of rape or theft, but like most yoginis she was confronted by both in her lifetime. It would appear that these tribulations of yoginis are universal and perennial. However, in Tantra personal vulnerability, such as that of a lone woman, presents important opportunities for exercising skilful means in conversion - pacifying, enriching, controlling or destroying. If a woman's rapists can be led to a profound recognition of their existential reality through the experience a woman gives them, there is no situation whatsoever that cannot be turned to advantage on the path. In this most poignant of all episodes in her life, Tsogyel not only demonstrates a valid and effective method of assimilating rape, but she shows how fortuitous sex can be an initiation with implicit formal stages. Tsogyel's method of making rape a positive experience was to accept the situation and then control it. Through visualisation identifying herself with Tara, the Goddess of Service, who is willing to do whatever is necessary to serve the Guru who is all sentient beings, the victim was transformed into the Saviouress. Unfortunately not all women have the Sakti that can raise a rapist's kundalini and propel him through the levels of bliss in such a way as to give him total realisation. But just as all women become Dakinis when relating to the Guru who sees them as such, here the rapists are transformed into the Dakini's Gurus by force of her visualisation of them. The Dakini sees all men as her Gurus; it is the sexual metaphor describing her lack of discrimination and her willingness to unite with all men that gives her a reputation for promiscuity. Lastly, confronting every situation on the path, both adversity and good fortune, with an equanimity that permits a spontaneous response free from fear and emotivity, seeing every moment through 'the third eye', the eye of nondual awareness, the Bodhisattva Vow (sems-hskyed) automatically motivates the Dakini's word and action.

The ambiguity of the word Dakini is amply demonstrated above;

perhaps there is error in attempting a too specific conceptualisation, for if the Dakini is caught on the point of a nice definition she becomes a dead concept. She belongs to the equivocal language of the twilight world, where she can make a mind-changing verbal impact. The Dakini remains a profound tantric mystery, an enigma that is only resolved upon initiation, when the yogin gains experiential understanding of her. In his introduction setting the stage for Tsogyel, Taksham is typically equivocal, 'It was this Buddha, then (Padma Sambhava), who served as skilful means to spread the Tantra. He had a greater number of accomplished mystical consorts than the number of sesame seeds (=tliig-le, seedessence) it takes to fill a room supported by four pillars (the four kayas), and all of them came from the Highest Paradise ('Og-min), to inhabit the cremation grounds, the heavens, the human world, the great power places, the saga realms and the realms of the celestial musicians. In this world of Jambudvipa, . . . he had not less than 70,000 accomplished girls, and among them were the five (nirmanakaya) emanations of Vajra Varahi (sambhogakaya), the five from whom he was never separated: the emanation of Varahi's Body, Mandarava, the emanation of her Speech, Yeshe Tsogyel, the emanation of her Mind, Sakya Dema, the emanation of her Quality, Kalasiddhi, the emanation of her Activity, Tashi Chidren (Khyidren),<sup>7</sup> and the emanation of her essential indefinable individuality, Khandro Wongchang (mKha-'gro dbang-'chang).' These six were the six aspects of his apparitional being (nirmanakaya). We know too little of the actual life stories of Kalasiddhi, Tashi Khyidren and Sakya Dema, and nothing at all of Khandro Wongchang, while concerning Mandarava there are several extant biographies and substantial mention of her in Guru Pema's own biographies. Here are brief sketches of the lives of the five.

Mandarava is the daughter of the King of Zahor,<sup>8</sup> born into the royal family of a small but strategic Himalayan Kingdom in the middle of the eighth century. She is born an Awareness Dakini (ye-shes mkha-'gro) and a prodigy. At marriageable age, like Tsogyel, she refuses all attempts to marry her, but fails to convince her father that she is destined to take ordination as a Buddhist nun. She serves the flesh of a Brahmin's corpse to her father to eat - a heinous offence - and then she absconds from the palace, assuming beggars' robes. After she had been ordained by the Abbot Santaraksita (also a native of

Zahor), her father comes to terms with his daughter's predilection for the religious life, and provides a palace for her meditations.

When Padma Sambhava, the youthful prince turned ascetic yogin, appears in Mandi from Orgyen, Mandarava is immediately entranced by him - she swoons as he floats up into the sky. As predestined, she becomes his disciple. But malicious gossip reports to the King that his daughter, the nun, is misbehaving herself with an unprincipled tantrika, and the outraged king is led to seize Guru Pema and burn him at the stake. The Guru is sustained by Dakinis, and the fire is transformed into a lake that smokes for seven days. On the eighth day the King finds Guru Pema as an eighty-year-old boy sitting upon a lotus in the middle of the lake.<sup>9</sup> Mandarava has been thrown into a pit covered with thorns. Most thankful to find his daughter still alive, the King reunites her with Guru Pema and worships them both. Until the Guru goes to Tibet it appears that he and Mandarava are inseparable.

The Guru remains some time in Zahor, and after having converted the populace, he and his consort go to the Maratika Cave at Heileshe in Nepal (near Lamidada, east of Okhuldunga) where they practise the yoga of immortality in the mandala of Amitayus, Guru Pema attaining the level of Knowledge Holder of Immortality (tshe'i dbang-la rig-'dzin). From Nepal they travel to Bangala where Mandarava is transformed into the Cat-faced Dakini, and assists in the conversion of the country (early Pala Bengal). Returning to his homeland, because no prophet is recognised in his own land, he is again burnt at the stake, this time with Mandarava, and again they are unharmed. Thereafter Mandarava becomes Queen of the Orgyen Dakinis - Orgyen is the Pureland of the Dakinis, a nirmariakaya Buddhafield. Towards the end of Mandarava's life she appears to Tsogyel while the latter is meditating at Phukmoche, and requests Tsogyel to teach her the twenty-seven secret precepts that Guru Pema had not taught in India, a rare admission that the Nyingma doctrines contained precepts that had no Indian antecedents.

The image of the fire and immolation appears twice in this legend. In the first instance, sustained by Dakinis Guru Pema alone is rejuvenated; the fire of the Dakini in the belly melts the concrete view of reality centred in the head, and in the lake of Emptiness that results

grows the lotus of compassion wherein sits a resplendent, virgin youth embodying the miraculous psychic qualities of prepubescence. The essential existential cause of this transformation is the passion of the Guru's relationship with Mandarava. In the meantime Mandarava was sitting in meditation in a pit - a symbol of the universal yoni. In the second instance the Guru and Dakini are burnt together. The fire of passion occurs repeatedly in tantric legend, signifying its important place in tantric practice. In general, the story of the yogin and yoginri's perambulation about India is an oft repeated spiritual love story.

This context offers an excellent opportunity to present the facts of Tsogyel's existence from a radically different standpoint. Stripped of the hagiographical trappings, what do we know, or what can we infer, of Tibet's greatest female mystic? When Tsogyel was about to leave this earth, asked by her disciples what they should tell posterity about her, she offers them some humanistic realism. First, she calls herself an 'unlovable spinster rejected by Tibetan men', and since the lack of physical attraction, real or imaginary, together with rejected love, are probably the two most common causes of women cloistering themselves for life, we are led to a possible inference that Tsogyel was only spiritually beautiful. Further, a sensitive young girl is wont to be resentful of being courted merely for her royal status and wealth. Rather than endure an arranged marriage she fled, an event not uncommon in contemporary India where the vision of nuptials with an unknown man inspires virgin horrors. Whichever way it was, we have Tsogyel fleeing to religion as an escape from a harsh world. She calls herself wanton, uninhibited, passionate and obstinate. Her wantonness is evinced by the quality of her erotic fantasies while in meditation at Nering in Bhutan, where she dreamed of verbal and physical seduction. But this should be considered normal for a nubile young woman deprived of all male company, and, likewise, the excessive sexual activity in which she indulged with three healthy young men in a further retreat is also a natural development. The purchase of a male slave smacks of Freudian fantasy. Her other sexual partners, the Emperor, who gave her a magnificent wedding, and the Indian Guru, were both much older than herself, and must have provided her with much mature experience. Her obstinacy and incorrigibility were probably her most unattractive qualities, but essential factors in her ability to endure three winters on the snowline with only intermittent

signs of success. It was a strong-willed adolescent who roundly cursed the minister Santipa as he performed his duty; and it was a mature woman who knew what she wanted and how to get it when she prevailed upon her Guru to give her the Dorje Phurba initiation after he had decided otherwise. Of her 'deceitfulness, propensities to intrigue and over-extend herself in power play', there is the evidence of the attempt upon her life and her subsequent banishment for causing conflict and schism within the government after the old king died, and the implications of her maintaining a relationship with the 'foreign devilpriest' against the wishes of the majority of ministers, and also of her evasion of the first sentence of banishment, with the connivance of the King, when she accompanied her Guru to Tidro. When the occasion demanded it she was quite capable of taking life while keeping her hands clean; the Bonpo leaders committed suicide at her behest. Towards the end of her life she succeeded in amassing a very large following and establishing several monastic establishments. She was the Emperor's priestess, the abbess of the principal monastic academies, and the Guru of many prominent figures in government. In the literary world she attained immortality by having a large proportion of Nyingma scriptures ascribed to her.

The above vignette, composed in samsara of samsara, is derived from internal evidence in *The Life*, which in general is written of nirvana in nirvana. The facts of Tsogyel's personal life are irrelevant; only her mythos has significance. Taksham's purpose was surely not to provide an objective statement of Tsogyel's life, but to use her life-story as a peg upon which to hang his purpose of throwing the reader out of his normal habits of thinking and being into a visionary realm of pure perception. Whether Tsogyel was a giant manipulative ego or a saint is irrelevant providing the reader gains some intimation of the Tantra (thread), in which moments of psychotropic experience are counted off like beads on a thread, each as a mystic union of Guru and Dakini.

Sakya Dema, or Sakya Devi, is Guru Pema's first Nepali consort. He finds her at Sankhu in the north-east corner of the Kathmandu Valley on his way to Tibet. A vihara of great antiquity, Sankhu sheltered pilgrims from Tibet en route to India. It was a vihara of master bronze smiths who were creating some of the finest art of Licchavi Nepal



about the time of Pema's visit. The shrine of Sankhu Bajra-Jogini is now dominated by a temple of Ugratara called Khadga Jogini (the Yogini of the Sword).<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the name Bajra-Yogini had its origin in Sakya Dema's association with the establishment. A local queen dies in childbirth and her corpse is taken to the cremation ground with her new-born daughter. The baby survives, suckled by monkeys, and grows up with them; but her hands and feet are webbed for she is an Awareness Dakini (ye-shes mkha'-'gro). Guru Perna finds her there and brings her to Pharping at the southern exit to the Valley, where at Yanglesho he performs his mahamudra meditation practice with her, utilising the mandalas of Yangdak and Dorje Phurba. This is all we know of ~akya Dema except that when Tsogyel visits Yanglesho some years later, the Guru's former consort is still living there as a yogini. The yogas which ~akya Dema relates to Tsogyel are the simultaneous creative and fulfilment processes of meditation that lead to mahamudra; the fulfilment process of 'burning and dripping'; the zaplam yoga of coincident pleasure and Emptiness; the togal yoga of the four visions leading to rainbow body; and sleep-yoga. A post-script to Sakya Dema's story is that some contemporary Tibetans believe that the Raj Kumari, the so-called Living Goddess of Basantapur Kumari Bahal in Kathmandu, is an emanation of the Goddess Sakya Dema.

Kalasiddhi is also born in Nepal. In ancient times Nepal was famous for its wool; Nepali blankets were sold in the market of Mauryan Pataliputra.<sup>11</sup> Kalasiddhi's parents are weavers. Her father and mother, Bhadana and Nagini, name their child Dakini. Like ~akya Dema she grows up in a place of the dead, her father having abandoned her in a charnel ground with her dead mother. Mandarava, in the form of a tigress, suckles the child while keeping the mother's corpse warm so that the child will still cling to it. When Dakini is old enough she spins cotton during the day and weaves it by night.<sup>12</sup> The fourteen-year-old Dakini is found by Tsogyel on her second visit to Nepal, where she comes to teach the Guru's secret precepts. Tsogyel names her Kalasiddhi: kala is the name of the substrata of the elements of the human body (bile, phlegm, semen, etc.) or 'atoms', and since Kalasiddhi belongs to the 'Body' family (kayakula) of Dakinis (and specifically to the conch type of Dakini, Samkini, which refers to the physical nature of the yoni), she will gain siddhi through realisation of the essential Emptiness of the 'atomic' structure of the body. In

Mangyul, across the Tibetan border upstream of the Triguli-kola, Kalasiddhi receives initiation into the Tantra Lama Mandala (gSangs-sngags bla-ma'i dkyil-d'khor) and after extensive meditation she gains siddhi. She accompanies Tsogyel to Mutri Tsenpo's court at Samye and to the retreat centre at Chimphu where she meets Guru Pema. The Guru immediately perceives Kalasiddhi's potential as a mudra in his practice to increase the Tantra in Tibet and asks Tsogyel to give her to him for that purpose. Very soon after, Guru Pema leaves for the South-west leaving Kalasiddhi in Tsogyel's care. It is to Kalasiddhi that Tsogyel gave the detailed zap-lam instruction as her parting gift.

Tashi Khyidren of Bhutan is a well-known folk-figure in western Bhutan, where she is known as Bhutan's gift to the Great Guru in his work of propagating the tantras in Tibet. One Bhutanese source relates that she was the daughter of the legendary Sindhu Raja, King of the Iron Palace (1Cag-mkhar rgyal-po), who invited the Guru to Bhutan (the Bumthang area) to cure his disease. Jamgon Kongtrul makes 'Tashi Khyeudren' (Khye'u-'dren - the preferred form of her name in Bhutan) and 'Tashi Chidren' two separate consorts of the Guru, informing us that the former was from Tsha-'og and the latter was the daughter of King Ha-mar or Hamra.<sup>13</sup>

The Life confirms that Tashi Khyidren was the daughter of King Hamra(s). At the age of thirteen she meets Tsogyel meditating in the Nering Drak Cave subjected to the wiles of the local spirits and demons. Full of admiration for the yogini, from time to time she brings her milk and honey. After Tsogyel has succeeded in subjecting the spirits and also the hostile local populace, Khyidren's father comes to pay her homage, and Tsogyel asks him to give her his daughter. King Hamra(s) obliges, and Tsogyel changes his daughter's name from Khyidren to Chidren, although Taksham still uses her former name. Soon after, Khyidren accompanies Tsogyel to Womphu Taktsang in Tibet, where she meets Guru Pema. He asks Tsogyel to give him Khyidren to perform as his mudra in the initiatory rites of Dorje Phurba, which he was to perform for the protection of Tibet. Khyidren plays an important role as the secondary consort of the Guru in this initiation. In the symbology of the Phurba-tantra, Khyidren is the tigress upon which Guru Pema and Tsogyel, as Phurba and Consort, ride to subject the gods and demons of Tibet. She remains a disciple of

Tsogyel for the remainder of the Dakini Guru's life. Khyidren is reborn as Machik Labdron's daughter.

Tsogyel lived during the climax of the Tibetan monarchy. Some years after her death there was a period of anarchy in Tibetan society out of which grew the roots of the theocratical system that was to develop and endure with various changes of direction until Mao's Chinese invasion. Despite the early political revolution there is little evidence of drastic social change in Tibet since Tsogyel's era. Except for some Indian, Mongol and Chinese influence, Tibet has remained socially isolated, and since Buddhism was assimilated underlying values have remained unaltered. The Buddhists (and Brahmins) teach the myth of an initial golden age, and a theory that recognises four ages, four stages in a process of inexorable decay from the glory of heaven on earth in the dharmayuga to the moral and physical corruption of the final cataclysmic kaliyuga in which we now find ourselves. These concepts imbue a profound conservatism and an intractable attachment to the status quo, so that the tendency is to conceive of any change as for the worse and to treat the past as a model for the present. After the end of the second period of propagation of the dharma (thirteenth century), the general bias was to consider foreigners, who inevitably brought new ideas with them, as harbingers of disaster. It was this xenophobic attitude, shared with the Chinese, that made Lhasa a forbidden city to the British Raj and gave Tibet a further century of moribund social and political existence. But the very isolationism that protected Tibet from the British left the country hopelessly vulnerable to Mao's Chinese. Due to imperceptible social change in Tibet down the centuries, we can deduce the nature of eighthcentury Tibetan womanhood from contemporary observation.

If we can judge from our contemporaries, the daughter of Tibet is a hardy soul by nature, physically strong, shrewd, stubborn, slow to burn but fierce and passionate when aroused; she is not devoted to a moral law, has little fear of the karmic repercussions of her acts, has complete faith in the power of her priests to ward off evil and to secure for her her desires. She is materialistic, but paradoxically she has implicit belief in the fierce and indiscriminately malicious world of spiritual powers surrounding her; she is highly superstitious but her faith in the efficacy of her charms and talismans, in the Lama's powers

of sympathetic magic, and in the power and fidelity of her protecting gods, insulates her from morbid preoccupation with an evil spirit world. Unless she is educated in an exceptional nunnery she is illiterate, her sole source of learning being the classical epics, such as the epic history of Gesar of Ling and various religious legends, customarily sung around the fireside by a bard or her grandparents. She is eminently practical regard less of her class, and she will often trade or act as family banker, holding the purse strings for her husband; if required to strike a deal it will be a rare man who gets the better of her.

Marriage is not a sacred sacrament in her society, but if conjugal ties prove expedient she is likely to remain faithful to her husband. Polyandry allowed her to be married to two or three brothers simultaneously, but it appears that only the early kings practised polygamy. The Tibetan female is not of mystical bent, so that it is unlikely that she will enter a nunnery unless it is expedient in solving the problem of food, shelter and clothing. If popular anecdotes" reflect the reality, the nunneries were havens of frustrated women, with discipline lax and meditation an unusual concern. No doubt there were personal and institutional exceptions, periods of reform elevating the tone from time to time and always extraordinary Lamas must have inspired their disciples to practise sddhana. A woman with otherworldly propensities would have been well-advised to marry a Lama or a tantric yogin and thereby gain a very special status in society with many material fringe benefits.

Tsogyel was born into a hierarchical and patriarchal society, in which the clans were still the strongest social groupings. Taksham thought it of sufficient significance to mention that Bonpo fathers exchanged their daughters in marriage. From this can be inferred that marriage was a social device for strengthening political and economic ties within a clan or forming a beneficial alliance with another clan. Dowries were exchanged at marriages, which were celebrated by a secular feast. Arranged marriages were the norm in the upper strata of society, but the wishes of the girl seem to have been given consideration. A woman had certain rights of inheritance; Milarepa's mother, for instance, received land and property from her mother's family. Thus divorce for a woman was a simple matter of separation.

Sexual morality seems never to have been puritanical or promiscuous; in general the Tibetans' sexuality appears well-balanced.

The status of women in the society into which Tsogyel was born, practically, could be said to be one of equality with men. True, it was a patriarchal society, but besides the basic power that resides in woman as mother and mistress, a power that unmarried feminists invariably underestimate in their evaluation of the status of woman, in every sphere of human activity women were active. In politics Trisong's queens' opinions carried significant weight, no doubt bolstered by the support of their powerful clans, and their prejudices changed the course of Buddhist history - Vairotsana's exile to Kham, engineered by a queen, carried Dzokchen to eastern Tibet, for instance. In religion the Bon gods were worshipped by priestesses besides male shamans, and in Buddhism Tsogyel herself was the best example of a woman reaching the apogee of attainment. This society was not highly sophisticated; but we need not envision feminine delicacy, intelligence and sensitivity oppressed in a tribal society of male warriors arrayed in skins with uncongealed blood still warm on their recently scabbarded swords. The cult of Avalokitesvara had been propagated amongst a portion of the aristocracy for a century or more, and Bonshamanism with its vicious gods and demons who demanded even human blood for their propitiation was on the defensive. It was probably the innately conservative women who were the principal votaries of such atavistic spiritual powers. In such a world Tsogyel shines 'like a star in the day-sky'.

To conclude this section on Woman and the Dakini, the word Dakini, or Khandroma, has introduced a valuable new concept to the western world. The value of the concept is in its very lack of precise definition; it embraces a range of meaning - the female principle, a moment of spiritual integration, the Guru's Consort, a female sexual partner - that adds up to an enigma and paradox. The image that 'Sky Dancer' conjures with its connotation of an immaterial, gossamer, shape-shifting goddess-Dakini dancing in the empyreum is no less enigmatic. Such concepts as 'Dakini' fulfil the needs of western yogins trying to find expression of their experience in exploration of inner space. Discoveries on this re-found frontier, particularly experiences of gnostic sexuality, are not accommodated by western religious tradition

with its equivocal dualistic concept of reality and strict compartmentalisation of sex and god. In the synthetic terminology and existential metaphysics of Tantra the word Dakini is central, just as the experience of the Dakini, by both yogins and yoginis, is central to the inner life.



## THE NYINGMA LINEAGES

A spiritual lineage is an uninterrupted succession of Guru-chela, teacher-disciple, father-son relationships. The lineage not only carries the instructions and techniques of spiritual evolution and of attainment of siddhi from its originator, but through initiation it actually transmits the spiritual power of its original Buddha-Lama. Thus tantric rites invariably include a liturgy of praise, worship or supplication of the lineage. Indian Hindu tantrikas keep memory of their lineal antecedents alive in song, in liturgy and through didactic legend, and although Nepali vajracaryas are notoriously ignorant of their original lineages, or their caste lineages, this could merely be a sign of decadence. The Tibetans, however, are deeply concerned with lineal purity. A text or doctrine is authenticated and given authority by the integrity of the lineage that transmits it. Proven lineal purity inspires the devotion that facilitates achievement of the lineage's siddhi, while it strengthens the lineage by reinforcing orthodoxy and thwarting deviant tendencies. Thus the Old School is highly sensitive to the reformed schools' allegations, though mostly unsubstantiated, that their early Tibetan lineages were adulterated by heresy, broken during the period of darkness between 840 and 950, or that they actually lacked authentic Indian antecedents. But to a large extent the terma theory of revelation provides a metaphysical support that displaces dependence on lineal purity.

The Old School lineages, specifically the lineages of anuttarayogatantra, initiated their first Tibetan disciples in the latter part of the eighth century, although there are indications, but no proof, that tantric lineages had transmitted teaching upon Mahakarunika and Hayagriva from the seventh century.' Quite distinct mainstream lineages carried the doctrines and empowerments of the three divisions of the Inner Tantra - mahayoga, anuyoga and atiyoga; individual tantras show similar but separate lineages. First, the mahayoga lineage is said to have begun with the Eight Knowledge Holders,<sup>2</sup> who received the Eight Logos Sadhanas from the Dakini's stupa in the Sitavana Cremation Ground near Bodh Gaya. Each of the Eight received a single sadhana, but Guru Perna is credited with bringing all



eight sadhanas to Tibet and teaching them to the Twentyfive Siddhas of Chimphu. Others of the Eight, Vimalamitra, and perhaps Dhanasamkrta and Santigarbha, also taught mahayoga to Tibetan disciples. The problem here is that the legend of the Knowledge Holders and the stupa in Sitavana is partially, if not totally, apocryphal. Second, the anuyoga lineage originated in North-West India; King Dza3 of Orgyen received the teaching from Vajrapani himself. Transmitted by a line of siddhas that includes carriers of both mahayoga (Humkara and Prabhahasti) and atiyoga (Garab Dorje), and also links in the mahamudra lineage (Kukuraja and Lwa-ba-pa) of the siddhacarya tradition centred in the Pala Empire, the anuyoga lineage was carried to Nepal by Dhanaraksita, where Dharmabodhi, Vasudhara and Chetsan-kye the Sage of Gilgit, taught Nub Sangye Yeshe.<sup>4</sup> Vasudhara taught Tsogyel in the E Vihara in Kathmandu and translated and taught at Samye.

Just as the Eightyfour Mahasiddhas are the principal exemplars and the root of Marpa and Milarepa's mahkmudrd lineage, the Dzokchen yogins of the Indian atiyoga lineage profoundly influenced the entire Old School tradition. Orgyen appears to have been the cradle of the Dzokchen lineage, and an examination of the origins of Dzokchen will provide ample evidence that North-West India was the sphere of activity of all the siddhas of atiyoga. Indeed, Dzokchen could be called the dharma of Orgyen. But before looking at the biographical legends of the Indian transmitters of atiyoga it is necessary to put the temporal lineages into perspective through an understanding of the transcendental origin of the Inner Tantra dharma, and the process of its direct transmission.

The time of the dharma's teaching transcends historical time; the doctrine was, and is, taught at the time of 'changeless, ultimate sameness and primal purity'. The place of its teaching is the Buddhafield of Akanistha, the supreme pureland of the nirmanakaya. The teacher is Kuntuzangpo manifesting as the principal deity of the mandala of the particular tantra that is being taught, and the teacher's retinue of disciples are the deities of the teacher's mandala. The dharmas that are taught are the tantras of the Old School. Condensed into a transmittable, verbal form, the doctrine is taught by Kuntuzangpo in the dharmakdya, Vajrasattva in the sambhogakaya,

and Vajrapani (Guhyapati, Master of Secrets) and the Dakini in the nirmanaka\_ya. These same deities of the Buddha's three modes of being, and also the Five Dhyani Buddhas, teach in the realms of the Dakinis and of men.' The Dzokchen siddhas, and later many treasure-finders, received Mind to Mind Transmission of various tantras directly from a transcendental source. Guru Perna himself received the Dzokchen transmission directly from dharmakaya and sambhogakaya deities, although he may have had human teachers also. Concerning the mainstream lineage of Dzokchen, Kuntuzangpo transmitted the teaching to Vajrasattva, who taught it to his nirmanakaya emanation Garab Dorje; Garab Dorje taught Manjusrimitra, who taught Sr! Singha, who taught Jnanasutra and Vimalamitra, and Vimalamitra taught the Tibetan neophytes. Thus Vimalamitra is the principal transmitter of the lineal Dzokchen teaching to Tibet.

Garab Dorje<sup>6</sup> was born to a virgin nun in Orgyen. Wishing to live an unencumbered life she threw the child into a cinder pit. A week later she regretted her hastiness, and returning to the pit she found the child playing in a bed of ashes. She named him Rolang Dewa (Corpse of Bliss). Later, when the miraculous child had grown into a wise young boy, the King of Singhala (now Sri Lanka) called Manjušrimitra, met him, and to him, his principal disciple, Garab Dorje taught a ninth vehicle to Buddhahood called 'how never to be wrong'. He taught this doctrine, atiyoga, to Manjugrimitra in a temple in the middle of an island in the Dhanakoṣa Lake in Orgyen. This was the lake in which Guru Perna was born on the pollen bed of a lotus. Here Garab Dorje taught Guru Pema the Dzokchen Nyingtik and the Space and Mind Classes of atiyoga.<sup>7</sup> Another source tells us that he taught Manjušrimitra in the Sitavana Cremation Ground in Bodhi Gaya, a location fraught with spiritual power and of enormous significance to the Nyingma lineage. At his death Garab Dorje appeared in a mass of light surrounded by a host of Dakinis and presented his 'heart-son', Manjušrimitra, with a golden box containing the complete Dzokchen scripture. This scripture was arranged by his disciples into the three sections of Dzokchen precepts: the Space Class (klong sde), Mind Class (sems sde) and the Secret Precept Class (man-nga sde).

Man-jušrimitra's two chief disciples were Buddha Sri Jnana and Sr,

Singha. The latter was born in China, perhaps Chinese Turkestan (see p. 297), and studied in China at Wu t'ai shan before following the instructions of Avalokiteṣvara to go to the Sosa-ling Cremation Ground west of Bodh Gaya if he wished to attain Buddhahood. In Sosa-ling the monk ~ri Singha encountered Manjuṣrimitra who gave him the entire Dzokchen message. Following his own Guru, Manjuṣrimitra dissolved into a rainbow body at his death and presented his disciple with a casket containing his final testament.

In the next generation of the lineage we find the imposing figure of Vimalamitra. More than Guru Pema himself, Vimalamitra was responsible for the transmission of Dzokchen to Tibet. He was born in a householding family in western India at about the same time as his spiritual brother Jnanasutra was born in another part of India in an outcaste family. When they were adults, Vajrasattva appeared to both Vimalamitra and Jnanasutra and instructed them to go to a certain temple in China where they would meet their Guru. Taking his begging bowl Vimalamitra set off for China and discovered Sri Singha sitting under a Bodhi Tree. For twenty years his Guru taught him Dzokchen through the mouth-to-ear method, and then, finally satisfied, he returned to India. He found Jnanasutra and taught him all he knew, but again feeling incomplete he accompanied Jnanasutra back to China, where in a cremation ground they sat at their Guru's feet for a further twenty years. At the end of this period Sri Singha asked them if they were satisfied, and they both replied in the affirmative. 'But I have given you nothing!' the Guru exclaimed. Vimalamitra was not disheartened and returned again to India, but Jnanasutra was enlightened by the Guru's remark, and having begged for the whole truth he was given the increasingly informal and formless (spros-med) initiations and instructions of Dzokchen. He meditated for sixteen years upon the highest precepts of atiyoga and was then given instruction upon meditation in action (spyodpa). Invited by the King of Khotan to visit him, Sri Singha left Jnanasutra. Some time later the disciple realised that his Guru had achieved parinirvana when he appeared to him in a cloud of light to give him his final testament, which included direction to a certain Chinese temple where he would discover the complete Dzokchen Nyingtik scriptures. Jnanasutra recovered these texts and returned to India to teach Dakas and Dakinis in a cremation ground called Bhasing. Vimalamitra in his turn was to

find Jnanasutra and ask his disciple, and now Guru, for the higher instruction that he had previously rejected. When Jnanasutra died Vimalamitra received his final testament, which was the quintessential, ultimate meaning of Dzokchen.

After Jnanasutra's death Vimalamitra wandered throughout India. He became priest of the King of Kamarupa, he was patronised by the Pala King of Bangala, he lived as a yogin in cremation grounds, he instructed the King of Orgyen, and he sojourned in Kashmir where he gained the epithet 'Sage of Kashmir' (Kha-che pan-chen). It was in Orgyen that he was approached by King Trisong Detsen's messengers (Nyang, Chokro and Kaba) begging him to come to Tibet. Much to the Orgyen King's chagrin he accepted the invitation. This offence to the King of Orgyen was to cause him much trouble in Tibet. According to Tsogyel's Life Vimalamitra arrived in Tibet in time for the great convocation after the completion of the Samye monastery and in time to take a leading part in the debate that resulted in the expulsion of the Bonshamans from Central Tibet. But his Indian yogin's appearance, the intrigues of the Orgyen king's spies and of the anti-Buddhist ministers, led to his impeachment, and he narrowly avoided exile. Since the period of persecution of the Buddhists was prior to the convocation, perhaps Vimalamitra arrived in Tibet earlier than The Life suggests. Certainly he enjoyed an extended stay in Tibet. To the majority of his disciples he taught simple, fundamental dharma - karmic cause and effect, the Four Noble Truths, etc., but to a few highly select disciples he taught mahayoga and anuyoga, and particularly the Vimala Nyingtik. Together with his chief translator, Ma Rinchen Chok, he translated important Nyingma tantras: the Guhyagarbha (gSang-ba snying-po - The Secret Heart), and the Guhyasamaja, amongst many. Of the Eight Logos Sadhanas he taught the Dud-tsi Yonten, which he had received amongst the Eight Knowledge Holders in the Sitavana Cremation Ground. But unquestionably Vimalamitra's greatest contribution to the Nyingma dharma, perhaps the pinnacle of all Buddhist doctrines, was the Vimala Nyingtik, which is contained in the Secret Precept Class of the Dzokchen atiyoga scripture. Further, Go Lotsawa<sup>8</sup> maintains that Vimalamitra contributed thirteen of the eighteen chapters of the Mind Class of precepts. The principal recipients of his Dzokchen instruction were King Trisong Detsen himself, Nyang Tingzin Zangpo, Ma

Rinchen Chok and Nyak Jnana Kumara. As the Guru of these four, from which all his Tibetan lineages sprung, he is the root of the most important Dzokchen atiyoga tradition. The ninth century period of persecution attenuated the Vimala Nyingtik lineage, as it did the entire Nyingma tradition, and the terma lineages were responsible for its continued vitality. In the fourteenth century Longchen Rabjampa blended the oral (kama) and revealed (terma) transmissions of the Vimala Nyingtik and produced his Seven Treasures (mDzod-bdun) which are exegesis upon the entire Nyingma tradition from the point of view of the adept of the Vimala Nyingtik. Finally, Vimalamitra left Tibet on pilgrimage to Wu t'ai Shan, and he died in China. Among his later incarnations is Jamyang Khyentse Wongpo, the leading figure of the Khampa eclectic renaissance of the nineteenth century. His living representative is Dodrupchen Rimpoche of Gangtok, Sikkim.

Another of Sri Siiigha's disciples was a Tibetan monk, a man whose stature in the tradition is almost as great as Vimalamitra and Guru Perna, not the less venerated because he was Tibetan. His name is Vairotsana. When assembling the bright young men who were to translate the Sanskrit scriptures into Tibetan after the foundation of Samye, certain highly auspicious omens led Trisong Detsen to a place called Nyemo Jekhar in Western Tibet where he found the boy Vairotsana. ~antaraksita ordained him as one of the first seven probationary monks, and having become proficient in Sanskrit at Samye he was sent to obtain Dzokchen precepts from Sri Sirigha in Orgyen. In a nine-storied pagoda in a sandalwood forest near the Dhanakosa Lake Vairotsana found the 'Chinese' monk Sri Sirigha. Having proved himself to a Dakini guardian, he begged Sri Sirigha for instruction. The Guru condescended to teach him, but only under the condition of rigorous secrecy, because the Orgyen King had proscribed Dzokchen. During the day Vairotsana received mahaydna instruction while at night the Guru wrote down the eighteen chapters of precepts of the Mind Class in goat's milk ink on white paper, cypher that would become legible only when applied to smoke. He also obtained instruction on the Space Class of atiyoga precepts and the tantra section of mahayoga. Sri Sirigha assured him that to understand one dharma was to understand them all, but the insatiable student went further into India after his departure from Orgyen, and in the Sitavana Cremation Ground he met Garab Dorje<sup>9</sup> who taught him the 84,000

Dzokchen Precepts. Only then did he return to Tibet.

In Samye he taught Trisong Detsen, Trisong's Khotanese Queen Li-za and Nyak Jnana Kumara, and he translated the Mind Class scripture. However, he could not escape the intrigues of the Bon ministers, the agents of the jealous Orgyen King and the Bon-po Queen Pong-za (whose deceits are recorded below). His exile to Tsawarong in Kham was profitable in so far as he established there a Dzokchen lineage that remains vital to this day. He taught on three notable occasions: to Gyelmo Yudra Nyingpo, who was to return to Samye and teach Nyak Jnana Kumara and others; to Nyang-ton Yeshe Lama; and to the ancient beggar Sangye Gompo, alias spang Mi-pham, who at the age of eighty-five meditated according to the Space Class of precepts, with the aid of a knee-belt and chin-rest, to attain great longevity. At the intercession of the Khotanese Queen, Vairotsana was recalled to Central Tibet, where he taught for the remainder of his life. His greatest contribution was the Mind Class of precepts; but he also taught the Space Class precepts; he taught Pang Mi-pham the Vajra Bridge (rpo-rje zam-pa), an important anuyoga text; and he translated a commentary upon the Guhyagarhha-tantra on mahayoga. Vairotsana was one of the Twentyfive Siddhas of Chimphu, and his principal meditation was upon the Drek-ngak niandala. He was one of the privileged few who concealed texts that would become part of the terma transmission.

Then what of Guru Pema himself? It was inevitable that western scholars should attempt to demythologise Tibet's Great Guru.<sup>10</sup> But after the profound layers of myth and legends have been stripped away scholars have found little of substance remaining. Without doubt, they say, Guru Pema was a great exorcist, but it was unlikely that he brought more than the mahayoga Eight Logos Sadhanas with him to Tibet and perhaps only some of those. The amount of indisputable, scientifically verifiable 'fact' we have relating to the early history of the dharma in Tibet is minuscule. While we have volumes of myth and legend concerning Padma Sambhava, the chronicles are silent and facts are few. But like any founder of a great religious cult, Guru Pema's significance lies in his mythos, in what people believe, not in forgotten fact. The principal fact of the Guru's life is that he had such an impact upon the Tibet of Trisong Detsen that he became the focus

of a cult that considered him a Buddha whose teaching was more profound, or certainly more relevant to Tibet, than that of Sakyamuni himself. The cult, of course, evolved later, and the legends accrued later, but can we doubt that the Guru's activity was exemplary, that he was the vajrayana dharma embodied, and that it was his power and realisation that gave the dead scripture existential meaning? Guru Pema was an exorcist and Jesus Christ a carpenter; and no doubt they were both masters of their crafts. There is no proof that Guru Pema initiated the Dzokchen Nyingtik lineage, but on the other hand there is no evidence refuting the later lineal tradition, and, further, there is no good reason to cast doubt on the purity of the lineage.

There is no need to resume the events of Guru Pema's life here. Although there is as yet no satisfactory translation of the Guru's biography available, his career is sufficiently well known. The Life is surprisingly short on description, and weak on emphasis, of the part that he played in the unfolding drama of Tsogyel's life. These are the main scenes in The Life in which he takes centre stage:

1. His arrival and the foundation of Samye;
2. the initiation of the King and his gift of Tsogyel;
3. Tsogyel's initiations and meditation instruction;
4. The King, Queen and courtiers' initiation into the sadhanas of the Eight Logos Deities;
5. the Dorje Phurba initiation, and subjection of gods and demons;
6. the inauguration of the Buddhist-Bon debate and the sentencing of the Bon;
7. hiding the terma;
8. The Guru's testament and his departure for the SouthWest;
9. Tsogyel's Dzokchen initiation;
10. his appearance in visions at Boudha, Karchung, Tidro *etc.*

During the forty years, including seven years of exile, that The Life implies that the Guru stayed in Tibet, he appears to have spent much of his time in meditation in various caves and meditation centres: Chimphu, Tidro, Womphu Taktsang and Drakmar. Other sources stress his activity of subjecting gods and demons and converting the Bon in the provinces. The Guru is invariably portrayed as a supernal being, a Buddha transcending mortality, and no distinction is made between his corporeal existence and his appearance in vision; indeed, according to the metaphysical view of Dzokchen his ontological status is identical in both forms of being.

Guru Pema's disciples are called 'The Twentyfive Siddhas of Chimphu' or 'The Twenty Five: King, Consort and Subjects' (rJe-'bangs nyer-inga), but different sources vary in their lists of the twentyfive. The Life gives these twentyone names of subjects (or 'courtiers') who received the mahayoga initiation at Chimphu together with the King and the Guru's Consort:

Chogyel Trisong Detsen.

Kharchen-za Yeshe Tsogyel.

Nub Namkhai Nyingpo, or Lhodrak Namkhai Nyingpo because he was exiled to Bumthang for many years, or Gelong Namkhai Nyingpo because he was a monk, and possibly one of the first seven probationary monks; he was also a teacher of Tibetan ch'an.

Nub Sangye Yeshe, the principal recipient and transmitter of anuyoga; a disciple of Vasudhara and Dharmabodhi in Nepal, and Vairotsana in Tibet; the author of the bSamgtan rnig-sgron; a concealer of terma.

Nanam Dorje Dunjom, a concealer of terma.

Dre Gyelwa Lodro or Dre bande, a minister and perhaps one of the first monks.

Khung-lung Gyelwa Chokyang or Ngan-lam Gyelwa Chokyang, a master of the Hayagriva-tantra; one of the first monks.

Denma Tsemang, a minister and important translator.



Vairotsana, transmitter of the Mind Class of Dzokchen precepts from ~ri Singha; a principal translator and one of the first probationary monks.

Kaba Peltsek, an important minister, messenger and translator; murdered by Langdarma.

Odren Wongchuk, not to be confused with Odren Zhonnu.

Nyak Jnana Kumara, a great translator who combined all the Dzokchen lineages, particularly those of Vimalamitra and Vairotsana.

Sokpo Lhapel Zhonnu, sometimes confounded with the other Uigur, Sokpo Yeshe Pel.

Lhalung Pelgyi Senge, or Pelgyi Dorje, who assassinated Langdarma and fled to Kham in AD 842; Trulzhi Rimpoche of Jumbesi is his contemporary tulku.

Chokro Lui Gyeltsen, minister and Kawa Peltsek's associate and co-translator and revisor of the old tantras in Repachan's reign.

Rinchen Zangpo, perhaps Atsara Rinchen (=dbUs Ratna?) one of the first monks.

Nyang Tingzin Zangpo, Trisong Detsen's trusted minister and messenger; guardian of the boy Senalek; Abbot of Samye; proponent of ch'an; disciple of Vimalamitra.

Langdro Konchok Jungne, an important translator; reincarnate as Tingle Jampa Jungne in the 19th c.

Lasum Gyelwa Jangchub, Atsara Sale, Tsogyel's yogic partner and editor of The Life (= Dre Atsara Sale?).

Drenpa Namkha Wongchuk, great siddha, translator and Bonpo scholar; author of the gZer-myig.

Drokben Khyeuchung Lotsawa, an important translator; reincarnate as Ratna Lingpa, and at present Dunjom Rimpoche.

Ma Rinchen Chok, a minister, messenger and great translator; one of the first monks; Vimalamitra's chief translator and disciple.

Gyelmo Yudra Nyingpo, received Vairotsana's precepts in Kham and taught in Samye.

Two other siddhas, mentioned in *The Life* as demonstrating siddhi at the Bon debate, Tsangri Gompo (?) and Odren Zhonnu Pel, complete the list of twentyfive. Dunjom Rimpoche's *History of the Dharma* and other sources list these siddhas amongst the twentyfive: Atsara Yeshe Pelyang (= Nyen Pelyang), Yeshe De, Drok Pelgyi Yeshe, Kharchen Pelgyi Wongchuk (Tsogyel's brother), Nanam Zhang Yeshe Dorje and Shubu Pelgyi Senge (a minister and messenger and Tsogyel's disciple). Dunjom Rimpoche also gives a list of seventeen Dakinis, ladies of high rank, who were initiated with the twenty-four yogins at Chimphu.

Tsogyel's eleven root disciples are named in *The Life* as Be Yeshe Nyingpo, Ma Rinchen Chok, Odren Zhonnu Pel, Langlab Gyelwa Jangchub Dorje, Lasum Gyelwa Jangchub (Atsara Sale), Darcha Dorje Pawo, Ukyi Nyima (Surya Tapa), Monmo Tashi Khyidren, Kalasiddhi, Li-za Jangchub Dronma (Trisong's Queen), Shelkar Dorje Tsomo and Kharchen Zhonnu Drolma. Also mentioned as her disciples are King Mutri Tsenpo and his son Murum Tsenpo, and Murum's wife Ngangchung Pelgyi Gyelmo; her Nepali disciples, Jila Jipha, Vasudhara and Sakya Dema; Gelong Namkhai Nyingpo who Tsogyel taught in Bhutan; and the yogini Demo who she found in Bhutan and who is variously called Dewamo, Chonema and Dechenmo; and Selta and Lodro Kyi who she initiated in Mangyul. It may be inferred that all these disciples lived through Mutri and Murum's reigns and some into Repachan's era.

~antaraksita does not belong to the anuttarayoga tantric lineages, but since his significance in the Tibetan tradition can be considered more fundamental than Guru Perna himself, because he introduced the monastic lineage to Tibet, without which there is no sangha, his importance should not be overlooked. Known as Khempo Bodhisattwa (the Bodhisattva Abbot) to the Tibetans, he was born in the Kingdom of Zahor and became Abbot of Nalanda University. First and foremost of the panditas invited to Tibet, he arrived when the Bonpo ministers

were still too powerful, and he was forced to retreat to Nepal after strongly advising the King to invite Guru Perna to exorcise the country. After his return to Samye he ordained the seven probationary monks, about whose names there is no unanimity.<sup>11</sup> Through this first ordination in Tibet Santaraksita instituted the Mahamulasarvastivadin ordination lineage, which remains unbroken until this day. His mahayana philosophical views have had a powerful impact on all Tibetan thought. He belonged to the svatantrika-madhyamika tradition," but he was of a syncretic turn of mind, strongly influenced by the dialectics of Dingnaga and Dharmakirti. He wrote several works which had a formative influence on Tibetan thought and were of major import in the development of Indian Buddhist philosophy. His principal Indian disciple was Kamalašila, who was to be invited to Samye to defend his school's position against the quietist Chinese ch'an masters, should the need arise. The need arose. Santaraksita probably returned to India to die before AD 790.

A part of the reformed schools' compendiums of Indian scripture called the Kanjur and Tenjur were translated from Sanskrit to Tibetan during the early period of propagation of the doctrine in Tibet. The Kanjur, containing the hinayana tripitaka, the mahayana sutras and the tantras, which comprise the Buddha ~akyamuni's corpus of teaching, and the Tenjur containing exegetical works of Indian scholars, saints and siddhas, are of great importance to the Old School, but the works omitted from the Tenjur by its fundamentalist compiler, Buton, are of even greater importance because they comprise the bulk of anuttarayogatantra texts and the works of Guru Perna, Vimalamitra and their lineage holders. These texts were collected and collated into two major collections: the Nyingma Gyud-bum (The 100,000 Nyingma Tantras) and the Kama Canon. The Nyingma Gyud-bum was collected by Ratna Lingpa in the fifteenth century; the Kama Canon consists of the literary forms of the orally transmitted pronouncements of the Dzokchen Gurus. The principal collection of termas is the Rinchen Terdzod, a compendium of selected termas edited by Jamgon Kongtrul and Jamyang Khyentse Wongpo in the nineteenth century.

In general, the teaching of the kama and terma are identical in substance; the entire corpus of literature explains the metaphysics, and instructs in the practical techniques, of the Inner Tantras - mahkyoga,

anuyoga and atiyoga (although some space is given to the Outer Tantras). The major difference between kama and terma lies in the manner of transmission of their substance. The kama is transmitted by the 'long lineage' (ring-brgyud), indicating temporal extension of the lineage from a moment in time prior to Guru Pema's birth to the present day. The terma lineages are 'short' or 'direct' lineages (nye-brgyud), where 'short' means emanating directly from the extra-temporal sphere, or originating with the discoverer to be transmitted by a short lineage. Although some terma lineages extend back to the early Sovereign Tertons<sup>13</sup> of the later period of propagation of the dharma in Tibet, usually the termas the practitioner uses are those of his Guru or of his Guru's Guru. Specifically, there are three kama lineages, each defined by its method of transmission ('transmission' is used here as a synonym of 'lineage'). These three methods of transmission are the Buddhas' Mind to Mind Transmission (rgyal-ba dgongs-brgyud); the Knowledge Holders' Symbolic Transmission (rig-'dzin brda'-brygud); and the Individual's Whispered Teaching Transmission (gang-zag snyan-brygud). Since termas are in essence concealed, and rediscovered, kama teaching the entire Nyingma dharma originated, and continues to emanate, through one of these modes of transmission. Capable of different levels of interpretation the relevant level is determined by the interpreter's didactic purpose. One important purpose is to endow kama and terma texts with authority, and another is to provide a metaphysical basis for the doctrine of direct revelation of 'mindtreasures'.

The Buddhas' Mind to Mind Transmission is taught unremittingly by Kuntuzangpo in the dharmakaya. The yogin who accomplishes the dharmakaya immediately receives the totality of Kuntuzangpo's transmission. In the sambhogakaya the same message is transmitted by the Five Dhyani Buddhas as lightform. In the nirmanakaya the supernal Bodhisattvas - Manjusri, Avalokitesvara and particularly Vajrapani (Guhyapati) - transmit Mind to Mind to those beings who transport themselves through meditation practice to the Bodhisattva's own Buddhafield. In short, the Mind to Mind Transmission is effected by the yogin's accomplishment of the three modes of Buddha's being.

The Knowledge Holders' Symbolic Transmission can be defined by distinguishing between two forms of transmission - 'word

transmission' and 'meaning transmission' (tshig-brgyud and don-brgyud). Transmission of meaning is affected by a Knowledge Holders' intentional disposition of Body, Speech and Mind as a free-play of Knowledge (rig-pa) in a form determined by the spiritual potential of the recipient, an I understood by him as a blessing (byin-brlab) or 'wave of grace'. The 'word transmission' is Vajrapani or Vajrasattva's transmission of verbal symbols that contain the condensed content of a text or doctrine. For example, Vajrapani transmitted symbols containing the verbal key to the sPyi-mdo dgongs-'dus, an anuyoga sutra, to a group of Knowledge Holders, one of whom, a Raksasa, translated the symbols into manuscript form.<sup>14</sup> The Knowledge Holders played an important role in revealing the kama scriptures.

The Individual's Whispered Teaching Transmission is a temporal lineage founded by a nirmanakaya incarnation who has received the essence of the doctrine through Mind to Mind Transmission from a Buddha, or as a symbolic transmission from the Knowledge Holders. Taking the Dzokchen atiyoga lineage of whispered teaching as an example, Garab Dorje received the doctrine from Vajrasattva in direct Mind to Mind Transmission. The teaching was then passed down from mouth to ear as the essential Dzokchen precepts. These precepts were written down by Garab Dorje, Vimalamitra and Vairotsana and have come down to us as the kama texts of the Mind, Space and Secret Precept Classes of Dzokchen precepts. But notwithstanding the lineage's attenuation at the time of Langdarma's persecution it is taught that the oral transmission has also been transmitted vocally from Garab Dorje's time to the present day and constitutes the oral commentary given by the initiate's Dzokchen Lama on the kama texts. Thus kama can be defined as the original word, logos, or pronouncements of the Indian Gurus of the Inner Tantra, transmitted orally or written down in a literary form in India and translated during the early period of propagation of the dharma in Tibet, or written down directly in Tibetan during the same period. Since all terma was derived from kama, kama can be viewed as the 'mother' lode and termas as the 'son' caches.

The reformed schools considered the kama texts to be spurious scripture; they doubted that any Sanskrit originals ever existed. The implication was that Guru Perna, Vimalamitra, Vairotsana and Sangye

Yeshe in particular were heretics, that their realisation was not of the order of King Dza (Indrabhuti), and that their oral transmission was invalid. Literary reasons were also given for rejecting translations made in the early period, but essentially Buton was prejudiced against any Old School doctrine that was even remotely tainted by the ideas that Kamalaśila reputedly refuted in the Great Debate of Samye. This prejudice resulted in exclusion of some of the most profound tantric texts from the great Kanjur and Tenjur collections, texts that had their genesis in Kashmir, Orgyen, Gilgit - North-west India - where Chinese influence was strong.

The kama texts are subsumed conventionally under three heads: sutra, maya and mind (mdo-sgyu-sems gsum). Sutra refers to the anuyoga literature, and means 'tantric exposition'. The sPyi-mdo dgongs-'dus (Chido Gong-du) is probably the most famous of these sutras. Maya refers to the mahayoga Net of Illusion (sGyu-'phrul dra-ba) cycle of tantras. The Guhyagarbha is the most important tantra in this cycle. 'Mind' indicates the three classes of atiyoga precepts - Mind, Space and Secret Precepts. As noted above, the termas are highly practical applications of the kama doctrines. The kama tradition is still alive, but in general practitioners use terma texts for their daily ritual meditation and for every exceptional occasion such as rites of passage and advanced yoga practices.

The notion of terma is not an original Tibetan idea. The first termas were the Prajnaparamitasutras which the Buddha ~akyamuni had hidden in the naga realms until the time propitious for their propagation, and which Arya Nagarjuna discovered in the second century AD. The canonical tantras 'discovered' in the Orgyen Dakini Paradise (Orgyan mkha'-'gro gling) and those relating to the south of India (Dhanyakataka) are also termas of a kind." In Tibet termas were concealed by Guru Pema and Tsogyel, by Vairotsana, Sangye Yeshe, Namkhai Nyingpo, Jnana Kumara, Dorje Dunjom, Tingzin Zangpo and others during the latter part of the eighth century and the early ninth. Undoubtedly more were hidden during the following period of political turmoil. Two hundred years later these termas began to be rediscovered. Sangye Lama (1000-1080) is remembered as the first treasure-finder. Innumerable termas were discovered by many tertons during the later period of propagation of the doctrine in Tibet, and the

period up to the end of the fourteenth century was the great period of discovery. Even Atisa himself, the reformer of the monastic tradition who abhorred 'loose' tantric practices, discovered a chronicle (dkar-chag) in a pillar in the Rasa Trulnang Temple in Lhasa.

It will be useful first to make a superficial distinction that is often ignored by the Nyingmapas themselves, between those sacred artefacts - images, stupas, vajras, phurbas, and most important, manuscripts - that have been actually concealed by human hands in caves, in temple walls and other places of safe keeping during times of persecution, and those artefacts and books that were, and are still, discovered as pure creations of an enlightened spirit. But these categories overlap. First, both categories of artefacts are said to have been consciously hidden by Guru Pema and his contemporary siddhas; second, many literary termas are inspired re-editions of ancient termas; third, tertons often appended apocryphal colophons to their works to give them the authority exerted by the doctrine of revelation, thereby obscuring the texts' origins. To the yogins of the terma lineage, all termas have the same status, no matter what their origin or whether the discovery was made in the earth or in the sky; but a sceptic who demands the authority of Indian origins attached to his texts will look askance at the cryptic label *dgongs-gter* ('mindtreasure') in the colophon of a manuscript. In the largest category of terma, liturgies of ritual meditation (*sgrubthabs*), there have been no major departures in metaphysical thought or technique since the eleventh century; the same structural formula is evident today no matter what the text's origin. The literary historian has a difficult, complex task in determining a terma's origin; but for a yogin the source is largely immaterial.

The nature of termas is highly complex and ambiguous; it can be defined in terms of the three different methods whereby the terton is empowered to reveal termas, three different terton lineages. These three lineages are the 'short' or 'direct' lineage of transmission as distinct from the 'long', or temporal, *kama* lineages. The first of these three is the Lineage of Command and Authorisation through Prophecy (*bka'-babs lung-bstan brgyud*), command that may have issued from Guru Pema in a vision or from a prophecy contained in the scriptures. The ninety-third chapter of the Guru's biography called the *Padma*

Ma'-thing Shel-brag-ma gives prophecies of fifty tertons, most of whom had lived or who subsequently appeared. The second lineage is the Transmission of Initiation and Empowerment through Aspiration and Resolution (smon-lam dbang-skur brgyud); the prayer of a Buddha in the dharmakaya has sufficient force to empower his nirmanakaya emanation as a terton. To the third lineage belong those tertons to whom specific termas are entrusted by Dakinis (mkha'-'gro gtad-rgya brgyud); the archetypes of this lineage are the Eight Knowledge Holders who were entrusted texts by the Dakini Pleasure Power," removing them from the stupa in the Sitavana Cremation Ground (the stupa is a representation of the dharmakaya). One branch of this lineage is Transmission through the Yellow Parchment Cypher Lineage (shogser tshig brgyud) - an Awareness Dakini entrusts a sealed scroll to the appropriate terton. The nature of the cypher on the parchment may be Sanskrit or Apabhramsa; it may be the language of Orgyen, from which Orgyen Lingpa, for instance, translated the Sheldrakma; or it may be the Dakini cypher itself (mkha'-'gro brda'-yig). When a terton has difficulty in translating a cypher he will reconceal the terma.

The Dakini cypher, says the Lama, can be understood only by initiated tertons, and this initiation is one of the deepest mysteries of the Tantra. Yeshe Tsogyel wrote many termas in the Dakini script; this script may be understood as a highly condensed symbolic language. The few symbols deciphered to construe an entire chapter of a terma often preface that chapter. Some texts Tsogyel reduced to a single cypher and then concealed them in one of the five elements, in earth, rock, water, trees, fire, wind or sky, *etc.* The terton versed in the interpretation of such cypher expands the original single hieroglyph into the Dakini language and then into an extended manuscript form in Tibetan. Such termas are called 'earth-treasure' (sa-gter), 'firetreasure' (me-gter), 'wind-treasure' (rlung-gter), *etc.* Thus the ripples of a lake, the glyph formed by the bark of a tree, a constellation of clouds, may be the original seed-cypher. If a terton reveals such a treasure and finds the time is unpropitious he will reconceal it, and it may be rediscovered later as a 'twicerevealed treasure' (yang-gter). Dakini cypher revealed as 'mindtreasure' (dgongs-gter) or 'profound treasure' (zab-gter) may be conceived in this manner: The Adibuddha Kuntuzangpo is the indeterminate ground of all being and experience,



and his three modes of being embrace all things under the sun. Every entity of existence, or synonymously, every point-instant of experience, is a divine cypher of the totality of being in the same way that each point of light in a hologram contains the entire hologrammic vision, or each cell of the body contains in potential the entire psychoorganism. A point-instant of experience is an emanation of Kuntuzangpo, a cypher of Kuntuzangpo, but its form is heterogenous and enigmatic, analogous to an apparently meaningless, unique Taoist magical diagram. This cypher is described in terms of its universal, metaphysical infrastructure that is represented in Tantra by a complex mandala of Buddhas loaded with intentional significance. When a tertön 'discovers' a particular cypher that is the key to a disciple's realisation of Buddhahood, or to the attainment of a certain siddhi, it is in terms of a mandala of Buddhas that he translates it into a descriptive tantra, or liturgical manuscript form. But only tertöns can read the language of the Dakinis, and without the Dakini's initiation into her mystic language (mkha'-'gro gsang-brda'-i dbang) we fumble in the dark.

The most convenient categorisation of terma is threefold: 'earth-treasure', or ancient manuscripts discovered by human hands; 'twicerevealed treasure', which includes terma from every source, not excepting terma of dubious origin; and 'mindtreasure' that is the prerogative of the visionary. In general, the manuscripts that were hidden in the eighth and ninth centuries were discovered during the following few centuries, and there have been fewer and fewer ancient texts coming to light since - the Tun Huang stash discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in 1907 is an important exception - and no doubt ancient manuscripts can still be found in caves, stupas, and temples in Tibet. In the nineteenth century the Old School eclectic masters of the Kham renaissance left the defensive in the centuries-old battle with the reformed schools' insistent, uncompromising demand for proven Indian origin of didactic texts and propounded an unequivocal doctrine of mystical origin of their 'mindtreasures.'" Most termas discovered these days are mindtreasures.

Two important conditions govern the moment of revelation of a terma. First, a tertön must have realised the spiritual potential necessary to propagate the apocalyptic message contained in the

terma; and secondly, since every terma is designed to benefit a certain person, a group of disciples or the entire community, according to spiritual, political or social need, at a specific point in time, suitable recipients must be waiting at a propitious juncture. Treasure-finders are invariably emanations (sprul-pa) of Guru Perna or emanations of his emanations (yang-sprul). United with his consort in fields of lotus light (the clear light of the dharmakaya), the Guru projects emanations in the nirmanakaya to perform the tertons' bodhisattvic activities. These tertons need only to understand their origin and purpose to realise their power and fulfil their functions as tertons. Illiterate tertons are not unknown. Immediately transferred to the realm where the truths of the Guru's doctrines are self-evident and the meaning of the Dakini cypher is naturally apparent, the immense and profound self-confidence inherent in the recognition of himself as a tulku-terton goes far to explain the prolific production of some tertons.

The Life stresses the importance of the termas and of Tsogyel's chief *raison d'être* as concealer and custodian of the apocalyptic literature, but the text passes all too quickly over the practical details of concealment and discovery. Tsogyel was a human being with a phenomenal memory which permitted her total recall of all her Guru's discourses and precepts; but she was also an Awareness Dakini, and the personification of the wisdom (prajna) that is the 'meaning' of all scripture, and also the embodiment of all Awareness Dakinis who would present yellow parchment scrolls to tertons of the future. Namkhai Nyingpo, Denma Tsemang, Atsara Pelyang, Chokro Lui Gyeltsen, Yudra Nyingpo and Vairotsana are mentioned by name as her assistants in writing down the termas, although all twentyfive of the Siddhas of Chimphe were involved. The termas were written in Sanskrit, Newari, the languages of Gilgit and Orgyen and in various Tibetan styles of writing, in the Dakini script and in letters of fire, water and air. The texts were then 'collated' according to manifests (kha -byang) of various types. The simple manifest is a list of texts; the concise manifest (snying-byang) is a short cryptic list; lists of termas to be reconcealed (yang-byang) anticipate discovery at an unpropitious moment; and extensive prophetic catalogues (lung-byang) give cryptic indications of discoverers' names, the circumstances of revelation, the name of the text and its whereabouts - the manifest in the Sheldrakma foretelling the tertons of undisputed preeminence is of this nature. The

Life makes clear that the function of these manifests is to inspire trust and confidence, to imbue a terton's discoveries with the authority of the Guru.

Before The Life's explicit description of the manner in which the termas were concealed, a crucial statement is made identifying Guru Perna and Tsogyel as Kuntuzangpo and his Consort Kuntuzangmo. Guru and Consort indivisible they are 'coextensive with all-pervasive space'; they are the union of ideal cognitive fields (ye-shes, jnana) and ideal spatio-temporal fields (dharmadhatu); their apparitional bodies (nirmanakaya) are the nature of all phenomena, and their Speech (sambhogakaya) is the nature of all sound. With this realisation we can then read how Guru and Consort wander throughout the ethnic Tibetan world, from power place to power place, blessing the ground, praying for the success of yogins who meditate there, exhorting protectors (gter-skyong) to guard the terma, concealing the termas themselves and hiding the manifests, sometimes with the caches of terma and sometimes without, until 'not a sod of earth lacked blessing'. The entire passage in The Life treating terma (pp. 122-4) is a fine example of the way in which realistic analogue and metaphysical dogma is mixed in tantric literature; it has the effect of breaking the readers' habit of critical, judgmental thought (rnamrtog), transporting him into a mystical universe where there is no distinction between fact and fiction, 'reality' and 'illusion'.

As to the content of the termas, The Life identifies the methods of accomplishing the Lama's Mind (thugs-sgrub) and similar ritual meditation liturgies (sgrubthabs) belonging to the heartdrop cycles (snying-thig) as the most profuse. Together with the meditation rites of Lama, Yidam and Dakini (rtsa gsum) these texts originate from the sadhana section of rnahayoga in the kama lineage. The major tertons discovered sadhanas that give their disciples entrance to the mandalas of Lama, Yidam and Dakini, most drawing upon the Eight Logos Deities for a Yidam. The sadhana section of the Rinchen Terdzod collection of termas is by far the largest of its sections. Besides root tantras, exegetical works, and books of precepts for all kinds of yogas, the biographies of Guru Perna (Guru rnam-thar) and other legendary works are highly significant termas, and another large class of terma, a genre omitted from the chief collections, consists of texts propitiating

local spirits and gods and demons, exorcising them or invoking them to fulfil purposes of a lower ethical order. To be cynical, one could say that if an author wishes to endow his work with the authority of the tradition he declares himself a tertön and his work a terma no matter what the content of the text. Indeed, down the centuries periodic rushes of spurious terms treating low-level magic and its rites have appeared, the products of bogus tertöns acting through self-initiation.

The subject of terma is vast and deep and these remarks have merely scratched the surface of the matter. However, it should be evident that the doctrine of revelation is far more than a skilful means of keeping the dharma out of the hands of scholarly morticians by constantly revivifying the lineages with texts fulfilling contemporary need. Anuttarayogatantra offers initiation into lineages that provide direct access to the Buddhanature (tathagata-garbha) and to the pure inspiration that is capable of creating 'treasures' of value equal to Guru Pema's own teaching. The ramifications of the terma doctrine sharply define the difference between the Old and the New Schools. The Old School has little respect for the authority of Indian texts per se; the spirit is more important than the letter. The genius of Tibet and its mystics is the mainspring of the Old School's tradition; Sakyamuni belonged to another time and place. Guru Pema, the Second Buddha, is more important than the first both as an exemplar of Buddhahood and as a fount of meditation teaching. Finally, since initiation can be had from internal, transcendental sources, and Guru Pema, Guru Rimpoche, is every Lama and accessible to all, there is a tendency towards an independence that leads to true spiritual anarchy and personal freedom, militating against communal religion, institutionalisation and establishmentarianism.

Although several of the Dalai Lamas have been covert practitioners of Dzokchen (the Great Fifth was a tertön) the notion that Dzokchen was tainted by non-Buddhist and heretical schools at its inception has always persisted. Several distinguished Yellow Hat pundits have stooped to most undistinguished invective and vilification of the Old School. The historian Sumpa Khempo is one such eighteenth-century scholar who became emotionally involved in this purely academic debate. It is difficult to understand why companions on the same path should curse each others' techniques of endeavour; but it certainly

happened in Tibet, and it is still happening in refugee communities and even amongst Western converts to the Tantra. But after extracting the invective there does seem to be some truth in Dzokchen's detractors' claim that nascent Dzokchen was influenced by heterodox schools and perhaps by Saivism. Because these influences have made Dzokchen what it is, and because elements of the original synthesis are still affective, it is interesting to examine the ground in which the lineage took root.

Ch'an bloomed in T'ang China. The missions arriving in Central Tibet from China during Trisong Detsen's reign were probably practitioners of ch'an. The ch'an master Hwashang Mahayana taught at Samye for some years. "K One of the accusations levelled against Dzokchen is that it was heavily influenced by heretical ch'an. Certainly there are superficial similarities between Dzokchen and ch'an: they both claim to be short-cut paths to Buddhahood; both employ yogas derived from nonBuddhist traditions (Saivism and Taoism); both lay strong emphasis upon the importance of the Guru; both employ paradox and koan as skilful means. Then on a deeper level: both stress the immanence of Buddhanature; both maintain the view of all phenomena and existence as pure from the beginning, *ab initio*, *ab aeterno*; both use indiscriminating activity as a fast method of personal evolution; and both are nondual schools. Although Dzokchen employs a more rigorous, nondualistic dialectic than ch'an, unequivocally maintaining the middle path, rejecting the concepts of both 'sudden' and 'gradual' awakening, in practice the methods that the tradition uses in common with ch'an produce a sudden awakening; spontaneity (*Ihun-grub*) is the key work in Dzokchen *togal*, and the Tibetan names for the adherents of the Dzokchen Nyingtik (*snying-thig-pa*) and ch'an (*chig-car-pa*) are virtually synonymous. Further, some ch'an hierarchs were also links in the Dzokchen lineage and vice versa. Namkhai Nyingpo was an initiate of both schools, and Aro Yeshe Jungne was the seventh link in both the Tibetan ch'an and the Dzokchen lineages,<sup>19</sup> founding a Dzokchen school in Kham. Then dissimilarities should be noted: the salient 'quietist' aspect of ch'an is not stressed in Dzokchen theory (although in practice some Dzokchen lineages insist upon years of total sensory deprivation); ch'an emphasises 'suppression of thought', while the Dzokchen precept is 'without acceptance or rejection', 'without suppression or cultivation'.

Explicitly, Dzokchen allows entry to the mandala through any door and every door, whereas ch'an insists upon its narrow quietist methods.

There is not sufficient evidence to prove that Dzokchen was derived from ch'an, but it is reasonable to assume a strong formative influence. Although some Dzokchen lineages may have assimilated some techniques and modes of expression from the Tibetan ch'an of Hwashang Mahayana and his lineage, it is probable that basic Dzokchen texts (particularly of the Vimala Nyingtik) had become virtually inviolable by the time they were taught in Tibet, and thus they had become impervious to Chinese influence. Ch'an's formative influence would have been effective in the land of Dzokchen's birth, Orgyen, and through the 'Chinese' Guru Sri Sirigha and his disciples. Orgyen lay on the southern branch of the silk route that passed over the Hindu Kush and into Chinese Turkestan. The silk route was the great ancient highway that facilitated cultural intercourse between China and India, and in the eighth century China sent ch'an to North-west India with the pilgrims who passed through en route to Aryavarta and with the scholars who came to study in the academies of the area. In the eighth century Kashmir was experiencing the climax of its creative cultural efflorescence. It was the most vital of the four great Indian centres of Buddhist learning;<sup>20</sup> it was creating incomparable art; and it produced the nondual school of Kashmiri Saivism with which Buddhist Tantra had an important creative interaction. The pre-Muslim history of both Kashmir and Orgyen is obscure, but it appears that they were both Sahi kingdoms<sup>21</sup> with a shared culture, if not political ties; their bronze casting provides sufficient evidence of their cultural alliance. Thus we assume that students of Orgyen and Kashmir studied with visiting Serindian teachers of ch'an who were eager to propagate their vital doctrine, and, thereby, ch'an became known to the yogins of the Indian North-west.

As for Sri Singha we have no evidence that he was an adherent of ch'an, and again we can only posit assumptions that appear reasonable and fit the facts of legend. There is no evidence that Sri Singha was an ethnic Chinese; but he was a Chinese citizen, living in Turkestan or Kansu, trained in the Buddhist disciplines current in Chinese monasteries, which included Taoist tainted prajnaparamita and ch'an. Sri Singha is not a name that could have been translated from Chinese,

and it is a name that would be congruous amongst the names of the indigenous Indo-Iranian inhabitants of the oasis city states of Turkestan. The towns associated with Sri Singha, Tashi Tigo and So-khyam, are probably to be found in Turkestan (or possibly Kansu), for no better reason than if they were located in southern China, as some have suggested, the Guru and his disciples would have spent more time on the road travelling to and from India than practising yoga.<sup>u</sup> We may speculate that the Wut'aishan where Sri Singha studied was Khotan, which was a centre of Manjuṣri's cult, a drained valley-lake surrounded by peaks, and one of the few places in T'ang China where it was possible to study the tantras. Both before and after King Trisong invited him to Tibet, the preeminent proponent of Tibetan ch'an, Hwashang Mahayana, lived in a ch'an community in Tun Huang where certain of the school's texts were written down; thus indisputably ch'an flourished in Turkestan. Sri Singha died on his way to visit the King of Khotan to whom he was known. If the religious life of North-west India and Chinese Turkestan, its neighbour, were inter-related and ch'an was known in both areas the source of the ch'an influence on Dzokchen is self-evident.

That Orgyen was the cradle of Dzokchen is indisputable, and more specifically, the Dhanakosa Lake has the same relation to Dzokchen as Bodh Gaya has to hinayana and Grdhrakuta to the mahayana. Vajrapani taught Dzokchen to the Knowledge Holders at Dhanakosa;<sup>2-</sup> ' Garab Dorje taught Manjusrimitra there; Sri Singha taught Vairotsana near the lake; Garab Dorje was conceived by a virgin in Orgyen, and Padma Sambhava was born in the pollen bed of a lotus on the lake; Vimalamitra was born in 'Western India' and was discovered by Trisong's messengers at the King of Orgyen's court; he was known as the Kashmiri Pandita. Indrabhuti (King Dza), the initiator of the anuyoga lineage, was King of Orgyen. Several tantras, including the Guhyasamaja, were revealed there. Orgyen was an important power place (pithasthana) amongst the twenty-four spots sacred to the practitioners of the Cakrasamvara and Hevajra-tantras and also to saktas worshipping Mahadeva and Uma. The Chinese pilgrim Huan Tsang records observing many yogins covered in ashes or wearing bone ornaments only in Orgyen.<sup>29</sup> It was in Orgyen, then, that Garab Dorje had Dzokchen revealed to him, and where he formulated its expression using the literary modes available to him and employing

whatever yoga techniques proved efficacious regardless of their origin. A thorough study of Kashmiri Saivism would probably reveal loans to Dzokchen other than certain total yoga exercises. The contribution of ch'an with its Taoist-flavoured paradoxical elements, meditation techniques, and perhaps the books that Jnanasutra brought back from China, may have been assimilated further down the lineage. But primarily Dzokchen is the quintessence of the Indian Buddhist tantras, and it had lain incipient in the great root tantras awaiting the genius of Garab Dorje to distil it and dispense with the dross.

Another school which claims to teach the quintessence of the tantras was in the process of glorious conception in the same century as Dzokchen. The adiguru of the mahamudra lineage riding the 'vehicle of spontaneity' (sahajayana) to imminent Buddhahood was the Great Brahmin Saraha, who lived in the latter part of the eighth century.<sup>25</sup> Some features of ch'an were also traits of this siddha tradition: anti-scholasticism, anti-monasticism, use of hathayoga techniques, and use of paradox as skilful means (although the siddhas' mystic teaching-songs, the carya-paddas, contain a notion of the absurd quite distinct from that of the Chinese). Many of the mahamudra siddhas were well grounded in the scholarship that they abandoned, and because they never departed from the Bodhisattva path they avoided conflict with orthodox mahayanists. The metaphysical, didactic dohakogas of Saraha, Virupa, Tilopa and Naropa<sup>26</sup> translated into Tibetan in part by Vairotsana, is mahamudra instruction (upadega) that could be accepted in Coto by Dzokchen yogins, particularly the expression of vision (Ita-ba). Was there mutual exchange of ideas between two independently arisen siddha schools, Mahamudra and Dzokchen? Or was Orgyen the source of the quintessential vajrayana doctrines, ideas that were to spread gradually across northern India to Bodhi Gaya, Nalanda and Vikramagila, carried by wandering siddhas from the western Himalayas? The mahamudra lineages of the Eightyfour Mahasiddhas include some yogins who were born or operated in the North-west, and some of these (Lwa-ba-pa, Indrabhuti, Kukuraja) belong to the anuyoga lineage. The spheres of activity of the two schools of siddhas would have overlapped in Bodhi Gaya, where Dzokchen was taught in the Sitavana Cremation Ground.

Finally, the Reformed Bon believe that Dzokchen had its genesis in



Tibet, and that the Bon Master, Shenrab, is the adiguru of the Dzokchen lineage. According to Bon texts, Shenrab was a native of Western Turkestan (Tazik),<sup>27</sup> west of the Pamirs, and he made only one or two visits to Zhangzhung in western Tibet where he taught his Dzokchen doctrines. Shenrab is believed to have taught in Tibet long before the seventh-century King Songtsen Gampo's reign. After their assimilation in Zhangzhung his doctrines were taught in Central Tibet, where in the reign of Trisong Detsen they were systematised, using a vajrayana framework and vajrayana terminology, as the Bonpo Dzokchen of the A-khri and Zhangzhung snyan-brgyud lineages. In this case the metaphysics and yogas that would have impinged upon nascent Dzokchen would have been those of Central Asian Manichaeism, Zhangzhung Bon, the Buddhist Tantra and Kashmiri Saivism. It should be noted that Shenrab's native country, Tazik, is contiguous to North-west India, and to refrain from dismissing the Bonpo claim peremptorily, it is possible to posit a common origin of Buddhist and Bon Dzokchen doctrines. The Bonpo theory gives more power to the Tibetan people and disdains the possibility of an Indian provenance of their most exalted yoga. It is also the most extravagant conjecture in a welter of unfounded conjecture about the origin of Dzokchen.

One final flight of fancy: if the Dzokchen texts were not in an immutable form when Vimalamitra taught in Tibet, we can imagine a metaphorical scenario during Trisong Detsen's reign wherein mystics of genius and high existential praxis and realisation belonging to the Orgyen Dzokchen, Tibetan ch'an, Mahamudra and Reformed Bon schools gathered in Samye from China, Turkestan, Kashmir, Orgyen, Nalanda, Nepal, Bangala, Zhangzhung and Central Tibet, and in an ambience in which the spirit of the dharma prevailed over the letter they crystallised the atiyoga incipient in all their traditions creating a ninth vehicle to Buddhahood. Both kama and terma texts would have been the outcome, written down by Vairotsana, Jnana Kumara, Ma Rinchen Chok and others. Regarding its two aspects, metaphysics and yoga techniques, Dzokchen's nondual metaphysics are then the distilled essence of many Buddhist schools' doctrines; and as for Dzokchen's yoga techniques, their heterogeneity is explained by the diversity of foreign yogins in Samye. Such a congress of yogins would have been orchestrated by Guru Pema himself. This hypothesis would

support the Old School belief that Guru Pema alone formulated the doctrines that were to be hidden as terma, the Dzokchen Padma Nyingtik, a system parallel to the Vimala Nyingtik. But to answer those critics who believe that the Guru taught only mahayoga precepts in Tibet, he must have been aware of the dynamic new yoga emanating from his homeland of Orgyen, and after instruction by dharmakaya or sambhogakaya deities he could have achieved Dzokchen realisation with or without instruction from a lineal Guru before arriving in Tibet. Thus he could have taught the Eight Logos Sadhanas of mahayoga within a Dzokchen framework.

The Reformed Bonpos' claim to be the originators of Dzokchen was probably motivated by a defensive chauvinism provoked by the zealous and highly successful Buddhist missionaries. Undoubtedly the Reformed Bonpos borrowed shamelessly from the Nyingma tantras, working on the principle 'If you can't beat them, join them'. But the movement from Buddhism to Bon was by no means a one-way flow. By the end of the period of the later spreading of the doctrine the Old School had absorbed important elements of the Reformed Bon tradition. The liturgical forms of various Bonpo rites had been absorbed through Bon termas hidden at the time of Trisong Detsen's persecution. Some Dzokchen doctrines were reabsorbed in the same way. Peculiarly Tibetan concepts had been assimilated, including numerological devices: the sacred Bonpo numbers 9 and 13 were employed by the Old School. Bon rites propitiating or exorcising local deities were given a Buddhist tantric framework. Guru Pema had subjugated the entire Bon pantheon, and Tibetan gods and demons were now considered at best as protectors of the Buddha dharma and at least as servants of the tantric yogin. The Nyingma yogin-priest, the ngakpa (sngags-pa), appropriated many of the functions of the Bonshaman, satisfying the religious needs of ordinary people concerned with rites of passage, exorcism and prognostication. Eventually there was little practical difference between Reformed Bonpo and Nyingma ngakpas, both wandering magician-priests performing ritual magical functions.

Two important rites containing elements of the indigenous Tibetan religion are the Longlife Empowerment (tshe-d bang) and death rites (rites of the bar-do). The former is, in essence, a eucharistic sacrament,

and it has been suggested that the Nestorian Christians brought its antecedent ritual to Tibet - there was a sufficient number of Tibetan Christians to merit a Nestorian Bishop of Tibet. 'Bread' and 'wine' are sanctified by the power of the principal of the mandala disclosed for the purpose - Amitayus, Avalokitesvara or Dorje Phurba are commonly invoked - and then the consecrated 'host' is distributed and consumed by the communicants who thus gain longevity. On an esoteric plane, the yogin is initiated into the state of the Immortal Knowledge Holder (tshe-yi-d bang-la rig-'dzin), and substantiating that power through yoga techniques he attains control over his lifespan. The Bonpo bardo rites that guided the soul (bla) as it winged its way through the phantasmagoric realms of the spirits to the heavens of Mu, Cha or Yang, influenced the Buddhist tantrikas' guide to 'the principle of consciousness' (shes-pa) striving to attain a pureland. The forty-nine day journey in the tantric rite is structured according to the process of efflorescence of the mandala of the Wrathful and Peaceful Deities (Zhi-khro lha), which is a specifically Nyingma mandala. On an esoteric level, the bardo rite is a mahkyoga ritual meditation for attainment of Buddhahood here and now. The Tibetan Book of the Dead (Bar-do thos-grol),<sup>28</sup> which contains these rites, is a terma which like many other termas (including The Life) is probably edited from lost sources, in this case both Indian Buddhist and Reformed Bonpo.

Together with these rites the Nyingma yogins borrowed several very important ritual instruments from the Bonpos. The large two-faced drum is well-known in Siberian shamanism where it is used for conjuring spirits, inducing trance and for transportation into spirit realms like the broomstick of a witch; it is used by Buddhist tantrikas to invoke raging deities, and gods and demons. The phurba (phur-bu is the diminutive form), or magical dagger, is of immense importance to the Nyingma yogin, and although it was known in India its close association with the shamanistic world compels the conclusion that the Bonpos also wielded a magical dagger, though not the 'dagger of Emptiness'. There is no representation of the phurba in Indian stone or bronze art, and there is no mention of it in the legends of the Mahasiddhas or in their songs: it would have been the siddhas who carried it. In the Sambara-tantra guardians of the mandala are armed with the phurba to transfix evil spirits who trespass into the magic

circle, but here it is the unique weapon of insignificant protectors.<sup>29</sup> On the contrary, in the Bonpo world the demon-transfixing phurba is ubiquitous and of central importance. Both Buddhist and Bon ngakpas always carry one in their belts. King Mutik-tsenpo (early ninth century) went into battle with a cohort of phurba - wielding officers on his left hand.<sup>30</sup> When Guru Perna arrived in shamanistic eighth century Nepal he exorcised and subjected a class of demons called Phurba Protectors (Phur-srung);<sup>31</sup> this is, perhaps, a reference to a local class of shamans who used the phurba. Even today every Nepali jankri (healer and exorcist) must carve his own wooden phurba (in Newari forba) as an initiatory exercise, and the Buddhist Tamangs, ethnic Tibetans who are believed to have entered Nepal in the seventh century, employ jahkris called bon who use the phurba in their rites of healing. Little is known of the early history of the phurba, but a close study of old Bonpo texts would probably reveal the Bonpos' independent, preBuddhist, use of it.

The origin of the phurba is closely associated with the origin of the Dorje Phurba Tantra; Dorje Phurba is one of the Eight Logos Deities and the most popular Nyingma Yidam. Guru Perna brought the tantra to Tibet after he had received initiation from several sources: he was initiated directly by deities of the Phurba mandala; the Nepali Dhanasamskrta gave him the whispered transmission and initiation into the lineage of King Dza of Orgyen;<sup>32</sup> Prabhahasti, one of the Eight Knowledge Holders, sent him the compendium of Phurba texts called the Phurba Byitotama when spirits obstructed his mahdmudra meditation at Yanglesho in Nepal,<sup>33</sup> texts that he had received from the Dakini-guarded stupa in the *itavana Cremation Ground*. *Prabhahasti hailed from Zahor, King Dza lived in Orgyen and Dhanasamskrta was Nepali: these three siddhas all lived in subHimalayan, shamanistic kingdoms (if Prabhahasti's birthplace is Mandi rather than E. Bengal). Some critics denied that the Phurba Tantra was an authentic Sanskrit tantra; but akya Pandita discovered a short Sanskrit version of a Phurba tantra in the thirteenth<sup>34</sup> and Buton included this text in the Kanjur. The most important caches of Phurba termas were discovered at Senge Dzong Sum and Taktsang in Bhutan. Although Guru Pema's Dorje Phurba scriptures were translated into Tibetan in the eighth century, the phurba was probably known already through tantric practices relating to Hayagriva, in which the phurba*

with the horse's head above its vajra-hilt is used. Hayagriva, the Horse-necked Deity, was perfectly suited to the horseworshipping, horse-dependent Tibetans with the finest cavalry in Asia; their god-king, Songtsen Gampo, was known as 'Exalted Horse' (rTa-mchog). It seems quite plausible that the Tibetan tantrikas harnessed the horse to their sacred phurba. This would be one of the first cases of Bon's amalgamation with Buddhism, and that would have been in the seventh century at the time of Thon-mi Sambhota.

This space devoted to speculation upon formative influences upon the early Nyingma lineage may appear irrelevant to readers who have taken up *The Life* in order to gain insight into the principles and practice of Tantra. But apart from the hedonistic pleasure gained from tantric archaeology and the excavation of mystical Tibetan literature, since religion cannot evolve in a vacuum and is always a human response to a specific political, cultural and geo-physical environment, the purpose of this digression is to prevent mistaking the wood for the trees when approaching Tantra, to identify, even if only by conjecture, some of the factors that have made Tibetan Buddhism what it is. Guru Rimpoche may have been born spontaneously upon a lotus, and Garab Dorje may have been born to a virgin nun, but Tibetan mysticism was not a product of spontaneous combustion in the psyche caused by such factors as oxygen starvation of the brain or over-exposure to ultraviolet rays. Much as Tibet's art is a blend of foreign influences in a Tibetan mould so its religion, and particularly the unreformed schools' religion, is a melding of heterogenous inspirations.



## **THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Yeshe Tsogyel lived during the heroic period of Tibetan history. The Tibetan Empire was at its height, and Tibetan military power was feared throughout Central Asia. The princes of the obscure Tibetan province of Yarlung had become masters of an Empire larger than the Indian sub-continent, and this sudden widening of the horizons of the people of Central Tibet was coincident with an implosion of knowledge from India and China. Perhaps because it contained the highest knowledge and was the most dynamic religion of the day, and perhaps because the Tibetan temperament demanded such an abstract expression of spirituality, Buddhism was the form of knowledge that filled the vacuum in the minds of the Tibetans, the nobility in particular. But Buddhism was not unopposed; Tibet's first Buddhist king, Trisong Detsen, championing the Buddhist cause, provoked a storm of protest amongst the priests of the old religion and conservative clan leaders, and the politics of the early period of Tsogyel's lifetime is primarily the power play of Buddhists and Bonpos. Concerning foreign affairs, an intermittent war was in progress with China on the eastern frontier; but although a war involving tens of thousands of Tibetans, and perhaps hundreds of thousands if we are to believe the legends, must have had a profound effect on family life when fathers and sons were absent, gone to war, the Buddhist histories mention the effects of war and Trisong Detsen's campaigns only in passing.

There are innumerable sources for the history of this period, but only two or three are authoritative and reliable. Two of these are the so-called Tun Huang chronicles and Tun Huang annals, and the third is the Chinese T'ang Annals, which was translated into Tibetan and incorporated into the fifteenth-century Red Annals; even the Red Annals is not totally reliable. Otherwise, there are several Tibetan histories which give detailed accounts of the period, but unfortunately these accounts conflict, often in statement of crucial facts. The authors of these histories relied upon ancient texts, but in weaving their stories their didactic purpose overwhelmed any concern for an objective truth that anyway had become distorted by the bard or the clan story-teller

by the time it was first written down. The period of political and social turmoil unleashed by Langdarma in the ninth century had an incalculable, disastrous effect upon cultural continuity; it formed a hiatus in the history of Tibet, and but for the three sources mentioned above we would be dependent upon legend for a history of the period of the kings. This is to omit one other source: terma.

Termas form the link between the early and the later periods of the spreading of the dharma in Tibet, and for Tibetans, particularly the Nyingma school, a perfectly valid and adequate link. But for Western historians termas are anathema; undoubtedly there is much authentic historical fact in, for instance, the Five Classes of Legend (bKa'-thang sde inga), which relate history concerning Guru Pema, the King, his queens, his ministers and the savants, but the separation of fact from didactic legend, parable and metaphor is fraught with difficulty. Indeed it is only possible when it is evident that a terma is composed of sections edited from various sources, some of them ancient and authentic, and when such historically valid sections can be easily isolated. One such section is the few folios in Tsogyel's Life that describe in a style and language inconsistent with the main body of the text the nature of a Bon blood sacrifice. Many of the historical termas are evidently compilations of old texts; our own manuscript is a fine example. So that although Taksham Nuden Dorje 'discovered' the text as late as the eighteenth century, it contains historical material of great import to a study of the Tibet of Guru Pema. This is not to deny the original authors' work or to treat the theory of revelation with scepticism; there is no contradiction of the metaphysical theory of terma in the statement that the tertön combined a rediscovered biography of Tsogyel, written by Gyelwa Jangchub and Nankhai Nyingpo, with other relevant material to form a composite narrative inspired by union with Tsogyel's mandala, emotional, metaphysical, spiritual, sexual and social. The essential characteristic of a terma is that the tertön's vision of it and the dynamic of its creation originates in a mind that can be described as 'an emanation of Guru Pema and Yeshe Tsogyel in fields of lotus light'; the texts are quite clear that the contents of a terma can originate in many different ways. There are many different kinds of terma. If a Tibetan scholar had discovered the Tun Huang cache of manuscripts he could have edited the Tun Huang chronicles himself and produced an historically authentic terma,



although his didactic treatment of it would not, perhaps, coincide with a Western scholar's view of what was scientific scholarship.

Thus the story which forms a temporal background to Tsogyel's timeless sadhana in *The Life*, the political drama enacted during her lifetime in Tibet, can be sifted for new historical data and for evidence to support existing hypotheses; it can also be enjoyed simply as historical legend. Although the temporal theme is of secondary importance to the principal purpose of *The Life*, which is to instruct and inspire in the Tantra, in so far as a religion or yoga is a function of the needs of a human community at a specific time and place, knowledge of social institutions, the politics and economics of that time and place provide insight into the purpose of religious modes and their evolution. The method that I have adopted here is to summarise a passage from the text and then to comment upon it.

King Nyatri Tsenpo was a scion of the Sakya Clan of ~akyamuni Buddha. He patronised the Bon who practised exorcism and propitiation of spirits. The last in his line was King Lhatotori, in whose reign the basic doctrines of Buddhism were introduced into Tibet, particularly the ten virtues (abstention from murder, theft, fornication, etc.) and also in whose reign the Bon Master Shenrab's Reformed Bon became popular. The doctrines of the Reformed Bon were consistent with the Buddha-dharma, and painted scrolls were created depicting Sakyamuni and Shenrab as forms of the same essence (Chapter 7).

The legend has it that in the far distant past some tribal inhabitants of the Yarlung Valley of Central Tibet discovered an Indian refugee belonging to the ~akya Clan of Northern India descending their sacred mountain, and being mightily impressed by him they carried him down on their shoulders and made him their king, calling him 'Neck-enthroned King' (Nyatri Tsenpo). Early inscriptions identify the father of the royal clan as Ode Pugyel.' This first king patronised the indigenous shamanistic religion. It was during the reign of Lhatotori Nyentsen, the third-century king of a later dynasty, that a box of apocalyptic treasures fell upon the palace roof (Om-bu lhakhang), the chief of these treasures being a sutra in Sanskrit called the *Karandavyuha*. No one was able to read this scripture, but a prophecy accompanied it predicting that it would be translated after five

generations. It is quite conceivable that wandering Buddhist monks found their way to Yarlung in the third century and that the Tibetans gained their first intimation of the Buddha-dharma from them; but it was only in Songtsen Gampo's reign, five generations later, that a civil code based on the ten Buddhist virtues was promulgated.

The early history of Bon is lost in legend, and there is no early literature to shed any light upon it. The Bon themselves ascribe Shenrab a very early birth, so that Reformed Bon is flourishing in Lhatotori's time. This implies Buddhist influence encroaching from the west into the old Bon kingdom of Zhangzhung.<sup>3</sup> Most Western historians like to think that Reformed Bon was an eighth-century phenomenon because in earlier times the Tibetans were simply incapable of the subtle and complex metaphysical thought that assimilated Buddhist doctrines into Bon. Zhangzhung apart, it is unlikely that Central Tibet was culturally evolved before the seventh century when Chinese, Kashmiri, Zhangzhung and Nepali cultural influences penetrated deeply; the Chinese saw Songtsen Gampo as a barbarian nomad warrior king leading a fearsome host of untamed montagnards out of the back of beyond.<sup>4</sup>

Namri Songtsen was the last of Nyatri Tsenpo's line to rule as an equal of six other Tibetan princes. His son, Songtsen Gampo, unified Tibet and the other princes ruled at his sufferance. Songtsen's reign was characterised by religious tolerance. The Rasa (=Lhasa) Trulnang, Ramoche and Trandruk temples, besides 108 smaller temples throughout Tibet and the borders, were constructed. Images were imported for these temples, and Nepali and Chinese artisans built them. A civil code based upon the ten virtues was promulgated. Tonmi Sambhota translated the Mahakarunika-tantras and 'King, Queen, ministers and subjects lived according to their commitments and pledges to Mahakarunika' (Chapters 4 & 7 pt 1).

The reign of Songtsen Gampo was a period of immense achievement. Father and son transformed the small principality of the Yarlung kings in the Yarlung Valley, south of the Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) to the south-east of Lhasa, and one of seven Central Tibetan principalities, into the heart of an empire including most of the Tibetan ethnic world, plus Nepal and parts of Central Asia and China. Namri began by

conquering the neighbouring states of Dakpo and Phenyul, and Songtsen took the culturally superior Bon state of Zhangzhung to the west, Kham and Amdo (Azha, the area around lake Kokonoor) to the east, parts of Kansu and Chinese Turkestan to the north, and Nepal to the south. Thus the Tibetans gained unrivalled military supremacy in Central Asia. As political influence flowed out of Yarlung, cultural influences flowed in. Namri is said to have studied medicine and astrology in China; certainly these sciences were introduced into Tibet during his reign. Songtsen married a Chinese princess who brought Chinese scholars, artisans and monks to Lhasa with her. His Nepali wife brought Nepali painters and sculptors, and no doubt his third wife, from Zhangzhung, was accompanied by Bon priests and bards. Queen Bhrkuti, the daughter of the great Nepali king, Amṣuvarman, had the Rasa Trulnang Temple built to house the image of Aksobhya she brought from Nepal; and the Ramoche Temple was built by Wencheng Kong-jo to house the dowry of her father, the Tang Emperor T'ai-tsung; his dowry was an image of ~akyamuni Buddha that had been presented to the Chinese Emperor by a Buddhist king of Bengal. These two temples with their images remain Tibet's most sacred shrines to this day. The third of Songtsen's temples was the Trandruk Temple built around a self-manifest image of Tara. The 108 border temples, testifying to the Emperor's ardent faith, bound the supine demoness who is the body of Tibet to the Buddha-dharma. Many of them still stand today.<sup>5</sup>

These achievements in art and temple building, however, are overshadowed by the genius of one man whose attainment is unique in the annals of mankind. Tibet has nurtured several men of immense intellectual stature, men like Longchen Rabjampa and Tsongkhapa, but Tonmi Sambhota was the first and perhaps the greatest of them. He contrived an alphabet (probably from the Western Gupta script) and a grammar and syntax, and then, creating a new technical vocabulary, he proceeded to translate into this new language complex Sanskrit works. The Mahakarunika-tantras and the Karandavyuha-sutra were only a part of the corpus of his translation. Chinese works on astrology, geomancy and medicine, and Zhangzhung Bon works, were also translated during Songtsen's reign. Although legend has no doubt exaggerated Songtsen's achievements and the extent of the penetration of Buddhism, certainly the foundations of modern Tibetan culture,

both religious and secular, were laid at this time.<sup>6</sup>

Twentyfive years after Songtsen's death the Buddhists and Reformed Bon were persecuted. Temples were destroyed and the faithful banished. Bonshamanism corrupted the country, and when Trisong Detsen was enthroned the dharma was barely alive (Chapter 7, pt 1).

There is little evidence of persecution of Buddhism twentyfive years after Songtsen's death. However, Songtsen's grandson Dusong was enthroned just twentyfive years after the great king's death, and this would have been an ideal opportunity for reactionary forces to counter Buddhist advances. The Bon opposition to the Buddhist kings of the eighth century was led by zhang ministers, who in *The Life* are virtually identified with the Bon ministers. The zhang ministers seem to have been hereditary officials belonging to the clans from which the kings' wives were chosen, and thus, strictly, were the kings' maternal uncles. Their great power lay in their apparent right to govern during a young king's minority, and since there is evidence that Tibetan kings assumed the throne as soon as they could ride a horse, around the age of thirteen, their fathers abdicating, and perhaps in the distant past being sacrificed, the zhang ministers held power potentially equal to the king himself.' Their politics were naturally conservative in order to maintain their tenuous traditional rights; and in so far as the abdicating kings may have been 'buried alive', that is to say, sent to live in the area of the tombs reserved for the 'living dead', the Bon priests whose territory that was, and for whom funeral rites were an important source of power, were their natural allies. Thus it is quite possible that as regents during Dusong's minority the zhang ministers persecuted the Buddhists, as they were to do when Dusong's son, Me Aktsom, died leaving the thirteen-year-old Trisong Detsen in the power of the zhang minister regents.

If Dusong neglected Buddhism, MeAktsom patronised the new faith, founding temples, and in his marriage to a Chinese princess he was instrumental in bringing Chinese missions to Central Tibet.<sup>8</sup> The missions sent by the Chinese Emperor probably consisted of ch'an monks. When Trisong was aged thirteen his father was assassinated, possibly by the zhang minister faction. Led by one Mazhang Trompa Kye the anti-Buddhists indulged in an orgy of persecution for about

five years. The Rasa Trulnang Temple was boarded up and obscene graffiti scrawled upon its walls, and the Chinese Hwashangs (monks) were expelled. Between the ages of seventeen and twenty, having spent some time on the frontier with his army, Trisong experienced a conversion and came into his own. The Buddhist legends would have us believe that this incarnation of Manjusri was thereafter bent on transforming Tibet into a Buddhist Elysium, but even *The Life* exposes the King as somewhat equivocal in his support of the dharma until much later in his life. Taksham may have projected Mazhang's persecution back to Dusong's reign to whitewash Trisong's reign.

Trisong Detsen's first act was to send for ~antaraksita to teach, translate, ordain and to build him a great vihara. But the opposition was still strong, and to exorcise the country and to quieten the Bon, ~antaraksita insisted that the King invite Guru Padma Sambhava to Samye where the foundations of the temple had been laid. Guru Pema was immediately successful, and the Samye temple-monastery and ritual abode of the King was constructed without hindrance. The translators were assembled, together with candidates for ordination. Thirty-three hundred monks were ordained and the translators began their work. But again political opposition interfered; intrigue caused the exile of translators and work was halted thrice. The King was forced to accord Bon privileges equal to the Buddhists, permitting the construction of a Bon Samye (Chapter 7, pt 1).

The above passage summarises the entire twenty-year period between the King's Buddhist awakening and the great convocation and the consecration of Samye. Santaraksita's enforced return to Nepal is omitted. The Bon opposition delayed Samye's construction for a decade or more, but in *The Life* the 'demon ministers' (Mazhang's role is played by Takra and Lugong, who are sometimes confounded in *The Life*) are not so successful. Other sources describe malice, treachery and betrayal as the ethic attendant upon the establishment of Buddhism in Tibet. The story of Mazhang's death illustrates this. Buddhist ministers bribe an oracle to demand human sacrifice to avert calamity befalling the King and the country. The ministers Go and Mazhang are chosen as the honoured victims, and they are incarcerated alive in a tomb. Go, however, has a means of escape prepared, and using it he leaves Mazhang to his fate.` Another source tells of the same bribed

oracle, but describes how two junior ministers first volunteer as victims and how Mazhang and Lugong are forced to overrule them in order to maintain face. Here they do not die, but become 'living dead', living amongst the tombs, denied all intercourse with the living.

Mazhang's death barely affected the strength of the opposition to the King, but Trisong felt sufficiently confident to recall Santaraksita from exile, and only then did construction of Samye begin. The Life is not explicit as to when Samye was consecrated, but it implies that it was at the time of the great convocation of translators and panditas. In that case the abbot Santaraksita ordained the first seven probationary monks and thirty-three hundred novices, and translation of Sanskrit texts began, before the consecration. The work of translation, an immense undertaking involving two Tibetans and one Indian or Chinese pandita for each of hundreds of lengthy texts, was slow, intrigue causing the exile of principal Tibetan translators. Vairotsana, for instance, is accused by Indian tantrikas, agents of the King of Orgyen, and some Bon ministers, of bringing spurious dharma back from India. The King is forced to pretend that he has had Vairotsana executed, but actually he has hidden him in an isolated temple, where a jealous queen notices the King's frequent visits. The queen, Tsepong Za, seeks Vairotsana's downfall and attempts to seduce him, and provoked by her failure, in a popular Indian scenario, she rends her clothes and rushes to the King accusing Vairotsana of raping her. The King is not convinced, but he is forced to exile his favourite to Kham. Namkhai Nyingpo was also banished due to intrigue and the King's weakness in believing poisonous lies; the Gelong Namkhai Nyingpo was sent to Kharchu in Lhodrak, north of Bumthang in Bhutan, where he was successful in influencing the Bhutanese. ", The King's faith weakened by the opposition's persistent and often successful intrigue, he attempted a policy of reconciliation and appeasement. He was reconciled to the Bonpos and permitted them to build their monastery, sensing perhaps that confrontation and a religious division between clans, and in families, would sap the nation's strength; later events proved such a notion only too true. It was unexpected events at the annual assembly for worship of the king and the translators' and panditas' uncompromising stance that forced him to stage the unwanted final confrontation.

Tsogyel was born princess of Kharchen. Kharchen was one of the seven Central Tibetan principalities subjected by Songtsen Gampo. Courted by princes of two other kingdoms, Kharchu and Zurkhar, Tsogyel would have neither and absconded to Womphu (the valley in which one of the three Taktsang power places is located). Finally, the Emperor married her when she was twelve or thirteen years old (Chapters 2 & 3).

Guru Perna was exiled to Turkhara (in Turkestan) for seven years. When he returned his enemies were still thirsting for his blood, and two attempts were made upon his life while he was living at the hermitage village of Chimphu, near Samye. The King was ensconced in the Samye monastery itself. While the Bon ministers sought the Guru's life, the King begged for initiation into the Tantra. Guru Perna insisted that Trisong Detsen wait a year for his initiation, and during that year the King married Tsogyel. Thus when the King again asked the Guru for initiation, he could offer Tsogyel along with his Empire as the initiation price (Chapters 2 & 3).

The empire that Trisong Detsen offered his Guru included China, Jang (south of Lithang), Kham, Jar, Kongpo, Bhutan, Purang, Mangyul, Guge, Hor, Mongolia and the Northern Plains (fang-thang) (Chapter 3).

In 763 Tibetan armies gained their greatest success. Marching and riding rapidly from the area of Kokonoor (Azha), rolling all opposition before them, they seized the imperial capital of Ch'ang-an. They installed an emperor of their own choice in place of the T'ang Emperor, T'ai tsung, who had fled, and exacted a heavy tribute before retreating. During the next two decades Tibetan armies rode with impunity throughout Central Asia. In 783 a peace treaty with China formally ceded Azha and Chinese Turkestan to Tibet. Thus Trisong was not boasting when he offered a part of China and Jang to his Guru. Nepal is notably absent from the list; a revolt in 704 had freed the Nepalis from their pledge of tribute. Purang and Guge are later names of southern parts of the old kingdom of Zhangzhung, with its capital at Khyung-lung to the west of Mount Kailas. Zhangzhung had rebelled twice since Songtsen had first conquered it, but it was now an integral part of Tibet (Bod). Later, in 790, Tibetan armies marched to the River

Oxus in northern Sassanid Persia, but thereafter an alliance between the Arab Caliph Harun-al-Rashid and the Chinese checked Tibetan expansion in the west. The Chinese were later to regret their assistance to the Muslims, for the Tibetans were one of the few powers that could arrest the advance of the victorious Muslims in their great march for Islam across Asia. Another military feat relevant here as evidence that the King's mandala offering was no fiction, is his cavalry's ride to Bodh Gaya for relics to enshrine in a stupa at Samye. The Tibetans left an iron pillar engraved with details of their prowess on the banks of the Ganga, and a certain clan was left behind to guard it. The pillar has disappeared, but scholars claim evidence of a village in South Bihar where Tibeto-Burman racial features are evident. But the size of the empire changed almost daily. Limited in human resources, unused to garrison duty in hot lands, after the cavalry had won their battle those nomad horsemen would exact their tribute and move on, the defeated soon returning to the status quo.

At the age of sixteen (ca. 773) Tsogyel received initiation. The King's admission that he had given his queen to the 'vagrant sadhu' was the cause of a raucous quarrel in council between the Buddhist and the Bonpo factions. The senior ministers Lugung Tsenpo and Takra Lutsen were the most active opponents of the King. Mama Zhang (Mazhang) was also present in council but played no part in the dispute. The King felt sufficiently strong to decree the building of monasteries and hermitages, and that any opposition to himself or the Guru would be punished. The violent reaction of the Bon ministers caused the King to compromise - both Guru Perna and Tsogyel would be banished. However, with the King's connivance, they went to Tidro to meditate (Chapter 4).

It is significant that the Bon ministers were provoked to the point of open rebellion by the King's gift of Tsogyel to the Guru. It was no doctrinal issue and no political or economic defeat that incensed them, it was the King's violation of tradition, his trampling on social convention, that outraged their conservative sense of propriety. Tradition was sacred; only universal honouring of accepted social forms stood between them and anarchy - and the loss of their authority and privilege. With hindsight it is evident that the old order was fighting for its very existence; but it was not possible for them to see



that the monasteries, the first of which was still in the process of construction, would eventually appropriate a virtual monopoly of authority, property and wealth. Not long after their defeat they were paying increasingly heavy taxes to support the nascent monasteries.

Taksham makes two men out of other sources' one. While ignoring Mazhang Trom-pa Kye, he mentions Takra Lutsen (sTak-ra klu-btsan) and Lugung Tsenpo (gLu-gung btsan-po) as the two principal Bon ministers." Takra Lugong is the Bon minister who is known to have been an opponent of the King and who was eventually banished. This minister should not be confused with the Takdra Lugong who was a loyal servant of the King, saving his life when his father was assassinated and leading the military campaign that reached the Chinese capital, and who modestly recorded his services in the Zhol Pillar inscription below the Potala in Lhasa.

The King's council meeting offers some insight into the nature of government and its processes during the period of the Buddhist kings. It is immediately apparent that the king has no absolute authority. On the contrary it appears that a crude form of parliamentary government is operative, comparable perhaps to the Anglo-Saxon witan, 'a supreme council composed of king, lords, elders, ecclesiastics and the king's friends and dependants'. Go the Elder, possibly the Chief Minister during Trisong's early reign, acts as a parliamentary Speaker, calling order and governing procedure, but he also appears to possess prime-ministerial powers such as the power of veto and the power of decision and execution, as for instance when he sent the religious quarrel to court. In the council described in *The Life* both the King and ministers agree that their power is mutually dependent, and that issues should be resolved by 'wise and civilised discussion'. As proved by the council's ability to force the king to compromise his evangelical fervour, the council acts as a check upon him, but he still wields the ultimate power of decree. Trisong's decrees are made in spite of the ministers and sometimes appear as weapons to curb them. Three of Trisong's decrees are mentioned in *The Life*: the first made in council, decreeing the propagation of Buddhism and protection for the Guru; the second after a later council, decreeing the procedure and judgment of the trial; and after the trial a third, decreeing that the Bonpos should be outlawed. These three decrees were aimed at the zhang and Bon ministers rather

than at the common people whose religious activity was virtually ungovernable. There is no intimation of the judicial system operative throughout the empire; but other sources assert that the empire was divided into military districts each governed by a general, and it is to be assumed that the general would implement the king's decrees and apply rough and ready justice. Concerning the manner of effecting decrees: the second decree was made law after it had been read nine times by the ministers reading from a law scroll (khrims-yig-ring-mo) and nine times by the King. And one further remark: it is evident from this description of the council meeting that if the king is weak a numerically superior opposition with an eloquent spokesman can control him and render him politically impotent, while if the king has charisma and popularity he can dominate the council and wield absolute power.

After the council Guru Pema and Tsogyel are banished. But they do not go to their respective places of exile; they go together to meditate at Tidro. We need not wonder at the ease with which they evaded the law. The population of Tibet was probably the same in Guru Pema's time as it is today - about four million souls - since the king was able to martial an army of perhaps hundreds of thousands. There was a relatively large sedentary population of clans in the villages of the fertile valleys who considered themselves culturally superior to the nomad pastoralist clans who wandered in the northern plains and the eastern hills. There was no machinery of central government and the provinces were to all intents and purposes independent. The king governed by moving his mobile capital of tentpalaces from place to place, making his presence felt wherever it was needed. In such an environment it would have been very easy for the Guru and Tsogyel to avoid human contact.

After a period of meditation, Tsogyel was instructed to go to Nepal to find her partner in yoga. Nepal was the Kathmandu Valley (Bal-yul). In Nepal she visited Khokhomhan, the Boudhnath Stupa, the E Vihara and Yanglesho. In Khokhomhan she found her consort, who was a slave, and bought him from his owners. She met ~akya Dema, Vasudhara and Jila Jipha (Chapter 4).

The glimpse of eighthcentury Nepal provided by The Life doubtless

contains eighth century elements, but there is no certainty that it was not derived from Taksham's own personal observation in the eighteenth century.<sup>12</sup> However, all the sites visited by Tsogyel in the eighth century should have existed then. The Newars believe that the Boudhnath Stupa was built in the fifth century by the Licchavi King Manadeva, while the Tibetans project its origins back into the distant past to the era of the Buddha Kaṣyapa. The Tibetans believe that the E Vihara was the original building that stood upon the site now occupied by the great Kasthamandapa temple-cum-reshouse in Durbar Square in Kathmandu. From 1143 until recent times, this so-called Maru Sattal was occupied by ~aivite yogins, but there is evidence to indicate that before the great building was constructed out of its single tree trunk a Buddhist vihara stood on the site; a local guthi (coven of tantrikas) still performs ancient Buddhist rites there. At Yanglesho near the Mesa Narayan Temple, and above it at Asura, are the caves in which Guru Perna performed his mahkmudra retreat and gained his ultimate enlightenment through the efficacy of the Dorje Phurba mandala; to the Nyingmapas it is more sacred than Bodh Gaya. There is no reason to doubt that this is the actual place of Guru Pema's meditation. Khokhomhan is usually identified with Bhaktapur, but in early texts it appears to indicate the capital town of the Valley rather than Bhaktapur specifically. Thus in Tsogyel's time Khokhomhan may have denoted the town in the area of the fabulous Kailaṣakuta Bhavan, that had been built by Amṣuvarman only a hundred and fifty years before. Whatever the location of Khokhomhan, slavery existed there, as indeed it has done in Nepal until recent times. And even today sadhus have a reputation as child thieves, the sadhu's garb being a convenient disguise.

Concerning the devotees she met, both Jila Jipha and Vasudeva are described as kings (rgyal-po). It is probable that 'king' signifies ksatriya, a man belonging to the ruling, warrior caste. Vasudeva is an important link in the Tibetan tantric lineage of anuyoga, and ~akya Dema is an emanation of Vajra Varahi in Guru Pema's mind.

Tsogyel returned from Nepal to Tidro, where she met her Guru and began her practice of the Third Initiation yoga with Atsara Sale, her consort. Then the King's speedwalkers, the ministers and translators Shubu Pelseng, Gyatsa Lhanang and Ma Rinchen Chok, arrived at

Tidro to invite the Guru to initiate the twentyone (or twentyfive) disciples. Takra Gungtsen was sent to welcome the Guru from afar. After initiation the disciples dispersed to practise in retreat (Chapter 4).

Speedwalking was the Tibetan equivalent of the American pony-express; trained messengers were capable of walking, or rather loping in a trance over vast distances without respite.<sup>13</sup> It is curious that Takra Gungtsen is sent as envoy of welcome to meet the Guru. Either reconciliation had effected a change in his heart for a time, or in the confusion of identity of this man the loyal minister of the Zhol Pillar, Takdra Lugong, was intended. It was the Tibetan, and also the Chinese, custom to send an envoy of welcome, and if the visitor was to be greatly honoured two or three different envoys, to meet a guest at varying distances from his destination. A similar custom governed departure; it is a mark of respect for a Tibetan to accompany his departing guest some distance from his house.

An indication of the lull in political infighting is the willingness of the King to permit his ministers, his brother-disciples, to disperse to practise their meditation. The twentyone or twentyfive Siddhas of Chimphu (the Twentyfive: King, Queen and Courtiers - Jewong Nyernga) were the cream of the Buddhist aristocracy, the privileged and educated, and their consorts ladies of high birth. Although the twenty-four were the King's ministers and supporters in council they were probably quite young, their fathers still alive; many of them were able to participate in Repachan's revision of the canon (Ma, Shubu, Chokro, etc.).

It is possible that the lower orders of society had been influenced, if not converted, by very early Buddhist missionaries to Tibet, but during the period of the Buddhist kings it was the upper classes who received Buddhist education and initiation. With the edict prohibiting the practice of Bon rites the peasants and nomads may have been touched by Buddhism, but it is difficult to see how any but the nobility could have been forced to abstain from the practice of Bon rites and relinquish their attachments to the clan deities, the local spirits and demons, the earth-lords, personal gods and protectors and the war-gods, *etc.* It is improbable that the nomads and peasants could

comprehend the nature of the abstruse metaphysical deities of Buddhism. In theory Buddhism is the most democratic of religions since no priest-mediator is necessary for the devotee to practise his religious observances, but in Tibet, from the first, dharma was seized upon by the educated social and political elite, who through their economic power then gained control of the monasteries. Since initiation was obtained by a substantial offering of gold to the teacher, the rich had an advantage, and later the tulku system was corrupted to assure certain families' hegemony of power in the monasteries. Thus a self-perpetuating theocracy arose, in which the ecclesiastical sons of the political and economic aristocracy were worshipped by the peasants like a pantheon of gods. This system had the great redeeming feature of permitting upward social mobility through academic achievement; if a novice showed great promise he could usually obtain the funds necessary to complete his education, and then he could aspire to the position of 'abbot' (khempo) or an administrative position. Otherwise, he could practise meditation, and if he had the karmic potential he could become a 'naljorpa' (yogin), a 'gomchen' (master of yoga), or a ngakpa (a wandering 'magician'). In many ways Tibetan Buddhism was similar to the medieval European Church; the Church, however, lacked any institution with a procedure of selection of its functionaries comparable to the method of choosing the tulku, the titular head and ultimate spiritual authority of a monastery. From a social standpoint the discovery of a tulku in a peasant or nomad family had the effect of raising the tulku's family from the bottom to the top of the social hierarchy; this was, and still is, a common phenomenon, since the process of divining a tulku's rebirth is often performed without prejudice.

Tsogyel spent six years in meditation at Tidro and in Bhutan. Then she returned to Womphu and received the Phurba initiation from Guru Perna, during which the Guru projected 'killer' forms of Dorje Phurba to eradicate or subject the gods and demons of Tibet. A single demon escaped from the Manasarovar Lake, at the foot of Mount Kailas, and in the form of a red ox was given sanctuary by King Trisong Detsen at Samye (Chapter 5).

This story can be interpreted as a political parable. The Lake and the Mountain, universal symbols of fertility and virility, are the spiritual

home of Bon and the chief power places of the ancient kingdom of Zhangzhung. As noted above, Zhangzhung had been conquered by Songtsen in the seventh century, and thereafter marriages between the royal families of Yarlung and Zhangzhung had maintained the tie. But Zhangzhung had risen twice in revolt, and Trisong was forced to have the Zhangzhung king assassinated. The story of the King giving sanctuary to the Red-ox Demon, Guru Pema's castigation of the King for this seemingly charitable act and his inauspicious prognostication predicting disaster out of all proportion to the cause, possibly indicates that Trisong compromised fatally in his treatment of the Zhangzhung Bon. Falling between two stools - the short-term political security of an important province and the long-term survival of Buddhism in Tibet - he assassinated the king but cherished the Bon snake that eventually turned upon his grandson and destroyed all that he had sought to build. The Zhangzhung Bonpos must have been staunch supporters of Langdarma the Apostate.

When Tsogyel had concluded her meditation practice, she found that the King had been reconciled to the Bon faction and that a peace treaty had been sealed with the Chinese Emperor (in 783); King Trisong Detsen's aspirations seemed close to fulfilment. The building of Samye completed, the King convoked a great assembly. Translators were recalled from exile; twentyone panditas were invited from India, amongst them Vimalamitra; Bon sages and shamans were called from Zhangzhung and other Bon centres, two magi named Tongyu and Tangak in particular; in a category of his own was Drenpa Namkha, the Bon scholar and shaman turned Buddhist siddha; Guru Perna and Tsogyel were escorted from Womphu Taktsang; and three thousand candidates for ordination were assembled from all over Tibet. The convocation took place on the Yobok Plain outside Samye (Chapter 7, pt 1).

Regarding the chronological succession of events, *The Life* is not authoritative; there is, however, a certain logic in the sequence of the convocation, the consecration of Samye, the quarrel at the Annual Worship of the King, the contest in magic and debate between Bon and Buddhist, and the edict establishing Buddhism as the state religion and abolishing Bon. The possible dates of these events will not be discussed here. In *The Life* the Tibetan Buddhist representatives are

usually referred to as 'translators' (lotsawas); this does not limit them to the function of translation. The translators are also the Siddhas of Chimphu; they are yogins, saints, magicians (siddhas) and the root-gurus of many Old School lineages, besides being scholars and translators.<sup>14</sup> But the Tibetans lay greatest emphasis upon their achievement as translators, emphasis commensurate with the enormous and profound respect that they feel for the scriptures, which are identified with the Buddha's Word or logos. Two periods of translation can be discerned during the early dissemination of the dharma: the first begins before the consecration of Samye, and ends when the pressure on the Chinese schools hardens and the Indian schools begin to dominate. The later period begins with the defeat of Hwashang Mahayana and ends with Langdarma's persecution. In the former period the translation of Chinese texts took priority, the majority of Tibetan translators working with Chinese. In response to Trisong's request the Chinese Emperor, T'ai tsung, returned to Tibet the Chinese ch'an mission banished by Mazhang. Further, after the Tibetan army took Tun Huang in the eastern Tarim Basin in ca. 782 the ch'an Master Hwashang Mahayana and some of the ch'an community with whom he lived were invited to Samye, where they assisted in translation. The Sanskrit scholars, though fewer, translated many texts of great importance to the Nyingma School. Vimalamitra from Kashmir translated his Dzokchen texts and Guru Pema and Vairotsana also translated Dzokchen texts together with some tantras.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps because of the greater facility, exactitude and literalism with which Sanskrit rather than Chinese could be translated into Tibetan, or because of the greater capability of the newly arriving Indian panditas, it became evident that higher standards of translation could be achieved and that standardisation of terminology was required. After completion of the Mahavyutpatti and other glossaries and lexicons, during Repachan's reign revision of the earlier translations assumed high priority, and whereas in the earlier work there was concern for essential meaning and cogency, the revisers eschewed paraphrase and suffered stilted grammatical exactitude. The Padma bka'-thang Shel-brag-ma gives extensive lists of Nyingma sutras and tantras translated in this early period, as does a catalogue of the Tibetan books in the royal library of Samye, called lDan-dkar-ma, prepared perhaps in 788 and revised later.<sup>16</sup> The early translations omitted from the Tenjur and Kanjur are to be found in the Nyingma Gyud-bum and other

collections.

Invited with special honour by Trisong, Drenpa Namkha Wongchuk<sup>17</sup> was also present at Samye. He seems to have been a man of towering intellect and magical power. He bridged the gap between Buddhism and Bon, and if he did not initiate the process of Bon's assimilation of Buddhism he assisted in the process. His termas were to be discovered in the eleventh century and after, when Reformed Bon appeared in Nyingma guise. The Bonpos maintain that he was Buddhist only in Body and Speech, his Mind remaining committed to the swastika. There appears to be admittance of some deceit in this statement; if not for his significant work for Buddhism, Drenpa Namkha could be seen as a Bon infiltrator of Nyingma tantric lineages, achieving the Promethian task of stealing the tantric fire.

The period of harmony between Buddhist and Bonpo was short-lived. After the convocation came the Annual Worship of the King (rgyal-po sku-rim) at the new year festival. The Bon were contemptuous of images and image worship and stupas, of the Indian element in Trisong's religion. In the Bon Kurim the swastika Gods, Cha and Yang, were invoked and propitiated by immense animal sacrifice; the King's longevity, good fortune and prosperity were contingent upon these gods' satisfaction (Chapter 7, pt 1).

Annual and grand triennial rites in which king and subjects were bound by oath to mutual loyalty were attended by sacrifice of animals including horses and dogs as witnesses and protectors of the vow. The sacrifice also instilled the fear by which the imprecation 'May all vow-violators come to a similar end!' was rendered more effective. It seems probable that the description of the Bon Kurim, which in its style, vocabulary and syntax betrays its ancient provenance, portrays the triennial oath of loyalty rite.<sup>18</sup> This rare glimpse of an unreformed Bonshaman rite (although Buddhist influence may have eliminated human sacrifice) introduces Cha and Yang. Essentially, these swastika Gods are sky-gods who like Mu (dMu) reign over their celestial paradises, heavens reached by the rainbow-like mu-cords by the early kings, and later by yogin-adepts. On a popular level, where Cha has come to mean 'chance', 'omen', or 'luck', they are virtually synonymous as the metaphysical powers of prosperity and fortune. The priests who



propitiate these gods are called Bon in the limited sense of adept officiants in rites of exorcism, invocation, etc.; both Bon and Shen (gshen) can be translated as 'shaman', and in 'Tomb Bon' (the shamans who perform funeral rites) and 'Cha Shen' (soothsaying shamans) 'Bon' and 'Shen' have the same value.

In a broad sense 'Bon' denotes not only a practitioner of the preBuddhist religion and a devotee of Reformed Bon, but the indigenous Tibetan religion itself. At this point the difference between Bonshamanism and Reformed Bon should be clarified. We have very little evidence of the nature of ancient Bonshamanism; thus the importance of the Kurim passage in *The Life of Taksham*'s description of Bonshaman metaphysics is obviously of Buddhist-influenced doctrines, but from other sources it is clear that the Bon priests were primarily involved in rites of exorcism, divination and death. Exorcism is to be understood as manipulation of noumenal powers, and thus includes the expulsion of 'black' spirits from impure locations (such as a diseased body or a haunted house), and the invocation of 'white' spirits for the purpose of destroying the black, or to fulfil the desire of an adept, or his client, for success in any enterprise. In short, the Bonshaman controls the spirit world; he balances the forces of good and evil, harmonises the spirit world with the human world, and attempts to influence the phenomenal world through his control of noumenal forces. Divination and funeral rites are applications of his skill in manipulating spiritual forces.

As in animistic, sub-Aryan India the universe is conceived in three planes: the heavens, the earth and the subterranean realms. The heavens are the stratified abodes of the sky-gods such as Mu, Cha and Yang. The shaman may send his soul on journeys to these heavens for various purposes. The Tomb Bon leads the soul through the 'intermediate space' by means of the bar-do rites when the time is ripe for the soul to leave the body; or the shaman-healer may chase an elusive soul that has been frightened out of its residence by a spirit of disease, in order to return it to its body. The middle plane, the earth, is populated by gods associated with human existence: the personal gods who inhabit various parts of the body, the 'energy gods' who fight evil, and the war gods, *etc.* and spirits that exist in the environment as extensions of the mind - the animistic gods of nature, the earth-lords

(sa-bdag) who dominate specific locations, the spirits of power-places, the elemental spirits that inhabit the elements per se and whose imbalance causes disease, spirits of specific diseases identifiable with viruses, bacteria, *etc.* These gods, demons and spirits are subject to sympathetic magic - charms, amulets, talismans, imprecations, music, dance, song, drugs and potions - and direct supplication through trance, hypnosis and sophisticated ritual psychoanalysis; the shaman has a large arsenal of weapons with which to control them. The subterranean world is inhabited by serpents - nagas - who are the guardians of wealth; minerals are their province, gold in particular, and also the element water. In general all these gods and demons, and sometimes spirits, are anthropomorphic in that they are capable of good and bad, but they are not merely projections of a human mind that determines their nature; they exist as extensions of the mind in so far as all experience occurs on planes comprising the mind, but they possess karmas of their own determined by their function in a universal order, or chaos, galvanised by the eternal, antagonistic play of light and darkness. In short, relative to the ego, gods and demons exist as discrete entities, but if the individuated mind is identified with the universal mind they exist as a part or 'projection' of the yogin-shaman's mind. But the shaman's philosophical idealism is animistic in origin, and has no causal relationship with Buddhist mentalistic philosophy. 'The universe was held to be immaterial mindstuff in the form of gods and demons, so that whatever the mind conceived was a god or demon' - this statement is probably derived from a rationalisation of a shaman's experience rather than from a coherent metaphysical system, which the Bonshamans lacked. Indeed Bonshamanism appears to have been an eminently practicable corpus of psychotherapeutic and mystical ritual devices, largely free of scriptures, although legends and the liturgies of ritual may have been written down in the Zhangzhung language. The innumerable methods of divination; the cult of the dead, employing vast tumulus-like tombs; the swastika, the drum and the phurba; the bards and the riddle-priests: all excite the imagination, and deserve extensive discussion, but there is no space here.<sup>19</sup>

The very fact that the Bon dharma was transmitted by bards as creation myth, parable and heroic legend, demonstrates the weakness that betrayed it when it was confronted by the systematic and highly

sophisticated metaphysics of the Buddhists. But regarding the early history of Reformed Bon, while the traditional Bon view is that Buddhism modified Bon as early as the third century and that by the time of Trisong Reformed Bon was already highly evolved, some scholars now suggest that the originator of Reformed Bon, the Master Shenrab, was a mythical creation of a Bon genius, or a group of highly motivated and intelligent men, defending the indigenous religion in the eighth century. Shenrab, the Bon tradition tells us, was a native of Tazik, probably the area around Samarkand, and he visited Tibet only once, to spread his doctrine in Zhangzhung. His doctrines consisted of much material consistent with the Buddhist Tantra, while some scholars have found traces of Saivism, Manichaeism, Nestorian doctrines and elements of other faiths of the sphere of Persian cultural influence and of North-West India.<sup>20</sup> Until original texts in the Zhangzhung language have been discovered and original Bon doctrines have been culled from Reformed Bon manuscripts, the origins of Reformed Bon will remain a mystery. As it is, Reformed Bon appeared like a phoenix in the eleventh century, almost indistinguishable from the Old School, an intimate mutual exchange having caused a close superficial similarity. The lower four of the Nine Ways of Bon, comprising the shamanistic techniques of healing, divination, exorcism and propitiation, and attainment of the devotee's well-being, are known to the Nyingma ngak-pa, but not practised by the Nyingma bhiksu. The upper five of the Nine Ways of Bon are modified paths of the Nyingma Tantra; in the ninth vehicle for instance, the Way of Dzokchen, the Bon Dzokchen Atri and Zhangzhung Nyen-gyud systems are reflections of the Dzokchen terma and kama traditions of the Old School. It appears that since the upper five Bon paths are saturated with Old School terminology and concepts they were directly derived from the Nyingma Tantra, while the practices of the lower four Bon vehicles were borrowed by the Nyingmapas.<sup>21</sup>

The Bon's contempt for Buddhism, and their blood sacrifice, caused the panditas and translators to revolt and demand the disestablishment of Bon. The King equivocated, wishing to avoid a confrontation within his council that would inevitably result in civil war, and the King conducting a campaign to suppress the Bon. The issue was decided, however, by the acquiescence of all parties to a suggestion of Chief

Minister Go that a debate and contest in magic should resolve the problem for all time, the losing faction accepting compulsory banishment. The contest had three parts: a contest in riddles, a doctrinal debate and a contest in magical power. The Bon were defeated, but refusing to accept their exile an extremist faction made a final militant stand, only to be destroyed by Tsogyel's ritual magic. Takra and Lugong (sic) were amongst her victims. The Bon of Central Tibet were then concentrated at Samye, and maltreated, it is implied. Guru Pema's sentence liberated the Reformed Bon followers of Shenrab, their books being hidden as terma, while the swastika Bon, the Bonshamans, were banished to Mongolia (Sog-po) and their books burned. The King then promulgated his second decree binding all Tibetans to refrain from Bonshaman practices and to practise only Buddhism (Chapter 7, pt 1).

The historicity of these events is doubtful, but not disproven. Where the Tun Huang chronicles may have mentioned such a debate the manuscript has a lacuna. The debate is ignored in many early historical works. But whether or not the events occurred as described above, the Bon surely lost the eighth century political and religious struggle with the Buddhists, the result being their exile from Central Tibet and the destruction or concealment of their texts. Until 1959 there was only one Bon monastery in Central Tibet,<sup>22</sup> and we know that the Bon texts appeared later as terma. The debate serves as an excellent subject for dramatisation, but something can be learned of Tibetan justice in the eighth century. The procedure of counting pebbles (rdeu), either black or white, is mentioned only in passing, but it may indicate an ancient Bon method of reckoning justice. The contest in riddles is precisely what it implies, but for the Bon riddles had an esoteric meaning and function which is obscure.<sup>23</sup> It is improbable that the Tibetans had a tradition of debate before the Buddhists brought it from India; 'by metaphysics shall you be judged' casts doubt upon the authenticity of the account, and would certainly have sounded the death knell of the Bon. More significant than their superiority in debate was the Buddhists' superiority in magic; Guru Pema's magical subjection of Tibet's gods and demons, like Milarepa's defeat of the Bonpo in a contest in magic on Mount Kailas, looms large in the popular legends that convince the people of the Buddha-dharma's greater power. Finally, if the Bon-po Buddhist debate is a figurative description of

actual events then the legend of the other Samye Debate, that between the Indian and Chinese factions of Buddhism, could also be a metaphor.

After the annihilation of the Bon the way was opened for the unobstructed propagation of the dharma. Another convocation affirmed the triumph of the King; the panditas were liberally rewarded and the King begged them to stay to teach and translate. During the next few years many monks were ordained and many monasteries were constructed; specifically mentioned are the tantric meditation centres (sgrub-grwa) of Chimphu, Yang Dzong and Yerpa, and the academies (shes-grwa) of Samye, Lhasa, and Trandruk. Some years later all the panditas except Guru Perna, Santaraksita and Vimalamitra returned home, their work complete. Satisfied, the great Buddhist King, the incarnation of Manjugri, Trisong Detsen, abdicated in favour of his son, Mune Tsenpo, and died soon after (Chapter 7, pts 1 & 2).

Trisong Detsen's reign saw the Buddha-dharma firmly established in Tibet. The first great monastic centre and several other academies and meditation centres were built, thousands of monks were ordained and a large portion of essential scriptures was translated. The Bonshamans had been banished from Central Tibet and the Reformed Bon impregnated with Buddhist doctrines. However, the seeds of the dharma's destruction had been set by the physical and social violence of the means employed to establish it.

Mune Tsenpo was poisoned by his mother shortly after his enthronement. Mune was succeeded by his brother Mutri Tsenpo. Tsogyel healed a schism in the Community and an edict prohibited schism by law. The anti-Buddhist queens responsible for the schism banished Tsogyel to Tsang, and after an attempt was made upon her life by a Bon priestess she journeyed to Tsang and Nepal to meditate and to preach (Chapter 7, pt 2).

Mune reigned for as few as three months or as many as twentyone months, according to different sources.<sup>24</sup> He is credited with three attempts at egalitarian reform, but even twentyone months seems too short a period to implement, and fail in, a policy of redistribution of land. Guru Pema's comment upon land reform provides a basis for the

ethical attitude that not only may rationalise Mune's failure, but also justify the hierarchical social system, kick-the-dog social values, and the feudal system that characterised Tibet down to modern times and in the end, perhaps, destroyed the old order: 'The rich are rich and the poor are poor on account of their generosity, or lack of it, in past lives; both are reaping the rewards of their karma.'<sup>25</sup> We are told that Mune was killed by his inordinately jealous mother, Margyen Tsepong Za, out of spite for her daughter-in-law, Phoyongza Gyeltsun, a younger queen of Trisong - she deprived her of her greatest pleasure. But in so far as *The Life* asserts that she was an inveterate supporter of the Bon faction, voting against her husband in council, and also causing Vairotsana's banishment, it is credible that she acted as an agent of her clansmen, the Tsepong zhang ministers, in the assassination of her communistic son. She may also have been instrumental in the schism; there is no mention of it in other sources. It is interesting to note that the swastika Bon Princess who attempted to kill Tsogyel was denominated a Bonshaman in the passage describing her magical battle with Tsogyel, but that now she is described as an Esoteric or Reformed Bonmo. No doubt many Bonshamans converted to the reformed sect to avoid exile.

With Trisong's death we enter a very confused period of chronology. Almost all the events of Tsogyel's phase of service to the dharma and sentient beings fall into the reign of Mutri Tsenpo, but Mutri's reign is relatively short. Problems of chronology will be discussed below (see pp. 338ff.).

Legend has associated Tsogyel's name with several places of pilgrimage in Central Tibet; the caves at Tidro where she practised meditation and where an anchorite's cave is named after her; Tidro Peak where she practised her austerity; Zapu Lung where she meditated and finally passed on; Tsogyel Dragmar, where a temple is attributed to Trisong Detsen; the Nyingma monasteries of Womphu Taktsang, Drak-dar, Samye Yamalung, Zapu and others associating her name with their establishments; and the Senge Dzong Sum and Nering Temples in Bhutan, both of which are sources of termas relating to Dorje Phurba. But her name is chiefly associated with Western Tibet (gTsang), where she roamed during her period of exile. She gave her name, or rather her title 'Jomo' (Lady), to Kharak Gang and to the

monastery she established there, Jomo Kharak, and also to Jomo Nang. She also visited Sangak Ugp lung, Shampo Gang, Zurpisa, and Pema Gang in Shang; she taught in Mangyul, which lies north of the Nepali town Triṣuli and has contemporary Kyirong as its capital. Tradition associates her with many of the cis-Himalayan areas of Nepal, particularly Yolmo (Helembu) where lies the Gung-thang cave, today called Tsashorong, in which she received her Dzokchen initiation, and also with the power places of Sankhu, Yanglesho and the E Vihara in the Kathmandu Valley.

Invited to return to Samye by Mutri Tsenpo, Tsogyel found Santaraksita dead, and she mourned before his reliquary stupa. Then she spent some time with her Guru, and having written down his termas she travelled with him throughout Tibet. Because the termas were hidden wherever they set foot, they were known as 'foot-termas' (zhabs-gter). The Guru then departed for the South-west (Chapter 7, pt 2).

It is possible that Santaraksita left Tibet to die in the land of his birth before the Samye Debate in 792, and that the Samye stupa enshrines token relics. The date of Guru Pema's departure will be discussed below. Some scholars have attempted to identify his destination, Ngayab Ling; but undoubtedly Ngayab is a mythic island, the sub-continent that lies to the south-west of Jambudvīpa. In the island's centre stands Zangdokperi, the Coppercoloured Mountain in the form of the Guru's mandala, and outside the mandala live demon-savages (sinpo) who can be either humans or spirits.

After the Guru's departure Tsogyel lived at Chimphu (the Samye retreat centre situated about 40 miles north-east of Samye itself), where she taught many monks recently ordained by the newly appointed Abbot of Samye, the Indian pandita Kamalaṣila. During this period a dispute erupted between the Chinese faction in Samye called the Tonminpa (adherents of the 'sudden' school) and the Indian faction called the Tseminpa (adherents of the 'gradual' school). The former led by the Chinese monk Hwashang Mahayana held the western area of Samye and the Jampa Temple, while the Indian Abbot Kamalaṣila held the Hayagriva Temple. It appears that violence was resorted to. Tsogyel descended from Chimphu, and although she was disobeyed

initially, she eventually healed the schism. A decree established Kamalaśīla's doctrines as the only path, while Hwashang Mahayana was sent home with honour (Chapter 7, pt 2).

The Samye Debate, whether the traditional account is interpreted literally or figuratively, was one of the most important events in the history of Tibet during Tsogyel's dramatic life. It determined that Tibet would turn away from China for both religious and cultural sustenance, and away from ch'an quietism, and follow the Indian Bodhisattva path. Taksham deals with it cursorily. Although Indian, Chinese and Tibetan sources describe the debate, none are authoritative, for almost every source has an axe to grind. Kamalagīla's *Bhavanakrama*<sup>26</sup> uses the debate as a peg on which to hang an exposition of Bodhisattva philosophy, idealising the debate and ignoring the opposition; the earliest and oft-quoted Tibetan account, Buton's *History of the Dharma*, is uncomfortably biased in the Indian's favour; amongst the amazing treasures of Tun Huang were several texts, some complete and some fragmentary, describing the doctrines of Hwashang Mahayana's ch'an, including an account of the debate by a disciple of the master, a writer who was probably present at the event.<sup>27</sup> The Nyingmapas are strangely quiet about the debate, but it is highly significant that a very early source makes the Chinese the victors. Indeed, we cannot be certain that the result was clear-cut, and it is indisputable that Hwashang Mahayana's influence continued to be felt in Tibet through the Old School's lineages, and that Buton served a vested interest by reporting Kamalagīla's absolute victory and by pouring scorn upon the Chinese.

The reformed schools influenced by Atisa continued and developed the 'gradual' school methods of Santaraksita and Kamalasila, sustaining the prejudices of the Indian party at the Samye Debate against ch'an and the Chinese. China enjoyed a cultural influence in Tibet during the T'ang dynasty that it was never to attain again; China was to become the enemy in Tibetan history. Since Songtsen Gampo had married a T'ang princess, Chinese social and cultural mores held an exemplary sway at the Tibetan court. The Tibetan nobility learnt Chinese, rather than Sanskrit, to educate themselves in the important sciences of medicine and astrology; Chinese tea and music became fashionable. The Tibetan army absorbed Chinese culture directly,



through social intercourse. Before envoys invited Santaraksita to Samye, Trisong's father had sent Ba Selnang and 'Sang-shi'll' to the Imperial Court to gather books. These two roving ambassadors were taught ch'an while in China and brought back texts that were hidden as terma due to Mazhang's unexpected ascendancy. But the ch'an monks invited by Trisong's father to Central Tibet had great success in their conversion of Tibetans. Expelled by Mazhang they returned in strength to participate in translation and propagation of the dharma, and they accrued a library of translations larger than the Sanskritists. The most prominent of the Chinese ch'an monks (ho-shang, corrupted to hwarshang by the Tibetans) was Hwashang Mahayana.

Thus the Chinese had achieved a powerful political and religious position by 792; the majority of Buddhist converts in Central Tibet belonged to the ch'an schools. There was ample reason for the Indian party to fear them and for Tibetans to involve them in their politics. But besides political considerations there were important doctrinal differences at issue. To be brief, Kamalagila taught that Buddhahood can only be attained by practice of social virtue and personal discipline, and that madhyamika dialectics are essential to condition the mind gradually to the reality of Emptiness and the futility of discursive thought. Practice of virtues and selfless acts throughout aeons of rebirths slowly but surely cultivate a Bodhisattva's karma, so that when enlightenment is finally achieved Buddha activity spontaneously arises. Traversing the paths and climbing the levels of a Bodhisattva's career, through persistent meditation upon the peaceful centre of the mind while guarding the doors of the senses, and practising giving, patience, moral discipline, etc., one's own purpose and the good of others are served simultaneously, and gradually samsara is transcended and nirvana attained. Solitary meditation with the aim of attaining gnosis alone, betrays the mahayana ideal 'for the good of others' and smacks of hinayana self-preoccupation; and anyway ordinary human beings are incapable of sustaining the thought-free samadhi (nirvikalpa-samadhi) by which the Chinese were obsessed. On the contrary, Hwashang Mahayana taught that not only are human beings perfectible but that they are perfect as they stand, and they need only an instant of that realisation to take hold of the root of their being to effect a turning around in the seat of consciousness and to transform them suddenly into Buddhas. Thus virtue is irrelevant

and quietistic meditation is all. Rejecting academic and monastic discipline, logic and dialectics, good works and persevering piety, the ch'an yogin is concerned only with the suppression of thought, with the elimination of all mental activity whatsoever, so that he may enter the thoughtless trance that reveals the ultimate nature of reality. Taoist techniques had been borrowed, and new methods evolved, to effect that trance; pranayama, koan, za-zen, and the soteriological psychotherapy of the master were some of the methods that achieved a sudden awakening to Buddhahood. This doctrine was heresy for the Indians, who accused the ch'an school of ignoring skilful means (upaya), one of the twin pillars of mahayana metaphysics and religious practice; transcendent awareness, or gnosis (jnana, ye-shes), was stressed to the exclusion of skilful means, the expedient form of response by a high receptive sensibility that is always a form of compassion (karuna).

In the orthodox account of the debate the existential Chinese poet-mystics lost to the erudite Indian scholars; like the Bonshamans defeated by Buddhist scholars they were at a disadvantage in the sphere of formal logic. But disregarding any weakness in Hwashang's formal presentation, if the result rested purely upon doctrinal considerations - and the King pronounced madhyamika the superior dharma - certain Indian siddhas and Dzokchen yogins should have been saddling their horses at the same time as the banished Chinese. What were the political factors that militated against the Chinese and exculpated the Indian siddhas? What made a Buddhist doctrinal controversy into a violent feud? Although the politics of the period were Byzantine in complexity, an effect heightened by the lacunae in our knowledge of the period and the multiplicity of conflicting sources, it appears that the old struggle between the zhang and Bon ministers and the king was now translated into a purely Buddhist conflict between the king's pro-institutional party supported by the Indians and the more anarchic, non-institutional faction supported by the old order and the Chinese-oriented majority. Ba Selnang, now ordained as Yeshe Wongpo and the successor to his mentor, Santaraksita, as Abbot of Samye, seems to have initiated the conflict by attempting to arrogate to his own position greater status and dignity than the zhang and Bon Ministers possessed. Opposed successfully by Nyang Tingzin Zangpo, a Dzokchenpa and confidant of the King, who

was to become the tutor of Tride Songtsen (Mutri-Tsenpo in *The Life*), Yeshe Wongpo was banished to Kharchu in Lhodrak, Ba Pelyang replacing him as Abbot. Although Pelyang sat with Kamalaśila at the debate (according to Buton's prejudiced account) he seems to have had close associations with Myang Tingzin and the Chinese; and it seems more than coincidence that immediately after the debate the King endowed Samye with a large benefice in perpetuity and allocated the receipts of a tax on householders to monks and yogins, as if the defeat of the Chinese faction had eliminated obstacles to the strengthening of Samye economically and politically. Thus it is plausible that the Chinese downfall was necessary to establish an Abbot in Samye sympathetic to the King's objectives, and also that it was the King's prejudice tied to the minority Indian party's superior skill in dialectics and logic that effected Hwashang Mahayana's defeat, rather than a deficiency in doctrine or practice.<sup>29</sup> As regards doctrine the King was probably equivocal; he was an initiate of Dzokchen, but marked by social and socialising doctrines and demanding a strong centralised monastic institution Kamalasila's Bodhisattva School must have had greater appeal to him than the anti-institutional, mystical, ch'an school.

In the aftermath of the debate, some say that the Chinese committed suicide, unable to bear the loss of face; reformed orthodoxy maintains that Kamalasila had his legs broken, or was murdered, by avenging Chinese. As regards Hwashang Mahayana, *The Life* reflects a current of Nyingma belief that the Chinese were lauded as worthy opponents, even if their leader was not loaded with gold at his departure; Hwashang Mahayana probably retraced his steps to the Tun Huang area to compose his apologia.

In the Kharchung Dorying Temple Tsogyel initiated King Mutri Tsenpo and his son Mu-rum (or Mu-rub), who was named Senalek by Guru Perna who appeared in a vision. Amongst Senalek's sons were Repachan and Langdarma (Chapter 8).

The Kharchen Dorying Temple in the Yarlung Valley contains an inscription attributing the construction of the temple to Senalek, who enjoined respect for the dharina upon his successors. According to *The Life* Senalek gained his name, which means 'successful on trial', after his successful attempt at reforming a prodigal period of youth. It

would take too much space here to unravel the tangled problem of succession after Trisong's death. The Life gives Trisong's eldest son, Mune, a very short reign, Mune's brother Mutri a very long reign, while Murum-Senalek's reign is not mentioned; Tsogyel died at the beginning of Repachan's reign. Although no line of succession has been established definitively this thesis is quite plausible: Trisong had four sons, Mutri, Mune, Murum and Mutik; Mutri died young; Mune reigned 797/8; Murum was banished to Bhutan for killing a minister and then recalled to reign as regent (798-804) until his brother, Mutik (Senalek), came of age to reign for ten years (804-15).<sup>4</sup> Apart from the difference in names the most significant departure of The Life from the above lineage is Senalek's relationship to his predecessor, that of son rather than brother.

Repachan's first decree assembled all those associated with Tsogyel's parinirvana in order to establish the precise nature of that event (Chapter 8).

Assuming that Repachan's first decree occurred during the first fourteen years of his reign, the year of Tsogyel's death can be fixed as the first bird year of his reign, which is the year AD 817.

A summary of the prophecy concerning the assassination of Repachan by his brother Langdarma's henchmen, and the aftermath, given in the Lungjang Chenmo: King Triral (Repachan) will accede to the throne as Vajrapani (the last of the three Bodhisattva Kings) and he will be murdered by Langdarma with the connivance of his ministers. Langdarma will be a paradigm of evil 'who will erase even the memory of monasteries and scriptures, establishing a law inimical to the Buddha-dharma.... The most devout will be killed, the lesser will be banished and the least enslaved. But the tantric vajra-brothers of the villages will keep the dharma alive. Lhasa and Samye will be despoiled and fall into ruin. When Pelgyi Dorje remembers his Guru's injunction he will assassinate the diabolic king and flee towards Mekham' (Chapter 8).

Guru Rimpoche prophesied to Mutri Tsenpo that his grandson's appearance would herald the loss of the throne of the Yarlung kings. A cause of this disaster is Mutri's failure to wear the cloak of devotion

lightly (Chapter 8).

To Trisong Detsen, Guru Perna predicted that the Red-ox demon to whom the King had given sanctuary would reincarnate in the third generation, kill his brother and establish an iniquitous government (Chapter 5).

In these prophecies references consistently affirm Senalek as the son of Mutri; Repachan and Langdarma are Trisong's greatgrandchildren and Mutri's grandchildren. The prophecies were accurate. Langdarma may have resisted his most reactionary ministers initially, but very soon (ca. 840) persecution became severe. Buddhist monks were given the choice of marrying, or becoming hunters, or Bon priests, who would advertise themselves with small bells, like lepers. Many Buddhists felt that this was no choice and, like Nyang Tingzin, Ma Rinchen Chok, and, perhaps, Vairotsana, were executed. After Pelgyi Dorje shot Langdarma in the eye with an arrow, the kingdom fell into chaos; the provinces became independent, and the empire was lost before the end of the century. But in Central Tibet, and perhaps Zhangzhung, as Tsogyel predicted, ordained monks were all killed or converted, and the tantrikas of the villages who lived as householders sustained the tradition. Further it is improbable that a few pockets of monks did not survive in the border areas; but it was in Kham that the lamp of dharma burned until the second half of the tenth century, when devotees from Central Tibet received ordination there and brought the vinaya back with them.

Langdarma's successful reaction should not lead to doubt of the extent to which Buddhism had permeated the country. However, it is true that Buddhism had been imposed by foreign priests under the patronage of a charismatic king upon an unwilling aristocracy, who felt rightly enough that its traditional authority was being undermined by the new political forces, and that its ageless religion was in peril. Unable to adapt with alacrity, its ancient institutions were endangered. No doubt the proud Tibetans were humiliated by a large number of foreign priests who failed to conceal their disdain for the 'demonworshipping' Bon; and no doubt many people were unable to understand Buddhist metaphysical concepts and the nature of the foreign deities and liturgies. Mystical, supra-rational ch'an appealed to

the people more than madhyamika, which required a subtle, analytical brain and a sophisticated moral sensibility.

Although the hard-core Bon were frenzied by jealousy and some segments of society and individuals were alienated by the Buddha-dharma, there must have been an unbending nucleus of sympathetic support for Buddhism from converts unwilling to renounce their vows; Guru Pema's success in assimilating Bon deities and spirits by subjection, and converting village shamans in the process, was of enormous importance when the dharma was threatened. Langdarma destroyed the monasteries with ease and the lineage of ordination was eradicated; it was in the villages that the dharma survived, the villages where Guru Pema had roamed for years. He had subjected the local demons and spirits and taught Bonshamans how to control and manipulate spiritual forces, removing the fear from the minds of people who had previously propitiated demonic powers in terror. The converted Bonshamans were the 'vajra-brothers of the villages' who survived the persecution, who virtually deified Guru Pema for opening to them the doors of perception, and who foiled Langdarma's intention. Thus, according to the Old School legends, although Langdarma was successful in cutting off the head of Buddhism he failed to destroy its heart; although the seeds of Trisong's violent and destructive treatment of his opposition finally bore fruit in surgent reaction, Buddhism had been so successful on a grass-roots level that its eradication was impossible.

## **THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PERIOD OF TSOGYEL'S LIFE**

A study of the chronology of the period leads into an interminable maze, and the game is barely worth the candle. A plethora of sources exists, each with its own integrity, but none offer sufficient evidence to invite credence. Neither the generally authoritative T'ang Annals nor the Tun Huang chronicles provide much assistance. Again it should be emphasised that attempting to derive history from legend is to treat an orange as if it was an apple. The dates arrived at by Professor Tuccis' are as precise as can be ascertained at this stage: to the undisputed date of Trisong's enthronement, 755, he adds 775 as the year of the foundation of Samye, 779 as the year of ordination of the probationary monks, and he accepts 792-4 as the date of the Samye Debate. The

year of the King's death is 797. The Life's only contribution to chronology is to imply that Tsogyel lived from 757 to 817, despite her own claim to have lived 214 years. The only other date mentioned is the well-known year of the Guru's departure for the SouthWest - the monkey year. Although The Life reinforces some less credible legendary sources' views and can add little to an understanding of the true sequence of events and their dates, a hypothetical chronology based on The Life is contrived here for purposes of comparison and to assist the reader in placing the events of Tsogyel's life in an historical perspective. Events the dates of which have been established within the bounds of probability are italicised.

**742**                    *Trisong Detsen born*

**753**                    *Tride Tsugtsen dies*

**753–765**           *Bon ministers in control*

**757**                    *Tsogyel born*

**764**                    Śāntaraksita arrives in Tibet

**765**                    Guru Pema arrives in Tibet

Foundation of Samye

*ca.* **766–770**       Pema banished (for 7 years?)

**769**                    **Completion of Samye**

770 Tsogyel marries Trisong

772 Tsogyel offered to Guru

773 Tsogyel initiated

774 Dispute in council

Perna and Tsogyel banished to Tidro

775 Tsogyel in Nepal

776 Pema returns to Samye

Initiation of the 25 Siddhas of Chimphu

776–785 Tsogyel's *yoga* practice

786 *Paṇditas* and translators assemble

1st convocation at Samye Yobok

787/8 The Bon Kurim

The Buddhist-Bon Debate

Exile of Bonshamans



2nd convocation at Samye

783–797 Period of teaching and construction

796 *Trisong abdicates*

797 *Mune enthroned*

Trisong dies

798 *Mune is assassinated*

Mutri enthroned

800 Schism healed by Tsogyel

Tsogyel banished to Tsang

802 *Śāntarakṣita dies*

803 Tsogyel returns to Samye

803–4 Termas written and hidden

804 Guru Pema departs for the S.W.

ca. 805 Kamalaśīla Abbot of Samye

*ca.* 808                      **Samye Debate**

805–815      **Kharchung Dorying built**

Mutri dies

Murub enthroned, reigns and dies

815                      *Repachan enthroned*

817                      *Tsogyel dies*

Although an exhaustive discussion of this chronology of what is essentially legendary material would be futile, some important points should emerge from a closer look at some topics.

#### **Trisong Detsen**

Concerning the great King's regnal dates, 755-97, the first is undisputed. He was probably born in 74232 and assumed the throne at the customary age of thirteen. The first years of his reign were dominated by the Bon ministers, and he came into his own only after achieving a religious awakening, similar to that of Moka, between the ages of seventeen and twenty<sup>33</sup> while fighting on the empire's frontier. He could only invite Santaraksita to Tibet after the demise of Mazhang and Takra Gungtsen. The end of his life is fraught with mystery. Why do the Blue Annals and the Red Annals give such early dates for his death (780 and 787 respectively)? Why does the Sheldrakma claim that he was given a magical extension of life in the 780s? Why do other sources claim that his death was kept a secret for a number of years? The T'ang Annals give 797 as the year of his death.

#### **Mune Tsenpo**

Although Mune's regnal dates are uncertain there is unanimity that his reign was short (except in the Blue Annals where it is claimed that he succeeded Trisong in 780). He was poisoned by his mother in his late twenties in 798 or 799.

#### **Mutri Tsenpo**

There is confusion in the name of Mune's successor, who was undoubtedly another son of Trisong. Following the T'ang Annals, the Blue Annals names him Ju-tse btsan-po; this is the Mutik of the Sheldrakma and the Mutri of the Ladakhi Chronicles. He may have been the brother banished for killing a minister and recalled to reign as regent for his son (or younger brother) Senalek. He reigned from 798/9 to 804.

#### **Senalek (Tride Songtsen)**

The T'ang Annals, Blue Annals and Ladakhi Chronicles all agree that Senalek was his predecessor's son. He is called Murum or Murub in The Life. There is no reason to doubt the T'ang Annals' 804-14 for his regnal dates. The Life is extremely vague about the reigns of the kings succeeding Mune Tsenpo; perhaps Taksham's sources conflicted.

#### **Repachan (Tritsuk Detsen)**

Repachan was Senalek's son and the brother of his fratricidal successor Langdarma. He was enthroned 814/15, but there is no agreement about the year of his death. The Red Annals supposes as late as 852, but the T'ang Annals' 838 is probably correct.

#### **Skntaraksita**

The orthodox legend records that *antaraksita, the Bodhisattva Abbot of Nalanda and then Samye, made a short unsuccessful visit to Central Tibet after Mazhang and Takra Gungtsen's demise, when he advised Trisong to invite Guru Perna to Tibet. If Samye's foundation was in 775 antaraksita must have arrived in Tibet a year or two previously. The Life seems to maintain that he came to Tibet in the early 760s and remained continuously. As for the end of his life, it appears uncertain whether he died in Tibet or returned to India to die;*<sup>3</sup> but at least there is a terminus ante quem established by the Samye Debate. Before his

death, or departure, he foresaw the coming schism and advised the King to invite Kamalaṣila to defend his school. If the debate occurred 792-4 then ~antaraksita would have been absent from Samye after ca. 790. The Life has him die in Samye ca. 802 in Mutri's reign and, again, before the Samye Debate. A stupa at Samye enshrines all or some of the great abbot's mortal remains.

### **Guru Pema**

Neither Tibetan nor Chinese political records give any indication of Guru Pema's movements. The Life maintains that he arrived early in Trisong's reign soon after ~ataraksita, was banished for seven years, returned, was banished again with Tsogyel for a year or so, before returning again and remaining until after Trisong's death. But if the Abbot did not arrive in Tibet until 773/4 it is probable that the Guru's arrival was ca. 774, just before the Samye Temple was begun in 775. However, it appears that the Guru's most important work was performed while he roamed the villages in Central Tibet and on the borders, and perhaps as far away as Kham, 'subjecting demons' and converting the Bonshaman priests into 'vajra-brothers'. The termas claim he performed this mission before arriving to exorcise Samye; he may have continued during his period of exile, as it is unlikely that he ever went to Turkhara. Wishing to minimise his importance, some sources claim that he stayed only a few months in Tibet, others a few years; but it is improbable that he could have created in so short a time the impression upon which a great cult was built. It cannot be established how long he stayed in Tibet. According to The Life he departed in the monkey year after Trisong's death; if Trisong died in 787 the Guru left for the SouthWest in 792, and if he died in 797 the Guru left in 804.

### **The Foundation of Sam ye**

The termas (Zanglingma, Sheldrakma, The Life and others) unanimously proclaim that Samye was built early in Trisong's reign; ca. 762 is indicated, after rationalisation, for its foundation, and 766 for its completion. But as in The Life consecration is often indicated as late as 785, fifteen years later. The Tun Huang chronicles imply that building started in 775, although the Samye pillar proclaims a Buddhist Tibet by ca. 779-82. Without bias it can safely be stated that

works such as *The Life* underestimate the political difficulties of Trisong's early years. The King spent several years fighting with his army in China, while at home the Bon ministers controlled the state. 77 is an acceptable date for the foundation of Samye.

#### **The Samye Debate**

It is difficult to dispute the dates 792-4 for the Samye Debate, for the Tun Huang chronicles, a contemporary source, are clear in their implication. However the sources are in such conflict that the inscrutable subject of the debate lends itself to endless speculation. How could the Ladakhi Chronicles and *The Kings' Genealogy* (rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long) claim that it was Senalek who invited Kamalasila to Samye? Was this a second visit for a similar purpose? And how is it credible that Trisong gave unequivocal support to the enemies of his vajra-brothers who were initiates into his own Dzokchen lineages, those of Vimalamitra and Guru Pema, besides the lineage of Hwashang Mahayana whose doctrinal stance was close to that of the Dzokchenpas? Can we safely ignore the orthodox account of Buton who considered the single debate to have been won outright and conclusively by Kamalasila and that the Chinese faction was then silenced forever? If Buton's orthodox account is, indeed, suspect, Tsogyel's conflict could have been a later confrontation, if it is not a spurious account inserted into *The Life* to prove Tsogyel's orthodox affiliations. One further point: the long reign assigned to Mutri and the occurrence of the Samye Debate in Mutri's reign are two of several indications in *The Life* supporting an early death for Trisong.

#### **Yeshe Tsogyel**

In order to establish the birth year of Tsogyel's birth as 757, it is necessary to reject the happy fiction that all opposition had been overcome, that the light of the dharma shone unshadowed throughout Tibet, and that Samye was completed, when Tsogyel was born. Even if Samye was completed by 769, the alternative birth year of Tsogyel's birth, she would have been too young to take initiation with the Siddhas of Chimphu in 776. Thus Guru Pema was probably not present in Tibet at her conception, and at that early stage he could not yet have been banished to cavort with the Dakinis in Orgyen Khandro Ling. Also, in order to give credence to her life in an historiographical

context, the biographical information she gives her disciples just before her death at the age of 214 must also be ignored; a numerological investigation of it may be rewarding. Atsara Sale, the writer of *The Life*, informs us that she died on Zapu Peak in Central Tibet on the 8th day of the bird month in a bird year before Repachan's first decree. Since Repachan was enthroned in 814/15 and the next bird year, the year of her death, was 817 there can be no doubt as to the date of her death. She was 60 years old. The only other source to mention a date for Tsogyel's birth or death is the *Sheldrakma*, which gives the wood-bird year, 745, for her birth. This would make her too old for initiation as a sixteen-year-old virgin by Guru Pema if the Guru did not arrive until ca. 774; but the *Sheldrakma* mentions the fire-bird year (757) as the date of meeting of Guru and Consort. Thus the element part of the Tibetan year indicator must be ignored, as it always must be ignored in order to render this terma's dates useful, and a measure of agreement with *The Life* is discovered. Indeed, it is conceivable that the *Sheldrakma* was one of the sources that Taksham drew upon when writing *The Life*. There is no other source to corroborate or refute the dates given in *The Life*, and since they accord with those dates incontrovertibly affirmed, until new evidence appears they must be accepted.

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# NOTES TO THE COMMENTARY

## 1 The Path of the Inner Tantra

1 Theg-dgu: see p. 192, n. 4. The Dzokchen atiyoga tradition is complete in itself in so far as it provides both external and internal preliminary practices (sngon-'gro). The lesser vehicles may also be considered as preliminary purification practices suited to different personality types.

2 Precise phraseology is important here. Although the word Emptiness is frequently used as if it denotes an ontological absolute, the Old School, unlike the other sects, stresses that ultimate reality is only empty of defilements, *etc.* (the gzhan-stong formula) and not Emptiness itself (the rang-stong formula). The problem is not only semantic; by implying that Emptiness can be experienced divorced from phenomenal appearances there is danger of the yogin striving for other than what is here and now, or for utter cessation, as in the hinayana nirvana. The relative world is not to be shunned for a pie in the sky; the absolute (don-dam) is the relative (kun-rdzob), and the male and female principles (upaya and prajna, yab and yum) are always in indivisible union.

3 Pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa drug. At the outset of the Bodhisattva Path the six perfections are practised conscientiously to condition generosity, moral behaviour, *etc.* Tsogyel defines them as spontaneous reflexes of her own being, which bound by her samaya automatically manifests these perfections.

4 Ngo-bo stong-pa, rang-bzhin gsal-ba, thugs-rje kun-khyab. 'Essence' is misleading if it is conceived as something apart from the whole: it is the whole. 'Existentiality' is an alternative rendering of ngo-bo (svabhava). The definition of nirmanakaya (sprul-sku) does indicate that no specific apparition is implied; rather it is a principle, or mode of being. 'Manifestation' is by definition 'compassion' (karuna); the creative act is an act of love, and only our confused notions and emotions corrupt it. Unveiled, a kettle or a gun no less than the Dakini

herself are manifestations of the Guru's compassion.

5 sTong-pa-nyid (sunyata), ye-shes (jnana), dbyings (dhatu) and bde-chen (mahasukha). These four are indivisible; it is impossible to experience one without the others, but in different contexts the Dakini may represent only one or another.

6 Tshangs-pa'i gnas bzhi (caturbrahmavihara), the Four States of Purity, or tshad-med bzhi, the Four Immeasurables: loving kindness, sympathetic joy, compassion and equanimity.

7 See K. Bowman, *Calm and Clear*, pp. 67-71, for Mi-pham Rimpoche's incisive instruction on the analysis of impermanence.

8 This explanation is based on the *Lam-rim ye-shes snying-po grel-ba* of bLo-gros mtha'-yas, f. 102ff.

9 See H. Guenther, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us*, pt 2, p. 113, n. 13.

10 dbYings, dhatu: the Dzokchen equivalent of chos-dbyings (dharmadhatu).

11 Chu-ser, lit. 'yellow water'. At death the red corpuscles sink in the organism leaving a clear serum in the capillaries which gives pallor to the corpse - this is chu-ser; the clear serum that a wound exudes for protection and to form new skin is chu-ser; the lubricant of joints is chu-ser. Despite an alternative medical theory that makes marrow the origin of semen, chu-ser becomes semen (khu-ba = thig-le = semen virile) after its purification.

12 Summarised from the *bShad-rgyud*, ch. V: *Tibetan Medicine*, p. 44, trans. Rechung Rimpoche.



## 2 Woman and the Dakini

1 Mahayoga, anuyoga and atiyoga may be classified as father, mother and nondual tantra and the respective views of reality of these classes of tantra are iconographically represented by the Guru, the Dakini and the Guru and Dakini united.

2 See J. Robinson (trans.), *Buddha's Lions (The Legends of the Eightyfour Mahasiddhas)*; the legend of Darikapa, p. 236.

3 See C. George (trans.), *Candamaharosana-tantra*, p. 55.

4 See H. Guenther (trans.), *The Life and Teaching of Naropa*, p. 80.

5 W. Evans-Wentz (ed.), *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, p. 133.

6 Tshangs-pa'i gnas bzhi (caturbrahmavihara): loving kindness, sympathetic joy, compassion and equanimity.

7 bKra-bshis spyi-'dren; but Taksham prefers Khyi-'dren. Other sources have Khye'u-'dren.

8 Without unanimity Tibetan and Western scholars identify Za-hor as the Kingdom of Mandi at the head of the Kangra Valley, Himachal Pradesh, India. Mandi is not far from the Jalandhara pithasthana. Probably the Great Fifth Dalai Lama's family and Prabhahasti came from Mandi where Guru Pema and Mandarava lived, while Atiṣa (as the Gelukpas believe) and ~antaraksita were born in E. Bengal, probably in the Vikramapur District. See G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 736.

9 mTsho-padma, Rewalsar, located approximately 10 miles south of Mandi.

10 See K. Dowman, 'A Buddhist Guide to the Power Places of the Kathmandu Valley', *Kailash*, Vol. VIII (2-3).

11 Kautilya's *Arthasastra*, quoted in D. Regmi, *Ancient Nepal*, p. 41.

12 See K. Douglas and G. Bays (trans.), *The Life and Liberation of Padma Sambhava* (Padma bka'-thang shel-brag-ma), hereafter *Sheldrakma*, p. 300f. Also W. Evans-Wentz, *The Book of the Great Liberation*, p. 146.

13 For the Sindhu Raja legend and sKong-sprul's reference taken from a very short chapter of his *gTer-ston-kyi rnam-than*, f. 31b-34b called *Guru Rin-po-che'i thugs-kyi gzungs-ma inga'i rnam-thar*, see M. Aris, *Bhutan*, p. 298, n. 11.

14 See Rinjing Dorje, *Tales of Uncle Tomba*.

### 3 The Nyingma Lineages

1 Such texts as the Karandavyuha-sutra, the sPyan-ras-gzigs-kyi mdo rgyud and The 108 Names of Avalokiteṣvara (the last two translated by the Nepali Gila Manju) introduced Tibet's protector, Avalokiteṣvara, to the Tibetans, and his lineage was sustained until Pema's arrival. The Kings' Genealogy (rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long), f. 32b, describes Hayagriva as Songtsen's protector, and the Mani bKa'-'bum describes a visitation of Hayagriva to the King. But there is no record of a sustained lineage until Trisong received the initiation from Guru Pema.

2 Rig-'dzin brgyad: Vimalamitra (western India), Humkara (Nepal), Manjuśrimitra (Singhala), Nagarjunagarbha (Bangala?), Padmasambhava (Orgyen), Dhanasamkrta (N.W. India?), Rong-bu Guhyacandra (Rong-bu is in Western Tibet), and ~antigarbha. These eight are known to have taught Tibetans anuttarayogatantra they may all have been Dzokchenpas.

3 King Dza (Sanskrit: Ja) is identified with King Indrabhuti I of Orgyen who originally received the Guhyasamaja-tantra. See Trinley Norbu Rimpoche, The Small Golden Key (privately published, based upon Dunjom Rimpoche's Chos-'byung), p. 4.

4 The Indian anuyoga lineage is fascinating but complex, and various sources conflict. The names King Dza (Indrabhuti of Orgyen), Gagasiddhi of south-eastern Western Turkestan, the Sage of Bruṣa, Che-btsan-skye (G. Roerich *et al.* has Bruṣa as Gilgit, but Snellgrove and Richardson identify it as Hunza), Humkara and Vasudhara (from Nepal), relate the Tantra to the Himalayas, particularly the North West. See Dunjom Rimpoche's History of the Dharma (Chos-'byung), f. 56a-60a; and 'Gos Lotsawa's Blue Annals (sDeb-ther sngon-po, hereafter the Blue Annals), p. 159.

5 See Dunjom Rimpoche, gNam-leags spu-ti: Lo-rgyus chos-'byung, f. 2a. The five graces (phun-sum-tshogs-pa Inga) are time, place, teacher, teaching and retinue.

= 6 Sanskrit: Anandavajra or Prahaṣavajra. Ro-lang-bde-ba Vetalaṣukha.

7 These legends of the Dzokchen atiyoga Gurus are based upon Dunjom Rimpoche's History of the Dharma f. 60a-69a except where indicated. The preceding part of this paragraph is derived from K. Douglas and G. Bays (trans.), The Life and Liberation of Padma Sambhava (Padma bka'-thang shel-brag-ma, hereafter Sheldrakma), p. 183. Garab Dorje and Guru Perna were not contemporaries. Lineal history is complicated by Tibetan commentators who neglected to indicate whether transmission of precepts from a deceased Guru was transmitted through vision, a Dakini, or an incarnation, *etc.*

8 Blue Annals, p. 107; see p. 191ff. for the sNying-thig lineage.

9 Perhaps transmitted by Garab Dorje in a vision; see n. 7 above.

10 See Eva Dargyay, The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet, p. 31ff. Here the author perpetuates prejudices that have bedevilled inter-school politics for centuries. Since it is impossible to either prove or disprove the assertions of the lineage concerning its origins, better let sleeping dogs lie. Recounting the tradition uncritically whenever possible maintains its integrity; it is contrary to certain tantric vows to undermine the faith of devotees.

11 Sad-mi mi bdun. Sources differ, but the so-called Samye Chronicles (sBa-shad) is probably the most authoritative: Pa-gor Vairotsana, Ngan-lam rGyal-ba mchog-dbyangs, rMa Rinchen-mchog, 'Khon kLu'i dbang-po, gTsang Legs-grub, mChims Sa-skya Ita-ba, dbUs Ratna. The first three are commonly corroborated; other possible names are gNam-mkha'i snying-po, sBa gSal-snang, rGyal-ba'i blo gros. See G. Tucci, Minor Buddhist Texts, p. 324 for comparative lists.

12 The essential beliefs of the yogacara-madhyamika-svatantrikas are that (a) external objects do not exist apart from the mind that perceives them; (b) ultimate reality is what is directly perceived in gnostic awareness and (c) the phenomenal aspect of this Awareness is nondelusory; (d) conventional reality is either illusory like a lake or delusory like a mirage; (e) only six types of consciousness are valid

(omitting alaya-vijnana and klesa-vijnana); (f) a Bodhisattva is free of delusion; (g) a Buddha ceases to be a sentient being because he has no mind to perceive himself or phenomena as discrete entities. See H. Guenther, *Buddhist Philosophy in Theory and Practice*, p. 131ff.

13 gTer-ston rgyal-po inga: Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer (1124-92), Guru Chos-dbang (1212-70), rpo-rje-gling-pa (1346-1405), Orgyan Padma-gling-pa (1450-?), mKhyen-brtse-dbang-po (1820-92). Rig- 'dzin rGod-ldem-can (1337-1409) initiated byang-gter lineages that are still vital.

14 See Trinley Norbu, *The Small Golden Key*, p. 4.

15 The Guyhasamaja-tantra, *etc.* discovered in Orgyen and the Kalacakra tantra taught at Dhanyakataka could be considered 'mindtreasures' (dgongs-gter) or 'profound treasures' (zab-gter) since they were revealed by Guhyapati, ~akyamuni, *etc.*

16 bDe-ba rtsal. But in Dunjom Rimpoche's History it is Las-kyi dbang-mo who delivers the mahayoga texts to the Eight Knowledge Holders and in Padma dKar-po's History it is Rig-'dzin rDo-rje Chos.

17 In his History of the Dharma Dunjom Rimpoche's amazing summary of Khyentse Wongpo's secret biography, an exposition of Khyentse's fulfilment of the Seven Mandates (bKa'-bab bdun-ldan), is an uncompromising acceptance of the terma doctrines, and it reveals the essential Old School spirit. Khyentse revitalised innumerable dormant terma lineages and edited their texts for inclusion in the Rinchen Terdzod. The Seven Mandates are empowerment to intuit the meaning of symbolic language (brda'-i dbang), to recover earth-treasures (sa-gter), twicerevealed treasures (yang-gter), treasures of Buddha's profound dynamic mind (zab-mo dgongs-pa'i gter), memory-treasures from past lives (rjes-dran gter), vision-treasures (dag-s nang gter), and treasures of the audial lineage (snyan-brgyud).

18 Hwashang Mahayana, the 7th and last ch'an patriarch, fled from the Emperor's persecution to Tun Huang from whence he was invited to Samye after the Tibetans captured the area. The Tun Huang Buddhist community had strong ties with Tibet during the seventh (?) and eighth

centuries. He returned to Tun Huang after the Samye Debate (794). Hwashang Mahayana is counted amongst the eighteen arhats.

19 See Blue Annals, p. 167. Phag-mo-gru-pa received precepts from Aro's school called 'Dzokchen according to the Kham method' and commented that they were nothing but Samatha precepts.

20 (1) Kashmir and Orgyen, (2) Southern Bihar - Nalanda, Vajrasana and Odantapuri (Bihari Sharif?), (3) East Bengal - Vikramaila, (4) Andhra - Dhanyakataka, Sr! Parbhat.

21 ~ahi, or ~ahiyas, were families descended from aka tribes that invaded the North-West ca. first century BC.

22 See Eva Dargyay, *op. cit.*, p. 18, 23ff.

23 See Dunjom Rimpoche's History of the Dharma, f. 60a.

24 See S. Beal, Chinese Accounts of India, Vol. I, p. 118.

25 See R. Sanskritayana, Dohkkoga (Hindi), p. 9ff.

26 Doha mdzod bdun (Treasury of the Seven Dohas), published in Rumtek, Sikkim. Technically a dohd is a metrical form, but it has come to mean a genre of song sung by the Indian siddhas, the content of which is mahdmudrd precepts or anuyoga instruction in twilight language.

27 See T. Skorupski, 'Tibetan gyung-drung Bon Monastery', Kailash, Vol. VIII 1-2, 1981.

28 The Bar-do thos-grol is a terma of O-rgyan-gling-pa (ca. fourteenth century).

29 See Kazi Dawa Samdup (trans.), Sricakrasambara-tantra, p. 13ff; translated from Sanskrit in the fourteenth century at Swayambhu, Nepal, 'at 'Phag-pa's command'. Within the encircling vajra-wall of the mandala stand protecting deities carrying phurbas (kilas) and clubs in their left and right hands respectively. Their function is to transfix black spirits through the head with the phurba while the initiate attains

Buddhahood. But these phurbas were probably the simple 'nail' or 'peg' type daggers rather than the elaborate, unmistakable dagger forms of the Bonpo phurbas.

30 See Gedun Choephel, *The White Annals*, p. 30, quoting the rGyalpo Thang-yig, a terma of Orgyen-gling-pa based on ancient sources.

31 Dunjom Rimpoche, *Guru nam-thar Yid-kyi mun-sel*, f. 366.

32 See Dunjom Rimpoche, *gNam-lcags spu-ti: lo-rgyus chos-'byung*, p. 2b. Kun-tu-bzangpo to rGyal-ba rigs Inga and rDo-rje gzhonnu and Vajrapani, to rGyal-ba rigs bzhi, to Guru Pema. Also, Kun-tu-bzangpo to rDo-rje gzhonnu, to the Brahmin Kapalika and Prabhahasti and Guru Pema. And, Indrabhuti to Dhanasamskrta to Guru Pema and Vimalamitra and the Nepali Gila Manju.

33 K. Dowman, *The Legend of the Great Stupa, 'The Life Story of the Lotus Born Guru'* (*Chos-gling's Guru nam-thar dpag-bsam ljon-shing*), p. 78.

34 See *Blue Annals*, p. 103. Sakya Panchen translated the *Vajramantra-bhirusandhi-mulatantra*. The *Vajrakila-mulatantrakhanda* is also included in the *Kanjur* (*Blue Annals*, p. 106).

## 4 The Historical Background

1 O-Ide pu-rgyal may have been Pu-lde gung-rgyal, son of King Gri-gum of the second dynasty, who was the first king to be buried rather than ascend to heaven via the dMu-cord. See Mani bka'-'bum f. 100a, and H. Richardson, *Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa*, P.P.F. Vol. XIX. The early legends are also retold in *The Genealogy of Kings* (rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long) ch. VII, the Red Annals and the Blue Annals. See also G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, pp. 727-34, and *The Religions of Tibet*, p. 226ff.

2 A mahayana sutra, very popular in Licchavi Nepal, describing the blessings of Avalokiteivara and the significance of his mantra, etc., translated by Thon-mi Sambhota and known as the Za-ma-tog.

3 It is by no means improbable that Indian Buddhist missionaries had succeeded in influencing the Tibetans as early as the third century or even earlier. A legend that an Indian sadhu brought the Karandavyuha to Yarlung could indicate early Buddhist influence in Central Tibet, also. However, it would have been in Zhangzhung where Shenrab taught that Buddhist influence would have been strongest; but it is unlikely that Buddhism had any radical reforming effect on Bon until the seventh or eighth centuries.

4 'How can we give the contents of our classics to these barbarian enemies of the west? . . . In what way would this differ from giving weapons to brigands or one's possessions to thieves?' Snellgrove and Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 31.

5 See M. Aris, *Bhutan*, pp. 3-33.

6 See Mani bKa'-'bum, chs XII-XXII for the most extensive catalogue of Songtsen's achievements. Although a late terma, undoubtedly the Mani bKa'-'bum was based upon ancient sources.

7 See H. Richardson, *ibid.*, pp. 5-6, and B. Laufer, *Bird Divination Amongst the Tibetans*, p. 103ff. Also R. Stein, *Tibetan Civilisation*, pp. 94ff. and 99ff.



8 See A. Chattopadhyaya, *Atiia and Tibet*, p. 217.

9 Recounted in *The Samye Chronicles (sBa-bzhad)*, a very early and credible work; see W. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History*, p. 35.

10 See M. Aris, *Bhutan*, p. 72.

11 See H. Richardson, *ibid.*, p. 1ff.

12 For historical references to Nepal see K. Dowman, 'A Buddhist Guide to the Power Places of the Kathmandu Valley', *Kailash*, Vol. III (2-3), 1981.

13 Although speedwalking is one of the eight great Buddhist siddhis this reference indicates that it was also a Bon siddhi.

14 The principal Tibetan translators were Vairotsana, Ma Rinchen Chok, Kaba Peltsek, Chokro Lui Gyeltsen, Drokben Konchok Jungne, Drenpa Namkha, Namkhai Nyingpo, Yudra Nyingpo and Nyak Jnana Kumara.

15 See Ch. 7, n. 6.

16 See Sheldrakma, p. 414ff., 504ff., and G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, p. 356, n. 1, for an interesting account of the lDan-dkar-ma.

17 See T. Skorupski, 'Tibetan g-Yung-drung Bon Monastery at Dolanji', *Kailash*, Vol. III (1-2), p. 33.

18 See R. Stein, *Tibetan Civilisation*, p. 200.

19 Tucci gives a comprehensive account of Bon and the folk religion in *The Religions of Tibet*, chs 6 & 7, and in *Tibetan Civilisation* R. Stein includes many interesting details from more limited sources; but much work remains to be done on the history of Bon.

20 See G. Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, p. 214ff.

21 See D. Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon*.

22 In fact Bon has only been recognised by the Tibetan theocratic establishment since the recent foundation of the Dolanji Monastery, near Simla, India. See T. Skorupski, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

23 See G. Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, pp. 232, 238. Along with the Bon (priests and dharma) and the bards (sgrengs), the riddle priests (Ideu) were considered one of the three supports of society.

24 Buton's *History of the Dharma (Chos-'byung)* gives twentyone months, and Dunjom Rimpoche quotes unidentified sources in his *Yid-kyi-mun-sel* giving three and six months.

25 *The Genealogy of Kings*, f. 102a. Whether moral cause and effect is a psychological law or an expedient though baseless theological premise (both Christian and Buddhist) belief in it negates the hypothesis of the social equality of man. However it may be argued that social inequality is the most profitable condition for personal evolution since it accelerates exhaustion of karma on the direct path and provides for passive acceptance or the attainment of merit on the gradual path.

26 See G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*. Introducing the *Bhavanakrama* in Tibetan, Sanskrit and English, Prof. Tucci gives an invaluable resume of our knowledge of the Samye Debate and its political and religious background, and also of several basic Dzokchen texts.

27 See P. Demieville, *Le Concile de Lhasa*, Introduction. The terma that claims that the Chinese were the victors is the *bLon-po thang-yig*.

28 Sang-shi or Shang-shi is the Tibetan transliteration of *ch'an-shih*, translated as *bSamgtan mkhan-po* (master of *ch'an*). The identification of Sang-shi is discussed in G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, p. 333ff.

29 Another factor determining the King's anti-Chinese bias was the Chinese betrayal of the peace treaty signed in 783.

30 See M. Aris, *Bhutan*, p. 73.

31 See G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, p. 336ff.

32 Confirmed in the Tun Huang chronicles.

33 The Sheldrakma gives his age as seventeen and the Zanglingma as twenty.

34 In A. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 480, his presumably Indian sources imply that ~antaraksita returned to India to die.

# INDEXES

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# **Index of Tibetan Words**

This index is ordered according to the Tibetan alphabet. It includes the phonetic forms of Tibetan words found in the text. It does not include notice of every passing reference to common terms. Sanskrit, transliterated, phonetic and synonymous terms within the brackets may refer to additional entries. Ch. = Chinese; pr. = pronounced.

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