Best known as Machig Labdrön’s teacher, the Indian mahasiddha Padampa Sangye is counted as a lineage guru by all schools of Tibetan Buddhism. He brought the lineage of Chöd to Tibet, carried the Buddha’s teachings to China, and is even asserted, in the Tibetan tradition, to have been the legendary Bodhidharma.

Padampa Sangye’s teaching methods were unorthodox and sometimes extreme. This transcendent and irascible teacher encouraged his disciples to disregard social conventions, disdain social contacts, and go beyond their cultural conditioning. He inspired innumerable highly realized disciples, many of whom were women.

Lion of Siddhas presents two extraordinary texts: a biography of Padampa Sangye and a rare collection of his verbal and nonverbal teachings, called *Mahamudra in Symbols*, recorded by his chief Tibetan disciple almost a thousand years ago. Both are previously untranslated.

"The illustrious master Padampa Sangye, who taught in Tibet during the eleventh century, created a legacy that spread through all sects and schools of Tibetan Buddhism. His teachings can be found today in monasteries and retreat hermitages throughout central Asia, from Mongolia on the north to Bhutan, Sikkim and Ladakh on the south, and continue to be practiced with undiminished enthusiasm. My old friend David Molk, working with Lama Tsering Wangdu, has performed a wonderful service...It is a great read, and explodes with the sense and sensibility of the enlightenment dynamic."

–Glenn H. Mullin, author, *The Dalai Lamas on Tantra*

David Molk became a Buddhist in 1981 and has translated for many Tibetan masters.

Lama Tsering Wangdu Rinpoche was born in Dingri Langkor, Tibet, where Padampa Sangye established his monastery, and is a lineage holder in the Pacification of Suffering tradition.
Lion of Siddhas
The Life and Teachings of Padampa Sangye
Lion of Siddhas

The Life and Teachings of Padampa Sangye

Translated by
David Molk

with Lama Tsering Wangdu Rinpoche

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# Table of Contents

Foreword by Swami Chetanananda vii  
Introduction by Lama Tsering Wangdu Rinpoche 1  
Translator’s Acknowledgments 11  
Translator’s Introduction 13  

**The Story of the Liberated Life of the Great Lord of Siddhas, Venerable Padampa Sangye: A Sun Ablaze with Thousandfold Rays of Attainment**  
*by Chökyi Senge*  

Homage 29  
His Previous Lives 33  
The Greatness of His Birthplace 37  
The Greatness of His Family Lineage and Birth 39  
The Greatness of His Training in the Vows 43  
The Greatness of His Gurus 45  
The Greatness of His Learning 47  
The Greatness of His Siddhis 49  
The Greatness of His Deeds 53  
The Greatness of His Miraculous Powers 91  
The Greatness of His Parinirvana 101  
The Greatness of His Disciples 137  
Summary 171
Padampa Sangye’s Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols, recorded by the heart disciple, Bodhisattva Kunga

The Sign Indications 177
The Speech Indications 181
The Rounds of Teachings through Questions and Answers 193
Questions and Answers on the Essence Meaning 211
Questions and Answers on Essential Points 261
Questions and Answers about Activities 275
The Mirror of Mind Instructions 289

Appendices

1. Rejuvenation Practice 311
2. The Stainless Path of the Silver Egg of Speech 313
3. Transmutation of Speech into Mantra 321
4. The Nature of the Path 325
5. Stabilizing the Preliminaries 327

Endnotes 329
I am delighted that this book is being made available in English for the first time. It is an important work, a window into the life and lifestyle of a great being. The text called Padampa Sangye’s Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols was compiled by Padampa Sangye’s disciple Kunga, who made notes each evening about the events of the day. Through it, we have a comprehensive picture of Padampa Sangye’s teaching methods and the nature of the instructions he gave. This text is also significant because Padampa Sangye is the only master of the ancient mahasiddha tradition who left such a record.

Mahasiddha refers both to a level of realization and the presence of great power within an individual. Mahasiddho means “the great accomplishment,” which is the total transcendence of our ego. It also means the “great capacity for accomplishment,” referring to the power of love to transform every circumstance, every suffering, into love itself. So, mahasiddha is the designation used to refer to someone in a state of total contact with the infinite resource within us, the creative energy of love that is at the core of existence. Padampa Sangye was such a being.

As teachers, mahasiddhas are concerned with the creative energy and the process of its unfoldment to the absolute finest possibility that is present in a human being. The practice of mahasiddha yoga is about awakening our deepest creative potential and allowing that power to expand and rise up and connect to the highest reality in which we are participating, and to live our lives with the awareness of that highest reality and in total harmony with it.

Mahasiddhas are beyond religious identity. Before there was any religion, the ultimate reality, which is pure consciousness, simply was. All experience comes from that pure consciousness. Religion is but a style and method of
remembering and connecting to and participating in that pure consciousness, that sacred dimension of ourselves from which all experience arises. Mahasiddhas go into the core of religion and appreciate the unity of consciousness, the unity of all authentic spirituality, and understand that the creative energy has no identity at all. That energy is beyond boundaries; it is completely transcendent.

Padampa Sangye studied in India, Nepal, and Tibet, with teachers of different lineages and traditions, and distilled the teachings he had received to their essence. He was not limited by any of the doctrines he had absorbed in the course of his own education, and he was not interested in preserving their integrity. He wanted only to alleviate the suffering of others and enable them to achieve their highest potential. In this way, he brought the mahamudra teachings out of the royal monastic tradition to which they had been confined and shared them with the common people of Tibet in a form they could understand.

That Padampa Sangye’s teachings have survived to the present day is evidence of their power. Dingri, the area where Padampa Sangye lived in Tibet, is a remote, desolate place, hardly one in which to plant seeds that would survive for hundreds of years. Padampa Sangye was a difficult person, his methods were unorthodox and sometimes extreme, and he continuously challenged his students and their assumptions about teachers. He encouraged his disciples to disregard social conventions, disdain social contacts, and go beyond their cultural conditioning in ways that could not have been popular. Yet elements of his teachings have been incorporated into practices in all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and have had particular impact on the Nyingma and Kagyu traditions.

I am grateful for my association with Lama Wangdu Rinpoche, who has been completely open and generous in sharing the transmission of his entire lineage with me and my students at the Nityananda Institute. Rinpoche himself has worked tirelessly for the Tibetan refugee community in Kathmandu, as well as for anyone else who asks him for help. Like Padampa Sangye, he is most concerned with relieving the suffering of others and has devoted his entire life to doing that. Through his efforts and the publication of this book, may the Pacification of Suffering teachings of Padampa Sangye continue to resonate in the world for a long time.
My thanks to the translator, David Molk, and the editor, Monica O’Neal, for the fine work they have done on this book.

Swami Chetanananda Saraswati
Abbot, Nityananda Institute
Introduction

In the case of our Tibetan Dharma, what are considered to be the most sacred teachings often come from Tö, western Tibet. They are then taken to Kham, eastern Tibet, and flourish there. The people of Kham have great faith in Dharma, like the Chinese people. Many holy Gurus lived in Tö, like Padampa Sangye from Tö Dingri and Milarepa from Kyirong. Khampas would come to Tö, request teachings, and then take the initiations, commentaries, and transmissions with them back to Kham. They didn’t flourish as widely in Tö. In Kham, they still have many scriptures, biographies of great lamas, initiations and commentarial texts, which were hidden away so that they would not be destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Now they are beginning to bring them out again. Students are being trained to use computers and they are publishing books such as the biography that has been translated here. I found this biography in a shop in Kathmandu. Many more books that we need, such as the texts named in the course of the biography, may yet be found to still exist in Kham.

Padampa Sangye is a principal source, a lineage Guru for all the lineages of Tibetan Buddhism in common. His teachings are important in the Nyingma tradition, for example. When Guru Rinpoche was at Samye, his ritual master, Kamalashila, is said to have been Padampa Sangye in an earlier visit to Tibet. Guru Rinpoche told Padampa Sangye that he must go to China in order to spread Buddha’s actual teachings and refute a false teaching that had been propagated there by Hashang Mahayana that undermined the validity of karmic cause and effect. They say that Padampa stayed in China for eighty years and purified false views that were prevalent there, causing the pure view as explained by Buddha to flourish. Then Padampa Sangye felt that Dharma in China had been purified and he announced that he would return to Tibet. The Chinese urged him not to
leave and told the ferryman not to pick him up if he tried to cross the river and leave.

Padampa Sangye, however, felt that his work in China was finished and, after urging the Chinese to practice, left for Tibet and India. Because of their protests, he left quickly, and one of his shoes got left behind. When he reached the river the ferryman told him that they had no boat. Padampa Sangye just placed a leaf on the water and rode it across! The protectors Agora Mahakala and Lhamo Tagshön Ma, the Tiger-Mounted Devi, came after him to bring him his shoe. She emanated as a red horse that took the shoe in its mouth and offered it to Padampa Sangye. The story is depicted in a Chinese thangka for long life and prosperity that was widely distributed in Tibet. The symbolism of the story is that Padampa Sangye was a mahasiddha, completely free of attachment. He did not have many possessions. He had a single bag, his “bag of dependent arising” as it was called, with several types of blessed objects for pacifying, increasing, subjugating, and wrathful activities, just a few things like a needle and a curved knife. It was as if he was predicting how people would carry small purses and briefcases in the present day! Dharma practitioners of those times often carried large amounts of possessions with them, huge trunks and so forth. But, as explained in non-degeneration of the six natural facets of yoga, it is all right to eat food begged from others!

The Shi je tradition of Padampa Sangye was incorporated most strongly into the teachings of Je Rinpoche, the Gelug. Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen felt that practice in the Gelug would benefit from Padampa Sangye’s highly blessed pure lineage descending from Buddha Shakyamuni, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, and so forth. He therefore received the Twelve Tathagata Initiation of Nairatmya, which includes all of the major deities: Tara, Marichi, Vajra Varahi, Rabjung Gyelmo, Sarva Nivarana Vishkambini, Vajrapani, Manjushri, Yambatka, Avalokiteshvara, Eleven-faced Avalokiteshvara Kasarpani, Samantabhadra, and Achala. He brought this lineage into the Gelug. In his biography Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen is quoted as saying that “There is no mahasiddha with greater blessings for the world than Padampa Sangye!” The Gelug long life and healing practice of nourishing the inner elements of the body with life force received from the external elements comes from the Ali Kali Scripture Initiation of Padampa Sangye (see Appendix 1), which was also incorporated into the Gelug tradition. Je Tsongkhapa received all of the lineages of Buddhism in Tibet,
the Kadam teachings of Atisha, the Sakya teachings from Sakya Jetsun Rendawa, the Nyingma teachings from Abbot Döndrup Rinchen, and Kagyu teachings as well, in formulating his Ganden tradition, as it was previously called.

Elements of Padampa Sangye’s teachings are found throughout all of the lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. For instance, the refuge and bodhichitta prayers of the Gelug Nyungne tradition, coming from Gelongma Pelmo, are those of Padampa Sangye:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dro nam drel dö sam pa yi} \\
\text{sang gye chö dang ge dün la} \\
\text{jang chub nying po chi kyi bar} \\
\text{tag par dag ni kyab su chi}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{she rab nying tse dang che pe} \\
\text{tsön pe sem chen dün du dag} \\
\text{sang gye dün du ne che ne} \\
\text{dzog pay sang gye tob par ja}
\end{align*}
\]

Wishing to free wandering beings,  
I shall always go for refuge  
In Buddha, Dharma and Sangha,  
Until attaining highest enlightenment.

O all Buddhas present here!  
By persevering with wisdom and compassion,  
I shall attain full enlightenment  
For the sake of all sentient beings.\(^2\)

The Powa Sky-door Opener initiation of Chöd came from Padampa Sangye to his disciples, Bodhisattva Kunga, Dampa Charchung, Dampa Charchen, and Vajrakrodha. From there, the lineage eventually passed unbroken to Mindröling Lochen Rinpoche. All of the lamas in Kham received it from Mindröling Lochen Rinpoche. I first received it from my Guru Rigzin Pema Tsewang who was from Kham.

Padampa Sangye also brought the practice of Pelden Lhamo from India to Tibet. The Gelugpa Bodong Chogle Namgyel received it and gave it to
Gendun Drup, the first Dalai Lama. That was how Pelden Lhamo became a protector of the Dalai Lamas.

When Buddha Vajradhara Samantabhadra first taught, the teachings were given without words, through direct mind-to-mind transmission. Teachings such as those translated in this book were later given through the language of symbols. Nowadays we have oral lineages that are passed on verbally; we listen to the Guru’s speech. The mahamudra text translated here is one of four texts of the Pacification of Suffering lineage referred to as the Round of Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols. The original scriptures are presently in the care of Trulshig Rinpoche, as are nine holy objects related to Dingri and Padampa Sangye, such as the stone that Buddha threw that landed in Dingri, three teeth of Padampa Sangye’s bull, and a small piece of stone imprinted with Padampa Sangye’s footprint when he was a baby.

The story of this last artifact is as follows: Padampa Sangye’s mother conceived him at a time when his father had been away and could not have fathered him. That was shameful to her, so she tried to abort the fetus by jumping off a ledge and jumping into a river. Her efforts were unsuccessful and after eight months she heard recitations coming from her womb. Learned pandits said that it was the tantra Expressing the Names of Manjushri and told her that she was carrying a Buddha!

When the baby was born he immediately spoke four lines of praise to his mother:

Beyond speech, thought, expression, wisdom gone beyond,
Unborn, unceasing, with a nature like space,
Discerning transcendent wisdom’s sphere of awareness,
Homage to the Mother of the three times’ Conquerors!

He then said, “Mother, you had such a difficult time carrying me in your womb, jumping off a cliff, jumping into the water, I must give you a blessing to return your kindness! Bring a flat stone!” His mother gave him a small light-yellowish flat piece of marble and he imprinted it with his foot!

The Tibetan government sent a disciple of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Trulshig Rinpoche to request copies of the four texts, including the one translated in the teachings portion of this book. One copy was made for His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala, and one copy was made for the king of Bhutan. We obtained
it from the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is happy for all beings to have the opportunity to learn about Dharma and he encourages distribution of the texts.

I received the explanatory tantras and instructions of Padampa Sangye’s lineage from two Gurus in particular: Rigzin Pema Tsewang and Pawo Gyendrup. They told me that as I had been born in Dingri Langkor, if I were to emphasize practice of Padampa Sangye and Machig Labdrön’s teachings, it would be beneficial for all beings. My teachers told me that because this was a time of the five degenerations, it was vital for the teachings of Padampa Sangye to be preserved, because they could pacify immense suffering such as that created by wars waged out of jealousy and greed. Wherever these teachings spread and are practiced, suffering is automatically pacified.

They told me that as I had received all of the initiations, transmissions, and instructions of Padampa Sangye’s lineage and Machig Labdrön’s teachings, I should complete the practice. After all, I was born in Dingri Langkor and had a strong connection with Padampa Sangye, so it would be auspicious. My Lamas told me this with great emphasis when they sent me to practice in Tibet and Nepal. From the age of twenty-two, I practiced at sites all over Nepal. Then I became known and was constantly called to people’s homes to conduct transference of consciousness when people died, to perform fire pujas, to practice Chöd for sick people, and so forth, because it was found to be beneficial.

I had been staying in Parping, Nepal, a sacred site of Guru Rinpoche and Vajra Yogini, for seven years when a person from America named Swami Chetanananda arrived. He was the Guru of Nityananda Institute, a spiritual community that practices Trika Yoga and studies the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. He also had an interest in Buddhism, and particularly the Kusali Mahasiddha Lineage of India that I practice. He asked me a few questions about my practice and asked me to perform the Chöd, which I did. He liked it a lot and said that it was a practice basically identical to his own. He said that Americans would be very interested in it. I told him that the Tibetans were not extremely interested in the solitary yogi type of practice, that they were more attracted to the large monastic gatherings. I said that if there were people in America who appreciated it, they must have associated with the mahasiddhas of India in previous lifetimes and that they may very well be incarnations of tantric yogis. Swamiji liked me and, for auspicious reasons, I gave him my damaru, bell, and thighbone trumpet.
I felt no regret in giving them to him because I was delighted that there was someone who felt deeply about the mahasiddha Dharma. I wondered if perhaps he was someone who had practiced among the previous mahasiddhas of India or if he was an incarnation of one of the mahasiddhas who later lived in Tibet such as Padampa Sangye, Virupa, Tangtong Gyelpo, Milarepa, or Shavari. Such mahasiddhas have freedom over the process of death and rebirth, and some may want to take birth in a nice country like America! We shouldn’t think that only Tibetans are very holy, while those of other races and nationalities are somehow inferior. Holy beings could take birth in any country, we don’t know! As Buddha said, don’t judge living beings!

Swami spoke with his disciples back in America about me and they asked him to invite me to teach them Chöd. When Swami returned to Nepal he requested teachings for his students and invited me to America. When I spoke to my lama friends about it they thought it would be very good. They told me that if people in America were requesting Buddhadharma, that I definitely must teach, and that it would be beneficial to spread knowledge of Buddhadharma wherever it was not yet understood.

So I came to America. I told the students at the institute that, in their case, their Western education would have to supplant the traditional extensive preliminaries and practices as preparation for Chöd. I told them that it would not be the same for them as for me, because I had trained in Buddhism from a young age, but that with their education, they would be able to immediately understand the meaning of my words, learn the melodies, and so forth. I taught refuge and bodhichitta and the Chöd ritual “Laughter of the Dakinis,” which they learned very well. Then I taught them the visualizations that accompany the recitations and the Cham dance that is performed when Chöd is practiced outside in charnel grounds. We counted eighty-eight Westerners present when I first taught Cham in America. When I learned Cham from my Lama at the age of twenty-one, there were eighty of us. That made an increase of eight. No such auspicious growth of that nature had occurred in my life thus far with my small group of Tibetan practitioners in Nepal. I had given teachings but no one had requested Cham and I had not taught it. That finally happened here at Nityananda Institute. I wondered at having the opportunity to teach Cham to so many, even eight more than my Lama, and I thought it was auspicious, and made prayers to my Guru inseparable from Padampa Sangye and Machig Labdrön.
for the successful flourishing of the teachings. Since that time the students at Nityananda Institute have gained a great deal of experience through persevering in practice of Chöd, Powa, healing, and other practices.

Then His Holiness the Dalai Lama was invited to Portland, Oregon, to teach during a time when I was staying there. His Holiness saw me sitting off to one side and expressed a wish to see me. When I met His Holiness he asked me what Dharma I practiced and I told him my story, who my Lamas were, and so forth. He told me that I must teach others what I knew. He reminded me that after some time, I would die and that my teachings would be lost unless I passed them on to others. He told me that when I returned home I must come to see him in Dharamsala. I thought, I am old and I don’t know how I could give much more extensive teachings, but His Holiness is Arya Avalokiteshvara, and He must see something of benefit for the teachings and sentient beings. At his residence, His Holiness questioned me in depth about the teachings I had received. Finally he said that my teachings and lamas were of the highest order and he said that, while other Tibetan traditions of Buddhism and Bön had well-established centers for learning, there was no such center for Shijay, the Pacification of Suffering teachings of Padampa Sangye and Chöd, apart from individual Lamas living here and there. He encouraged me to found a center and to teach everything I knew to small classes of young Tibetan disciples that he would send me. He gave me a statue of Buddha with many blessings, made extensive prayers, and said that he would help me. It was somewhat decided at that point.

When I returned to Nepal I first inquired as to where I might rent or buy a larger place than the space for eight or so practitioners that I had in Parping. At that time the monks of Shelkar Chöde in Kathmandu had outgrown their monastery and they needed to build a larger monastery elsewhere. Their old one was for sale. They didn’t want to sell it to someone who would open a factory or restaurant, but wanted it to go to someone who would use it as a space for Dharma. They offered it to me at a reduced price so I bought it. Once I bought it, we easily got sponsors for statues and other representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, and within a year, we were perfectly established with everything we needed. I now have the first nine disciples in retreat on Nyingma practices and after that I will teach them about Padampa Sangye’s tradition.6

Swamiji suggested that since Padampa Sangye’s teachings are so mean-
ingful for our time, it would be wonderful if more people in the world could experience them. He had obtained a copy of one of the four *Round of Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols* texts of Padampa Sangye and wanted to have the text translated into English. He asked David Molk to do the translation work and we have now produced this book. I worked with David, answering his questions on many points of the ancient language of the teachings so that the translation should accurately reflect the tradition. This is the first time these texts have been made available in English. They have existed in Tibetan, of course, but few Tibetans have taken serious interest in them. The Chinese people, on the other hand, have great interest in these teachings. Padampa Sangye’s actual father was Manjushri, and Manjushri is the deity of the Chinese people. The Five-Peaked Mountain of China is a sacred site of Manjushri and in the minds of the Chinese, the teachings and mandala of Manjushri is still there, unchanged. They have tremendous faith and admiration for these teachings.

At Swami’s request, I gave the Chöd initiation, the Sky-Opener Initiation, to Swami and his students. When I told His Holiness the Dalai Lama that Westerners were requesting initiations he said that I should give them. He said that we must teach anyone in the world who requests, without regret or possessiveness. I have taught Swami and his students everything I know about the “ripening initiation,” “perfecting transmission,” and “liberating instructions” of Chöd. I have also given many initiations of the Pacification of Suffering Lineage of Padampa Sangye: outer, inner and secret Padampa Sangye, Vajravarahi, Krudhakali, Nairatmya and the Twelve Tathagatas, the Ali Kali Scripture Initiation, Protectors and so forth and, so as not to spoil the auspiciousness, I have given everything. If someone has aspiration for any of these, they must be practiced and accomplished. For Dharma, it is good if everything is auspicious. If respect is not lost, all is well. If the close bond of *samaya* is not spoiled, all is well. With all auspiciousness, I have offered these to Swamiji without regret. As these practices are translated into English, they will spread and become available everywhere in the world. Now, if I die, I am happy because I know these teachings will flourish ever more widely. I feel like a farmer who has finished planting his seeds. Now I am happy to think about the harvest ripening in the future.

Machig Labdrön predicted that in degenerate times there would be people who would try to put a seal of ownership upon the ownerless teachings,
the teachings of selflessness. Buddha told us that no one owns the Dharma and anyone can practice it. One need not become a monk. Anyone, male or female, is welcome. Dharma is not something essential to only monks and nuns! Everyone has to eat, don’t they? Everyone needs the practice of Dharma. Your hunger cannot be satiated by someone else eating your food! It is too bad if we think someone else can practice Dharma for us. We have to do it for ourselves. Machig Labdrön also predicted that in degenerate times many would claim to be Chöd practitioners, wearing robes, playing drums, and so forth. Cloaking oneself in red or yellow robes does not help to realize naked awareness! For that, awareness must be drawn inwards! Anyone, male or female, can do it! That is what Padampa Sangye told Machig Labdrön.

As these teachings of Padampa Sangye spread widely they will help bring about peace in our world because they will become a means for people to become free from hatred, greed, and ignorance, and to develop compassion, love, and altruism. It will start to happen automatically, just by seeing the books of these teachings! People will become motivated to practice! Black magic will be diminished! Fewer weapons will be manufactured! For these reasons I am glad that this work is being made available now. I pray that the teachings spread everywhere and that they be authentically practiced.

Lama Tsering Wangdu
Nityananda Institute
Portland, Oregon
January 2006
I must begin by thanking Swami Chetanananda for the inspiration and support that has made this work possible. It is an outgrowth of the transmission of Padampa Sangye’s teachings to the community of Nityananda Institute from a living exponent of the Shijayā tradition, “the mad Chöpa of Dingri,” Venerable Lama Tsering Wangdu Rinpoche. This has been an especially good situation for me as a practitioner and a translator of Tibetan language because we have had full access to the instructions of the lineage and the meaning of terms as they are understood in the oral tradition. Most ideal, we have the blessings of a holder of the lineage to make this work available to others.

We have the Tibetan people to thank for the preservation of these teachings. They were the fortunate ones prophesied to receive them. In particular, we have His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama to thank for his compassion and expansive vision in wishing to make these teachings available to all peoples of the world. He has clearly stated this sentiment to Lama Wangdu.

I must also say that I have nowhere else in the West seen such enthusiasm for training in the dance, ritual, and meditation of Chöd as from the people of Nityananda Institute, and I appreciate the great service that they and Swami Chetanananda have provided for Lama Wangdu and his family. It has definitely helped his life and work to flourish. At Lama Wangdu’s present home in Nepal, and wherever he goes, people stream to him for spiritual enrichment, the healing of mental and physical ailments, and the clearing of hindrances in their lives. It was the work of relieving the suffering of beings that originally brought Swami Chetanananda and Lama Wangdu together, so it is fitting that they collaborate in bringing forth this volume on Padampa Sangye and the Pacification of Suffering teachings.
Over a period of many years, with the support of Nityananda Institute, I have checked my translation of the ancient language of the *Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols* text with Lama Wangdu, questioning him and receiving instruction on many sections. His insights were indispensable to the accuracy and spirit of its translation. The biography, on the other hand, was a clearly printed edition written in modern language that I translated on my own. In any case, I must bear responsibility for all mistakes. I pray that this work may contribute to the spread of Padampa Sangye’s teachings.

My utmost gratitude for the opportunity to do this work goes to Lama Wangdu Rinpoche and Swami Chetanananda. I also want to thank my mother, Marguerite, who taught me English, Venerable Gonsar Tulku, who taught me Tibetan, Snow Lion Publications editor Susan Kyser for her excellent assistance, and my wife, Gayle, for her constant love and support.

D.M.
There are two texts translated in this book. The first, *The Story of the Liberated Life of the Great Lord of Siddhas, Venerable Padampa Sangye: A Sun Ablaze with Thousandfold Rays of Attainment,* is a biography of Padampa Sangye written in 1906 by Chökyi Senge, also known as “Laughing Vajra of Keajra.” He was the fourth incarnation of Jamyang Shayba, the author of Drepung Gomang Monastery’s textbooks. The second text, *Padampa Sangye’s Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols,* is a rare collection of teachings, songs, stories, and conversations that were compiled by a close disciple during Padampa Sangye’s lifetime, almost a thousand years ago. With the exception of one abridgement of the biography, the complete translations of both these texts are included in this volume.

During Lama Wangdu’s transmission of Padampa Sangye’s teachings at Nityananda Institute, I have also had the opportunity to translate many tantric texts of the tradition, such as a compilation of excerpts from *The Great River Tantra of Inconceivable Secret Ali Kali,* a root tantra of the later transmission; *Accomplished Just by Reading,* a compilation of deity initiations from the early, middle, and late Pacification of Suffering lineage transmissions; and *Nectar of the Heart,* an extensive commentary on practice passed down in the oral lineage. These are representative of the essential tantric practices of the tradition that are referred to in the biography. Excerpts from these texts are included in this introduction and in the appendices, and their import will also inform the brief discussion of Padampa Sangye’s life and teachings below.

The biography does not give a chronological timeline of events in Padampa Sangye’s life. Structured more as an “inspirational and instructional model for practitioners,” the first seven chapters merely catalogue their respective subjects, while from the eighth chapter onwards, the master
begins to come alive. Besides many wondrous stories, also included are teachings and songs of realization such as his best-known discourse, his “Last Will and Testament, the Lines of Advice to the People of Dingri.”

The extraordinary nature of Padampa Sangye’s life makes it difficult to pin down historical fact, but I will give a brief sketch of what the biography and oral tradition assert. In a previous life as the Bodhisattva Aparajita, he received a prophecy from Buddha Shakyamuni that he would spread the teachings of the Perfection of Wisdom in the north. To indicate the place, Buddha threw a stone to the north. After six rebirths as Brahmin pandits, he was born into a Brahmin family in Bedha, Tsara Singha, South India, in about 545 CE. His father, who mined resources from the sea, was away when his mother miraculously conceived. Fearing her husband’s anger, she tried to abort by taking poison and jumping into the river. She was unsuccessful, however, and gave birth to a son who had a very beautiful form similar to that of a Buddha. He immediately offered his mother praise of the Perfection of Wisdom and put his footprint into a piece of marble, as a special thanks to her for the hardships she had undergone when he was in her womb. This yellowish piece of marble with the small footprint is still preserved in a set of nine sacred objects from Padampa Sangye’s life.

As a youth, he studied reading and writing of Sanskrit, the science of sound, and mastered it with just a little prompting. He also mastered logic, astrology, crafts, and archery, and worked for a while in his father’s occupation, mining the sea. At the age of fifteen he received novice monk’s vows at Vikramashila Monastic University and was given the ordination name Kamalashila. He also took the vows of a bodhisattva before his master Aryadeva the Brahmin.

At some point he became disillusioned with the monastic environment. He left and continued to train with numerous tantric masters and meditated at many sites in India and Nepal. The list of his gurus reads like a “Who’s Who” of Indian masters and mahasiddhas. He is said to have brought to Tibet the lineages of fifty-four male and female mahasiddhas. Three surviving texts in *Nectar of the Heart* summarize the instructions he received from these mahasiddhas. I offer a translation of one of these texts, the *Stainless Path of the Silver Egg of Speech*, in Appendix 2 to demonstrate the rich source of instructions in Padampa Sangye’s lineage coming from the mahasiddhas of India.

He persevered in listening to his gurus’ teachings, trained his mind, and
was initiated into the tantric mandalas. He then entered strict austerities, determined to gain full realizations. He gained every one of the “common” siddhis such as knowledge of others’ minds, life-extension, fast-walking, and the ability to transform base minerals into gold, as well as the supreme attainment of full awakening. The biography asserts that this occurred when he was 290 years of age, about the year 835. Endowed with the “armor of compassion,” cherishing others more than self, pure auspiciousness arose within him, so that he became profoundly beneficial to all who met him.

One of his teachers, the Bodhisattva Abbot Dharmarakshita, was in Tibet with Padmasambhava at that time and predicted that an internal schism would threaten the development of Buddhism in Tibet. He told King Trisong Detsen that he should invite his student Kamalashila when that occurred.

After Dharmarakshita’s departure, the Chinese abbot Hashang Mahayana composed many texts asserting that non-application of the mind to anything was the way to cultivate the “right view.” The king realized that this was a mistake and invited (Padampa Sangye as) Kamalashila to come to Tibet to debate with Hashang Mahayana at Samye Monastery in 846. He defeated the Chinese abbot with scriptural citations and reasoning and composed three texts called the *Stages of Meditation*, in brief, middling, and extensive versions, once again spreading the complete teachings in Tibet.

Although by some accounts Kamalashila died in Tibet, according to the biography Padmasambhava instructed him to go on to China and enact the same deeds that he had accomplished in Tibet. Various reasons make it difficult to map Padampa Sangye’s exact movements with any degree of certainty. He could travel very swiftly by speed-walking, and he himself said that he had walked over two thirds of the earth’s surface. To complicate the matter, oral tradition also asserts that he “pretended to die in China a number of times”\(^{19}\); this biography describes a similar occurrence.

The biography asserts that Padampa made a fifth and final trip to Tibet in 1097 and that he remained in Dingri for twenty-one years. The *Great Dictionary of Chinese and Tibetan*,\(^{20}\) representing other generally accepted traditions, asserts that he made his next-to-last trip to Tibet in 1091 or 1092, went on to China in 1101, and returned to Tibet a final time in 1113 before passing away in Tibet in 1117. It was during the final period of this 572-year life span that he became known to Tibetans as Padampa Sangye and gave teachings such as those translated in this book.
Thus, according to the mystical accounts, he returned to Tibet as Padampa Sangye two centuries later, but not before he had experienced an event that drastically altered his appearance. He was walking with another sadhu named Dampa Nagchung, “Black Dampa,” when they arrived at a valley where an elephant had died. There was a danger that its corpse would pollute the water of the area and cause an epidemic. Both of the yogis knew how to animate a corpse by entering it with their consciousnesses. Padampa Sangye asked Dampa Nagchung if he would enter the elephant in order to move it away from the water source. Instead, Dampa Nagchung asked Padampa Sangye to do it and promised that he would guard his body while he was gone. Padampa Sangye left his body, entered the body of the elephant, and walked it a long distance away, where he left it to be eaten by animals.

In the meantime, however, Dampa Nagchung could not resist the temptation to abandon his own form and steal away with Padampa Sangye’s beautiful body. When Padampa Sangye’s consciousness returned, nothing was left except Dampa Nagchung’s body. According to the mystical account, at that time, Padampa Sangye almost left this world for the land of the dakinis. But Machig Labdrön clairvoyantly knew what was happening and recited some lines of praise to Nagchung’s body that persuaded Padampa Sangye that he could still benefit beings by entering into it.21

It was in this form, as the “Black Acharya,” that Padampa Sangye returned to Tibet and finally found the stone of Buddha’s prophecy. In Dingri, western Tibet, it was resting in the middle of a field that was shaped like Vajra-varahi.22 It was being circumambulated by a number of musk deer. As he watched, the deer dissolved into the stone. It was there, staying among the crags of Tshibri Mountain and in the Dingri environs, that Padampa Sangye found the most fertile ground for his teachings.

A miracle-working mahasiddha, he lived as a naked yogi who always acted contrary to “conventional” conduct. He demanded total commitment and a willingness to leave behind pretense and hypocrisy completely. He commanded one of his primary disciples, Kunga, to disrobe in public, and teased him when he modestly stepped behind a rock! He often dealt with pretense wrathfully. It is no wonder that his criticism sometimes fell upon the Tibetans who encountered him. As in every human society, there were people of various levels of motivation and capability in Tibet. But through his wrath we can hear Padampa Sangye’s great challenge to every one of us. Are we willing to give up superficial concerns and take respon-
sibility for our own spiritual development, regardless of what anyone else thinks? Are we ready to be introduced to the ultimate nature of our own being and, if our guru demands it, remain living in that awareness as a naked yogi or yogini, giving up all ties to normal society?

Many great sages have lamented that few people have the capacity to receive their instructions. Even Buddha Shakyamuni said, upon attaining enlightenment:

I have found a Dharma that is like nectar!  
Profound, peaceful, projection-free, unborn clear light!  
Yet, even if I revealed it, no one could understand it,  
So I’ll just stay quiet, hidden in the forest!

Yet the Tibetans did understand Padampa Sangye’s teachings. Some attained realization by just seeing his face or hearing his voice. Many lay and ordained people, both male and female, were galvanized into devoting their lives to practice. We are particularly fortunate to have extant in these pages a record of many of the great female disciples. The Dingri environs became filled with realized practitioners, like a pure land of the dakinis. Most attained realization through practice of Vajrayogini Tantra. Padampa Sangye also brought the lineage of Chöd to Tibet. He was Machig Labdrön’s guru and assisted her in receiving recognition from the Indian pandits who came to Tibet to examine her, thus helping the Chöd system she formulated to become fully established.

The name of the Shijay, or Pacification of Suffering, lineage that he founded stems from the Heart Sutra’s mantra, which “pacifies suffering,” as well as from a time that he attended a gathering of mahasiddhas in India. The mahasiddhas were each describing the yogic powers they had attained when it was noticed that Padampa Sangye had remained silent. When he was asked what kind of siddhis he had attained, he replied that the only siddhi in which he was interested was that which brought the swiftest pacification of the suffering of sentient beings. For this, he was praised among all of the mahasiddhas as the only one who had truly found the essence of what Buddha had intended in all of his teachings of Dharma.

Innumerable discourses and conversations with Padampa Sangye were recorded, painstakingly written by hand in inks which, out of devotion, were often mixed with powdered gold, silver, and turquoise. Handwritten,
multiple volumes of the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* in 100,000, 20,000, and 8,000 verses filled the two entire side walls of the Dingri Langkor Monastery, as did many texts like the *Mahamudra in Symbols* translated in this volume, which includes metaphoric and nonverbal teachings.23

The transmission of Padampa Sangye’s Pacification of Suffering teachings in Tibet occurred in three periods—early, middle, and late. The early transmission was received by the Kashmiri Jnanaguhya, who passed it on to Pelden Sherab, Lotön and so on. The middle transmission occurred in Central Tibet and divided into three lineages, called Ma, So, and Kam, after the principal disciples. The Ma lineage was received by Magom Chökyi Sherab, the So transmission, by So Gendun Bar, and the Kam lineage, by Kamtön Yeshe Gyeltsen and their lines of disciples. The later transmission was received by four yogis, one of whom was the Bodhisattva Kunga, the main compiler of *Mahamudra in Symbols*.

Kunga was a humble Tibetan man who was trapped in a relationship with an abusive wife. He pretended to go out one night to raid grain from a neighboring village and instead ran away to become Padampa’s disciple. Padampa had been waiting for him a long time with great anticipation. As Kunga was not suited for the instantaneous path, Padampa gave him a graded path of instructions on the perfection of wisdom in connection with tantra. By the time Padampa passed into parinirvana in Dingri, Kunga had become his chief lineage holder.

In particular, among the many instructions Padampa Sangye entrusted to Kunga was the main treasure of his later transmission: *The Ali Kali Scripture Initiation of the Five Paths*,24 which derives from the root tantra *The Great River Tantra of Inconceivable Secret Ali Kali*. It is an extraordinary initiation and practice of highest yoga tantra, which Padampa Sangye received directly from the Goddess Nairatmya at the time of his enlightenment. It has many unusual features, such as being conferred on the basis of a volume of scripture rather than a painted mandala. When Nairatmya conferred the initiation upon Padampa, she did so on the basis of a Prajnaparamita scripture that she drew in space. When Padampa Sangye conferred it upon Kunga and thereafter, it was on the basis of a volume of the *Eight-Thousand-Verse Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. It is conferred utilizing the vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet—the “Ali Kali”—and by means of “mind-to-mind” “pointing out” instructions rather than chanted liturgies. It is a Nairatmya practice that incorporates the most profound type of
body mandala, in which elements of the subtle body are generated as deities. Meditating on such a body mandala helps to manifest extremely subtle consciousness with which to realize the ultimate nature of all phenomena—the perfection of wisdom from the tantric perspective.\textsuperscript{25}

The perfection of wisdom was always Padampa Sangye’s ultimate intention and he often transmitted it mind-to-mind, with a single word or a few cryptic words, or with nonverbal gestures. He said that people received initiation from him just by meeting him. The \textit{Mahamudra in Symbols} text is unique in being an extraordinary record of nonverbal teachings and Zen koan-like pronouncements from an Indian mahasiddha who is central to all Tibetan tantric Buddhist traditions.

This style of teaching lends credence to the assertion that Padampa Sangye was the legendary Bodhidharma, source of the “sudden enlightenment” “mind-transmission” of Zen. In his \textit{Meditation on Emptiness}, Jeffrey Hopkins quotes Nyingma Lama Khetsun Sangpo:\textsuperscript{26}

\begin{quote}

The founder of the Shi-jay order was Pa-dam-ba-sang-gyay, who many say was Bodhidharma, also known as Kamalashila.... He was a student of eighty gurus, including Nagarjuna, Maitripada, and Naropa, lived for over five hundred years, visited Tibet five times, spread Buddhism widely in both China and Tibet, and is said to have visited Mi-la-re-ba near the end of his life. Based on the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, he divides his teachings into three systems—sutra, tantra, and a union of sutra and tantra—spreading a doctrine much like that of sudden enlightenment. It is said that he pretended to die a few times in China.

Jérôme Edou, likewise, in his \textit{Machig Labdron and the Foundations of Chöd}, says, “According to Tibetan sources he traveled five times to Tibet. In the course of his fifth Tibet trip he continued on to China where he spent twelve years and was known as Bodhidharma....”\textsuperscript{27}

Asked the meaning of ultimate reality, Padampa Sangye ties a gag over his mouth. On another occasion, he blows on a horn and turns it to gold, then takes it in his hand and it turns to ashes. He hangs his sheepskin robe up in space. He covers his mouth with his left hand and raises his right palm outwards. He steals his disciple’s Dharma bag and burns it, and so on. Kunga interprets the various symbolic acts, and we have a chance to reflect
on them and get a visceral sense of them as well.

He indicates the inexpressibility of profound truth with commands like, “Listen to this with the ears of a turtle!” or, “Ask the head of the frogs!” He tells people they will gain no realizations without a qualified guru by saying, “If the mold has no design, the tsa-tsa will not emerge!” With the words, “Having eaten delicious food, don’t throw it up!” he advises them not to abandon the guru’s instructions once they have received them. Speaking of rigpa awareness cutting through all doubt, he exclaims, “Whatever one meets is drawn onto the path! A crazy person with a key wants to open all the locks!” At other times he is perfectly transparent, as when he answers the question, “What does Buddha mean?” with the words, “It’s what you call your own pure mind!” Again, Kunga offers his interpretations of the more cryptic pronouncements, and we can also ponder Padampa Sangye’s words for ourselves, to receive our own transmission of his intent. One of the qualities of an awakened being’s speech is that a single word can communicate different things to many different people simultaneously.

Access to this Mahamudra in Symbols text has been quite restricted for many years because of circumstances surrounding the destruction of Padampa Sangye’s monastery. Besides that, it does not seem to have been greatly used for practice in Tibet in recent times. The Chinese have historically shown more interest and faith in this particular genre of the solitary hermit’s style of teachings. I am especially glad to be making it available to English-speaking practitioners to explore what seems to be an extraordinary common thread between Tibetan, Chinese Chan, and Japanese Zen traditions.

We may even find an echo of the Tao Te Ching in Dampa’s response to the question, “Dampa, what is perfect truth?” He replies:

Having branded a hundred sheep,  
If there is one among them without the brand,  
Recognize the one without the brand!  
That is the brand!

In the context of Padampa Sangye’s teachings, it is clear that he is referring to recognizing and abiding in rigpa, clear light awareness, the supreme practice of highest tantra.

Strong parallels are also obvious in such scriptures as those of the Kash-
miri Shaivism of Vasugupta, in which mahasiddhas of India speak about the subtlest levels of consciousness manifesting in meditation. Masters like Nityananda have wonderfully demonstrated realizations such as those spoken of in tantra. For instance, it is said that perception of impurity is abandoned, and that the yogi’s encounter with “impure” things gives rise to blissful realization, but it is rare to find a yogi sitting in the middle of excrement, offering it to passersby as the finest of Parisian perfumes—but that is how Nityananda’s disciples found him one day, after a frantic search.

On another occasion Nityananda walked into a lake to obtain gold to fund the construction of his hospital, demonstrating an ability, similar to that of Padampa Sangye, to turn everything he touched into gold.

Suffice it to say that Padampa Sangye would never accept verbal conventions as a substitute for transcendent Dharma. The following exchange is a classic one.

Asked by someone, “Dampa, I feel faith in Prajnaparamita (Wisdom Gone to the Other Side) and Mahamudra (the Great Seal). Please give me an instruction on those!”

Dampa said, “That side, this side! Hand seal, foot seal! Such nauseating talk in the name of Dharma! Chasing after Dharma! Infatuated with sense objects! Studying meaning for the sake of the examples! Would you send a child to the enemy? Would you cover the one with everything? Would you sell out the meaning for the words? Would you send the lord to the subjects? Would you buy the inexpressible with candy?

“Outwardly, relax clinging to objects! Inwardly, give up clinging to the body! Secretly, loosen clinging to mind! Tighten with intensity, and then gently relax! The tightening is the method, and the loosening is the wisdom! Introduction to the nature of mind by the Lama is like that, as well!”

In an age when wars are still being fought over issues of nationality and ideology, it is refreshing to be involved in a project that cuts across national boundaries and religious dogmas. Among many open-minded people there is a healthy tendency to believe that all peoples of the earth have a common right to truth, and an equal potential to realize and manifest it, regardless of the different terms they may choose to describe it. The teachings of Pad-
ampa Sangye radically confirm that intuition, resonating with the highest essence of all mystic and yogic paths. He introduced people to the essential nature of their own being, revealing to them that they had never been apart from that which they sought. Such contemplative paths are perhaps better characterized as inner sciences, or sciences of consciousness, rather than religions. They are based not so much in culturally fabricated ideas of the divine as in observation of the results of experiments carried out in a meditator’s own body and mind. In fact what emerges as the fruit of such a path is nothing but realization of the actual nature and potentials of consciousness. As Guru Padmasambhava says:

Well then, what is the difference between Buddhas and sentient beings? Nothing, apart from their realization and non-realization of mind!

Nagarjuna’s student Nagabuddhi says:

What is nirvana, what is enlightenment, what is spiritual freedom? True enlightenment is nothing but when you fully realize the nature of yourself!

His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama comments on this:

When Nagabuddhi talks about the nature of oneself, he is referring to what Buddhists call the ultimate clear light, or inner radiant nature of the mind. He says that when this is fully actualized, or realized, that is enlightenment; that is true buddhahood.

Tibetan Buddhists generally consider the most definitive perspectives in Dharma to be expressed in the teachings of Vajrayana. In highest yoga tantra, gross, subtle, and very subtle levels of consciousness are distinguished. Consciousness is observed to emerge from its most subtle level into grosser levels during the dream state and the waking state, and then return to that subtlest level in the states of deep sleep, death, and deep meditation. This clear light mind, which Padampa Sangye also referred to as “natural luminosity,” “rigpa,” and “elemental mind,” is considered to be the source of all conscious states and the source of all of samsara and nirvana. It was to
this natural luminosity of their own minds that Padampa Sangye directed beings, just as Padmasambhava introduced the Mongolian Lha Pelgyi Yeshe to the pristine awareness of ultimate bodhicitta.\textsuperscript{33}

Lha Pelgyi Yeshe, listen! The spirit of awakening is without activity, so, without seeking it, it is self-arisen. It is without effort or accomplishment, so rest in the unmodified state of natural luminosity! In that state, the continuum of fluctuation and movement will cease. At that time, know that you are a Buddha!

This type of “divine pride” or identification with the deity is part of every tantric practice. The deities and entire mandala are viewed as manifestations of one’s own, the Guru Deity’s, wisdom. This is expressed in mantras such as

\begin{verbatim}
OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA
SHUDDHO HAM
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
OM I am the pure nature that is the pure nature of all phenomena!
\end{verbatim}

The “I” thus identified is understood as merely imputed upon the basis of the most subtle mind’s realization of the ultimate. This same “merely imputed” identification with the deity is also maintained, as omniscient wisdom subsequently manifests in the form of the deity and mandala to alleviate sufferings of beings and guide them to the bliss of enlightenment.

Kunga was once disturbed when he encountered a monk who doubted that Padampa Sangye’s disciples could actually be practicing the definitive meaning of tantra without practicing a graduated path. Padampa responded:

“...The frog in the well cannot comprehend the ocean! For that, you need someone who has seen the ocean! That monk is an example of the type who makes the gradual climb. If he were shown the profound meaning, it would cause him to panic! That’s why Buddha taught multiple vehicles in accordance with the level of trainees’ faculties! If there were no gradation of faculties, Buddha could have given just one single teaching.”

Kunga asked, “Well, shouldn’t one, first of all, seek a teacher
of graded stages of development?"

Dampa replied, “Why do you say that? When you get to the upper rooms, the job of the staircase is over! Where there is a roof, it’s impossible that there is no foundation! This is not the only lifetime you’ve set out on the path! You have already completed a great deal of purification and accumulation! There are others of highest faculties who are liberated spontaneously, not in stages.”

Again, Kunga asked, “Then, should one take the Shravaka’s vowed morality or not?”

Dampa said, “If you have it, that’s good; it’s a step toward liberation. But more becomes included in less and less! If you keep the tantric commitments purely, even if you do not formally take on the lower trainings, they are included in that. The three vows are not of separate substances! They may be kept separately, but they are of a progressively broadening nature!”

All training in means and wisdom eventually merges into recognizing and sustaining “elemental clear light mind.” Padampa Sangye said:

By just receiving the Guru’s introduction to elemental mind and merging their minds with its object, those of highest faculties need not train in any other application of meditation, because they abide in that primordial essence.

In one final note regarding the last three appendices: there I offer the reader Transmutation of Speech into Mantra (Appendix 3), The Nature of the Path (Appendix 4), and Stabilizing the Preliminaries (Appendix 5). Transmutation of Speech into Mantra is an excerpt from Nectar of the Heart which I include here to exemplify how the Tibetan tantric lineages are rooted in Padampa Sangye’s instructions, often in an original and even more extensive form. I include Nature of the Path so that those familiar with Tibetan tantric practice can identify, in an excerpt from a root tantra of the tradition, all of the usual components of Tibetan tantric Buddhism. I offer the last appendix, Stabilizing the Preliminaries, for those who might appreciate it as a method to make a personal-practice connection with Padampa Sangye’s teachings. Extracted from Accomplished Just by Reading, the
compilation of deity initiations of the tradition, it is the preliminary prac-
tice for the Scripture Initiation of the Five Paths, which can also be done as
a separate practice. It does not require an initiation.

I will close with Buddha’s own words from the twenty-fourth chapter of
The Tantra of the Great River of Inconceivable Secret Ali Kali.34 In response
to the question, “Bhagavan, what are the stages of meditation?” Buddha
replied:

The various beings are all born from mind!
Bodies, minds, objects, appearances,
All the colors of the animate and inanimate,
Are born perfect, fully perfect, in mahamudra!
If you realize this great “meditation without meditation,”
It is present no matter what you do!
Conceptual intellectual meditations exhaust you:
Be skilled in meditating for the sake of realization!
“Real” meditation does not eliminate delusions.
“Unreal” meditation improves qualities, nonetheless.
Doubt, because it is two-pointed, accomplishes nothing.
In nonduality there is no such thing as meditation.
With bodhichitta viewing emptiness,
Letting go and leaving it just as it is,
Adjust your gaze and enter clarity of rigpa!
Let go of all physical and verbal activity!
In space of realization, without thought,
Beyond expression, the sun of compassion dawns!
Great certainty, free of doubt, self-awareness,35
Thanks to the Guru, awakens from within!

David Molk
Big Sur, California
June 27, 2006
The Story of the Liberated Life of the Great Lord of Siddhas, Venerable Padampa Sangye:
A Sun Ablaze with Thousandfold Rays of Attainment

by Chökyi Senge
Homage

Homage at the feet of Venerable Dampa Sangye, our Guru and great Lord of Siddhas!
Please care for us in your great compassion!

Beautiful as bright moon crystal, enticing lass, with an elegant lusting glance,
Skillfully summons all conquerors to a feast of uncontaminated bliss.
Just thinking of you bestows illumination that liberates from darkness of delusion!
O Vajrarahi, stay on the lotus of my heart and
Bless me with stainless wisdom here and now!

Though the three secrets of all Buddhas are equal in qualities,
A world leader with whom none can start to compare
In compassion for beings of our time of five declines:\nHomage, O peerless Buddha Shakyamuni!

Loden Kelsang Trinle, sole protector of all beings seeking liberation,
With supreme powerful activities spreading the essence of Buddha’s Teachings,
And Pa Wangchug Gyatso, attained to glory of the eight powers,
Great sovereign of the ocean of mandalas,
Homage, incomparable Lamas, victorious to the peak of samsara and nirvana!

Outer common gurus such as the indicators Nagarjuna, Asanga, and Aryadeva,
Inner uncommon gurus such as Nairatmya Lion Proclaimer of Mind Termas,  
And amazing secret gurus, thirty-six tantric masters such as Gyelpo Daö,  
O Supreme Siddha, to your crown jewels of lineage masters, as well,  
Always, I bow, with body, speech, and mind, in devotion!

Great Hero, victorious in battle,  
Annihilating the four maras’ armies with the force of realization,  
Known as Dampa the Indian,  
Who turned the wheel of mastery and accomplishment, manifesting yuganaddha,  
Sole ornament of the world, whose fame, renowned as sun and moon,  
Pervades the three realms,  
All the powerful beings of samsara and nirvana honor you with intense devotion,  
Making the crowns of their heads your foot-rest!

If the vast space of your realizations cannot be measured,  
By even the garuda-like great Aryas,  
Other than just in a small part,  
How could a beggar of little intelligence such as I?

Yet, from the ocean of the enlightenment biography, difficult to fathom,  
With my knowledge, as little as the water you could cup in your hands,  
Exhorted by persuasive friends, I shall, here, with faith,  
Tell this story, soothing to the ears of the fortunate.

Alas, the practice lineage that flourished in earlier times like the swelling ocean!  
Because of the frost of the declined fortune of these very degenerate times,  
Even the bee-like swarms of practitioners hide humbly away.  
Leave aside happy songs! This sleep of stupidity is very sad.

Sometimes even children are praised at length  
By their parents when they become a bit proud of them;  
So why shouldn’t I speak of the great marvels  
Of a uniquely supreme yogi of ancient times!
Therefore, with my own perseverance as well,
By now letting thunder the secret drum of Dampa’s biography,
May those faithful and fortunate, who are now extremely blind,
Be given wide eyes of faith and dance with joy!
In the distant past
Before the Lord of Conquerors Lion’s Roar,
He took the supreme precious vow to liberate beings,
Throughout space, from the ocean of samsara.
Needing enthusiasm of exceptional courage,
He performed immeasurable great deeds of the bodhisattvas.
Again, before that sun-friend of beings
He strongly renewed his vow and was praised with delight.
[Padampa] pleased Protector Maitreya in the realm of Tushita,
Who conferred on him the power of future regent.
Then, in a succession of scholar siddhas of India,
He spread the teachings and brought relief to beings.
This white lotus garland briefly telling
Of the previous lives of this supreme of siddhas,
I lift with hands, in faith, as an offering;
Something to delight the Guru Deva!

This great lord of yogis known as Lord Dampa Sangye was endowed with many greatnesses exalting him over all the other Indian siddhas and scholars who ever came to Tibet. Throughout the world he is as renowned as the sun and moon, to all regardless of sect or tradition. Called “sole ornament of the world,” there are none throughout the three realms, including the gods, who could dispute it. As the omniscient great Pandit said:

Venerable Dampa Sangye, like the sun and moon, fully renowned,
Sole ornament of the world, unconquerable protector!
As to setting forth a condensed, convenient enlightenment biography of this great being known as Venerable Dampa the Indian, who, in definitive terms, is great Heruka, I shall first give a brief account of his previous lives. Second, I will give a slightly elaborate account of the life of Dampa himself. Third, I will tell a little of his future lives with a summary.

As regards his previous lives, prior to even the first age of this world, in front of a Buddha named Tathagata Sweet Roar, he generated the aspiration to supreme enlightenment, bodhichitta, and practiced many powerful bodhisattva activities. Finally it happened that when Dampa, this great being, was practicing the bodhisattva conduct before the Buddha King of Tushita, that Buddha prophesied:

Son of the lineage! In a future time you shall delight the Buddha Shakyamuni and, with extremely vast bodhichitta, you shall subdue sentient beings of the remote land of Tibet!

Then, in the presence of Buddha Shakyamuni, when he was the bodhisattva known as Aparajita Unconquerable Protector, Buddha said to him:

Son of the lineage! Go to the far north and work for the benefit of others!

Thus commanded, he passed away from that life to take birth in Tushita, where he delighted Buddha Maitreya, who accepted him, treating him like his future regent.

In particular, he was the seventh generation in a line of seven successive lives as great pandits. In the first of these, born in a land known as Bhehaha, he was known as Pandit Namkha Zangpo, Pure Space. He built a temple known as Padmaden, Lotus Endowed. He was cared for by Arya Manjushri.

In the second of these, he was born in a land known as Zang Ling, Excellent Realm. His name was Kshitigarbha, Essence of Earth. He built a temple known as Yangpa Chen, Breadth Endowed. He came into contact with Avalokiteshvara.

In the third, the land was Oddiyana Bheha, the name was Ökyi Nyingpo, Essence of Light. He built a temple known as Deway Silden, Endowed with Blissful Coolness. He came into contact with the five wisdom dakinis.
In the fourth, the land was Afghanistan, his name was Arya Tzutrül Chen, Magic Endowed. He built a temple known as Kaling Serkang, Golden House of the Land of Ka. Countless dakinis explained Dharma to him.

In the fifth, he was born in a town near Silwa Tsel, Cool Grove, of the south. His name was Drowa Dzinpa, Holder of Beings. He built the temple Deden Gaje, Blissful Bringer of Joy. He had visions of the Lord of Secrets Vajrapani, and others.

In the sixth, the land and city were known as Babtila. His name was Norbu Zangpo, Manibhadra, Excellent Jewel. He built the temple Betalay Tsel, Betalay Park. He was cared for by Dagmema, Goddess Nairatmya.

The seventh was his life as Precious Lord Dampa that shall be told elaborately, below.

Furthermore, in these various lives as seven pandits of India, by means of miracles and power, he stopped Turuka Garlog wars, refuted the logic of non-Buddhist tirthikas, instituted communities of Sangha, and so on; there was nothing that he didn’t do in his vast service to the teachings and doctoring to the needs of beings, as is well known. Further, when Buddha Shakyamuni made his prophecy, it is said that the land of Tibet to which Dampa came was just one island in a body of water. When Dampa, in the first of the seven births, went to Tibet, it was all just vegetation and forests with no human beings. At the time of his second incarnation, Tibet was the province of deer, wild asses, apes, monkeys, and various other animals but still no human beings. At the time of the third incarnation, the whole of Tibet was taken over by non-human Masang. At the time of the fourth incarnation, Nyatri Tsenpo had come from the realm of the gods to become the lord of human beings who were already present in villages. At the time of the fifth incarnation, the first teachings of holy Dharma were beginning to be found in Central Tibet, the precious basket of sutra and so forth having descended from the sky onto the roof of Lhato Torikang. At the time of his sixth incarnation, the Dharma king Songtsen Gampo, Avalokiteshvara in actuality, had invited his two queens from Nepal and India; this last, it is believed, is definitively established.

Although this is the traditional account, the time of the first two incarnations seems inconsistent with the time periods mentioned; so it seems to be a fabrication. This concludes a brief account of his previous lives.
The Greatness of His Birthplace

In lineage from the south of the Land of the Aryas, source of knowledge,
The lake of Tṣara Singha where swirls auspiciousness of the ten virtues,
Where garlands of waves of spiritual and temporal wealth roll,
Sporting place of powerful, confident scholars and siddhas,
Blessed by Avalokiteshvara and Tara,
Where many tantrikas and wise ones gather,
Of unsullied caste, brahmacharya, equal to the gods,
In such a land worthy of vying with pure lands
The great Lion of Siddhas was born.

In setting down the enlightened life of this great lord of siddhas there are seven or eight greatnesses traditionally explained from early stories: greatness of birthplace, greatness of ancestral lineage, greatness of training, greatness of Guru visions, greatness of realizations of training, greatness of siddhis attained, and greatness of activities comprise the seven. The addition of greatness of signs of miracle power, greatness of his parinirvana, and greatness of his disciple lineages makes ten.

The birthplace of Dampa, the great being, from the perspective of this world of Jambudvipa, was where the feet of that nirmanakaya of Ratnasambhava, the Lion of the Shakyas, tread the earth to the south, the land of Bedha, Tsara Singha, land of the well of the faithful. Above, it is like a mansion of lapis blue light. The land is that of interlocking reality sources and lotuses, a gathering place of all the dakinis, auspicious and swift for the per-
fection of the energy of samadhi. Those born there are mostly of Mahayana lineage with a broad-minded nature.

The four castes are unmixed there, and the people have clearer faculties and stronger passions than those of other places. There were many master students of all the five fields of knowledge and, because it was very conducive for practice and free of hindrances, many practitioners gathered there. It was the dominion of a universal emperor who enjoyed the seven precious objects of royalty. Being close to the outer ocean there was much variety of medicines and jewels available. A source of more power than other places, all the auspicious substances were there, complete. Being near the glorious mountain of the south, it was a place blessed by Avalokiteshvara, where he taught ethical discipline. Being close to the sandalwood forest of Bhisikota of the south, it was a place of the teachings and blessings of Tara of the Sandalwood Forest. It was in the town connected to the Forest of the Sage Arya, an extremely wondrous place from which many champions arose, that Lord Dampa was born.
Induced by the dawning of unique altruistic aspiration,
The great sunlight of the supreme emanated being
Rises from the east destroying darkness of the five degenerations,
Illuminating all directions with light of virtue and goodness!
Then, the ten directions’ Conquerors, as one,
Showered him with flower garland praises of delight.
The heroes and dakinis of the sphere of great bliss
Sang auspicious verses and played exquisite divine music.
All the deities who protect on the side of light
Raised banners of joy to the peak of existence.
The flocks of pernicious evil spirits
Hid in their dark hut of frustrated grief.
What wonder when this peerless Dampa was born!
The return of a prince of the divine Brahmin caste,
Otherwise known as the miraculous son,
Proclaimed with clamor even to the abode of Brahma!

In India, in general, people were of dissimilar castes, five in number: the
great royal caste, the venerable Brahmin caste, the caste of the unlearned
masses, the good lesser noble caste, and the serving untouchable caste.
Dampa himself was of the Brahmin caste. Out of four subdivisions, the
Pure lineage, Ornamental Net lineage, the Karoshampa lineage, and the
Sharnachen lineage, he was of the Pure lineage. Within that, out of many
different vocations, his father’s was that of mining jewels from the ocean;
his name, Larahati, Armor of Perseverance. Also of the Pure lineage, his
mother’s family was incense makers. On lush leaves, with every medicinal
combination, she made offerings to the Three Jewels, and striving for every
desirable attainment, she became a woman capable of bringing happiness to the land. Her name was Mastira, Pinnacle of Beauty, Excellent Samadhi. Their four children were eldest son, Ratnakirti; middle son, Suryakirti; younger son, Chandrakirti; and sister, Padmakirti. Dampa was the middle son, Suryakirti.

His father, having one time taken a new way to the ocean to gather jewels, while sleeping in a temple, had a dream that Avalokiteshvara came as a charming light-skinned man adorned with all ornaments and said, “Captain, make offerings to me! You will be blessed with great attainment!” The captain made about eighty offerings and made requests.

His mother had gone, together with some visitors, to gather ingredients for incense in a place to the south where the great victorious aruna plant could be obtained only once every six years during the winter months. Having gathered many medicinal herbs, she arrived at the abode of Tara of the Sandalwood Forest. Tara said, “Daughter, tomorrow morning there will come to you a powerful captain. He will be named Karanagasi. Care for him!” Then, having returned, she dreamt of a crow. At dawn, the Lord of Secrets, Vajrapani, said, “Daughter, tomorrow morning, an extremely great and powerful man will come to you. His name will be Karmavajra. Care for him!” Once after she slept near a tomb, at early dawn Manjushri told her, “Daughter, tomorrow at dawn, a man of supreme great wisdom will come to you. His name will be Lion of Teachers. Care for him!” Then all of the deities and dakinis of the emanated abodes of the ten places of Heruka, the eight charnel grounds, twenty-four places, and Oddiyana of the west, spoke with one voice saying, “The seventh-generation bodhisattva has entered the womb of his mother!” and they blessed her and gave her initiations of the five transcendent wisdoms. Then, having returned to her own home, at dawn she dreamt that an emanation of Avalokiteshvara came as a handsome white man. Circumambulating her three times, he scattered flowers and said, “Daughter, you will have a son with extremely great love and compassion. His name shall be the Unconquerable Protector. Care for him!”

As predicted, his mother miraculously conceived, without male contact, during a time his father was at sea. Afraid her husband would be angry, she swallowed poison and tried everything she could to abort, but was unable to destroy the vajra body. At that time his mother dreamt that many women were prostrating to her and circumambulating her. As she elevated in space in meditation posture, a right-spiraling conch sounded, the sun soared as
her cushion, the moon clothed her and she traveled to the four continents. Riding a lion, she moved through the sky. The sun shone forth from her body clearing the world’s darkness. Immeasurable portents of goodness and virtue arose such as the building of ships and bridges for the liberation of multitudes of beings.

At about three months into the pregnancy the vowels and consonants of Sanskrit could be heard coming from her womb in four sessions throughout the day. At six months, recitation of the Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in verse and Expression of the Names of Manjushri could be heard by anyone who came near her and all were astonished. His mother experienced many samadhis during that time.

Then, at ten months and twenty-one days, with many wondrous omens such as light and music, without pain of childbirth, a beautiful baby boy was born. All forty teeth were complete and he had the enlightened marks and signs such as the hair being as black as obsidian. Thus, he was born in bliss. Immediately upon having been born he asked, “Mother, are you well?” and, folding his palms together, recited praise of the Mother Perfection of Wisdom:

Beyond speech, thought, expression, wisdom gone beyond,
Unborn, unceasing, with a nature like space,
Discerning, transcendent wisdom’s sphere of awareness,
Homage to the Mother of the three times’ Buddhas!

Sages skilled in the reading of signs, upon examining him, said, “The boy will follow in his father’s vocation at first. Then, becoming a Buddhist monk, he will become a great pandit, master of the five fields of knowledge. Then he will become a great lord of yogi siddhas. His fame will spread in all directions like the sun.” Thus, in accordance with their prophecy, he was given the name Suryakirti, which means “famed as the sun.”

When the father became upset and criticized his wife for having a child while he was at sea, Avalokiteshvara and Manjushri came in actuality, saying, “This son of yours is a son of all the Buddhas! All sentient beings of this world are his parents, not just you! His fortune is to be unconquerable!” Then his father, the sea captain, believed in him and was delighted.

As the good news that Kshetra Kirti had an extraordinary son spread, the boy was examined by the best pandits from different congregations.
The pandits said that since he would be a master of all fields of knowledge, he should be named Devagarbha. The yogis said that since he would be a yogi siddha, he should be named Dhyanaraja. The dakinis said that since he would be a sadhu who would wander throughout the charnel grounds, he should be named Ajitavajra. Thus everyone including the king and ministers each named him according to their own understanding. The young man, from infancy, was trained by the Sanskrit scholar Karunasambhava at Soma Mountain Temple, in reading, writing, and the science of sound, which he mastered with just the slightest prompting. He also gained mastery of such fields as logic, astrology, craftsmanship, and archery. Then, made the captain of many merchant traders, he mined the sea for jewels and other ocean resources, working for the welfare of beings in his family occupation.
The Greatness of His Training in the Vows

Even in youth he was never defiled
By even the slightest fault or downfall,
A crystal clear mountain holding pure morality,
Beautified with the robes of saffron,
He clearly stood out amongst holders of vows.
The precious golden vessel of his awareness
Was filled with the nectar of bodhichitta altruism.
Bound with the necklace of bodhisattva conduct,
He worked solely for the lives of all beings.
Ripened with the stream of four pure initiations,
He never, for an instant, transgressed the vajra seal.
Majestic as the crown jewel of all vidyadharas,
Isolated from stains of faults and downfalls,
The entire rosary of luminous jewels of his three vows
Dispelling the world’s darkness, he was praised in one voice
By all the Conquerors as the sole example
Drawing beings to such perfect paths!

As for the greatness of his training, when he was fifteen, Avalokiteshvara appeared to him saying:

All activity is meaningless, cause of suffering,
Devoid of essence. Samsaric things
Are momentary, impermanent, like clouds or lightning.
Abandon bad reasoning and take ordination!
Thus he urged him. Manjushri also said to him, “Son of the lineage! You take ordination in Buddha’s teachings and enter practice. Your name shall be Kamalashila.” In accordance with his prophecy, at Vikramashila temple, he took novice monk’s vows from the Mahasanghika abbot Virtuous Deva Dharmashila and the master Pandit Kamalarakshita, who gave him the name Kamalashila, just as Manjushri had. Then, before master Aryadeva he generated aspiring and engaging bodhichitta. From fifty-five male and female siddhas he received initiations of secret mantra, manifesting the transcendent wisdoms of the empowerments on each occasion. He understood all the gross and subtle parameters of the pratimoksha, bodhisattva, and tantric vows and committed not the slightest infraction of them. Not only that, through the force of meditation from previous lives, he was naturally endowed with unfabricated bodhichitta, cherishing others more than himself. And he never strayed for even a moment from perceiving all that appears being sealed in the nature of the three vajras, thus keeping all the great vows as the jewel of his crown.
The Greatness of His Gurus

Fully masterful, seeing all phenomena,
Extremely accomplished in the three trainings and two stages,
Peerlessly perfected in scriptural and realized qualities,
Supreme being, holder of the Buddhas’ lineage!
A life such as his in which he relied upon
Such wise and accomplished gurus
As Saraha, Nagarjuna, and Asanga by delighting them in the
three ways
Is unparalleled on this earth.
Cared for by deities with bodies of wisdom and dakini hosts
Such as Manjushri, Lion of Expounders, Treasure of Wisdom,
As many as constellations of stars in space,
He became a treasury of the vast and profound instructions.
That he was prime disciple of all those leaders of humans and gods,
All the authentic holy beings of India,
And vidyadhara abiding in pure lands,
Is indisputable throughout samsara and nirvana.

As to the greatness of his guru visions, his common gurus were fifty-four male and female siddhas; he had thirty-six uncommon vidyadhara Keajra gurus; he had twelve blessed yidam deity gurus and twenty-four siddhi-bestowing dakini gurus of whom he had visions and by whom he was blessed and cared for.

The fifty-four male and female siddhas, his common gurus, included eleven who were gurus of the science of sound\textsuperscript{38} and dialectics: Protector Nagarjuna, Prajñabhadra, Gunaprabha, Dharmakirti, Akarasiddhi, Shangkara, Arya Asanga, Aryadeva, Jnanagarbha, Shantideva, and Guru Suvar-
nadvipa; eleven who were gurus of the father tantra lineage of the moving energy-winds: Vagishvara Kirti, Buddhaguhya, Godhari, Karmavajra, Javaripa, Jnanapada, Nagabodhi, Ananda, Krishnapa, Vasudhari, and Padmavajra; eleven of the mother tantra lineage of the experience of great bliss: the Lotus-born Vajra Guru, Indrabhuti, Dombi Heruka, Vajra Ghantapa, Tillipa, Krishnapada, Lalitavajra, Luipa, Virupa, Kunga Nyingpo, and Kukuripa; eleven Mahamudra Sign gurus: Saraha, Charyapa, Gunari, Togtsewa, Koshawa, Shavari, Maitri, Sarasiddhi, Surya Spasapa, Akarasiddhi, and Ratnavajra; and ten who were Introducers of Rigpa Awareness: Ritröma, Drimema, Pemo Shab, Kumuda, Sukhasambhava, Gangzangmo, Chitoma, Lakshmima, Shingloma, and Sukhasiddhi. Furthermore, five of these gurus were deathless: Padmasambhava, Tilopa, Avadhutipa, Vajra Ghantapa, and Mother Sukhasiddhi.

Of his six supreme gurus, three were male: King Indrabhuti, Nagarjuna, and Krishnacharya; and three were female: Drimema, Cherbuma, and Shingloma. Three of these gurus are said to be his special gurus: Lion of Expounders Manjushri, Brahmin Aryadeva, and Virupa. Thus, he received infinite vast and profound instructions from these learned and realized gurus.

Some other biographies say that he had five hundred common gurus and fifty-four male and female siddha uncommon gurus. In those versions, gurus not counted in the preceding list of fifty-four include Master Buddhaguhya, Vasubandhu, Shantarakshita, Great Vajrabhava and others. And, in many other accounts of Dampa’s gurus’ lives it is said that he was filled, just as one vase from another, with the instructions of eighty male and female siddhas.

He encountered both Aryadevas, the elder and the younger, and it is widely known that he considered Brahmin Aryadeva his principal guru of all. He had thirty-six miraculous tantric Keajra gurus such as Vimalakirti and Chandravimala. Twelve were blessed yidam deity gurus such as Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, Vajrapani, Tara, Kasarpani, Yamantaka, Vairochana, Achala, Marichi, Vajra Varahi, and Samantabhadra. Twenty-four dakini gurus were those that abide in the twenty-four external places and are set at the twenty-four places of the body mandala such as Rabtuma.
The Greatness of His Learning

Through the magical key of wisdom of learning,
Opening the door to immeasurable knowledge,
He effortlessly became possessor of a treasure
Of outer and inner knowledge, infinite sutra and tantra.
All rivers of nectar of oral instructions
Of the profound, swift, secret teachings
Of the holy beings, deities, and dakinis
Became of one taste in the great ocean of his mind.
Shining out like the moon, lord of night,
Amidst the constellations of stars
Of countless scholars and siddhas of India and Tibet,
This pandit-siddha renowned as Kamala
Became crown jewel of sages of Jambudvipa.

Having studied all the five fields of knowledge in general, in the field of the inner sciences alone, he knew thirty-six different systems. In particular, in regard to scriptures of the inner sciences, it is said that there was none of the Tripitaka or the four great sets of tantras and their commentaries composed by those wise great siddhas prophesied by Buddha that he had not heard and understood.

In Vinaya, alone, he knew all of the six different systems such as Maha- sanghika in detail. He understood everything from the complete explanation of the elements up to the four blisses and the meanings of all the words; the channel abodes, moving winds, blissful drops, inseparability of wind and mind; the three kayas as self-evident and taking appearances of variety as the path of dharmadhatu; indivisibility of phenomena, their absence and aspects; all phenomena being mere names; samsara as dharmakaya;
bringing out intensity of luminosity through confidence in rigpa; ceasing eternity in appearance of the present; subjective antidote as dharmata; absence of entity of an agent through the naked arising of rigpa; holding the energy-wind of rigpa’s mode of awareness; life-giving nectar of rigpa; ultimate purity of supplemental prayer; impartial realization through spontaneous purification of the five poisons; receiving naked vision of rigpa; the collecting of energy-winds in natural abode; understanding the equality of existence, nonexistence, and all things; these and others he learned in the presence of holy gurus.

He learned all of the gross and subtle topics of Dharma, cutting through preconception completely, and, in reliance upon twenty-eight lines of lineage masters, became a lord of speech. He attained the dhārani of non-forgetfulness. He became an indisputably great pandit, his name renowned throughout all directions of space. He erected twenty-four temples such as the One in the Reeds, as well.

Once, later, when he was in Tibet, Sochungwa asked Dampa, “How much Dharma does my Guru know?” He replied, “None of the teachings known to the pandits of India are unknown to me!” Vajrakrodha asked, “How much Dharma does the Guru know?” He replied, “The ocean is fathomless, space is endless, the Acharya’s knowledge cannot be expressed!”
In India, at Bodhgaya and Vulture’s Peak,  
Other places Buddha turned the wheel of Dharma,  
And the twenty-four places and eight charnel grounds,  
He took the essence of practice with great austerity.  
He accomplished the eight great common siddhis,  
The sword, eye-ointment, pills, and so forth, one after another.  
Having brought yogic actions to culmination,  
His fame spread under many various names.  
Directly prophesied by Arya Tara,  
Treasure of compassion, the great being  
Went to Oddiyana, and in a frightful charnel ground  
Enjoyed ganachakra feast of all desirable qualities.  
At that time vidyadharas and dakinis gathered like clouds,  
Shri Heruka Father-Mother came in person,  
Conferred upon him initiation and entrusted him with all the dakin tantrhas.  
His realizations increased like an overflowing river.  
By drinking deeply of nectar of the four pure initiations  
In the body mandala of goddess Dagmema,  
Manifesting nondual great transcendent wisdom,  
He attained supreme siddhi of immutable mahamudra.  
Though his mind of peace was as cool as the moon  
It scorched and consumed the tumult of the four maras.  
Though he ceased all dualistic elaboration in the sphere,  
He was still bound by vows of compassion and altruism.  
Though he did not stir from meditative equipoise  
He clearly saw all existent phenomena.
Effortlessly becoming a lord of the ten powers,  
Spontaneously accomplishing, he attained perfect enlightenment.

As for the greatness of his siddhis, the great being, having thus completed such a study through hearing and contemplation, was in Bodhgaya when a Tara, self-arisen in sandalwood, known as the Huluka Tara, said to him, “Son of the lineage, your skill in the words is not mastery! You must master the meaning!” Having meditated on that, in order to develop special realizations, he spent twelve years at the Nagarjuna Cave; twelve years on Tara Mountain of northeastern Kashmir; and, by doing guru yoga retreat at the Lion Fort for six years, pervasive realizations arose. He spent fifteen years in Bodhgaya; four years at the Swayambhu Stupa; five years at Kurukula Mountain; five years beside the River Ganges; five years in the charnel grounds of south India; seven years in the charnel ground of Silwa Tsel; another three years in Bodhgaya; and ten years in Akshobya’s Realm of Bliss. Further, among the nine sites of Buddha’s teachings such as Vulture’s Peak Mountain, Kalingka, and the eight charnel grounds of the south, the twenty-four places such as Oddiyana of the west, the fifty-five abodes of samaya dakinis, and, in general, the one hundred and twenty-three gathering places of the dakinis, there was no place to which Dampa did not go and stay for some time.

Practicing by way of extensive austerities, cared for by the yidam deities mentioned above, he was given initiations and blessings and various sets of instructions. He accomplished the common form of shamata vipashyana samadhi, experience of the uncommon special realizations of generation and completion stages of secret mantra, and each and every siddhi.

As for the manner of his manifesting miraculous powers, at Arya Bull Mountain he accomplished the siddhi of the sword, flying into space, seeing the emanated inner ocean. Going to the peak of the yoke-shaped mountain, he drank nectar of immortality offered by devas of space. At Bird Foot Mountain, accomplishing the Yakshini, he attained control of all resources. At the Lion Fort he accomplished the siddhi of passing under the earth and saw the palace of the king of the nagas. At Tara Mountain he accomplished the siddhi of eye medicine and saw islands of jewels. Having accomplished the siddhi of being fleet of foot at the Nagarjuna Cave, he traveled over two thirds of the earth’s surface. In the land of Tingtse he practiced the poison-flower pill retreat (chülen) enabling him to remain in the human world for
five hundred and seventy-two years. Beside Lake Kundali Conch Protector he accomplished nectar pills giving rise in him to knowledge of many past and future lives. Accomplishing invisibility and Keajra as well, he attained everything necessary to the welfare of self and others. He enacted conduct in all of the great yogic sites such as the twenty-four places.

As fame of his accomplishments spread he came to be known by various names. His visions of *tathagatas* as numerous as constellations in the sky included yidam deities such as Vairochana, Chakrasamvara, Hevajra, and Hayagriva. He was constantly together with Manjushri, Lion of Speakers, with whom he conversed just as one person with another.

In Varanasi, when conflict broke out with the tirthikas, by clapping his hands together, the tirthikas vomited blood and collapsed. When the Duruka war erupted he quelled it with great miracle emanations.

In each land he drank boiling poisonous water. In nests of falcons and lairs of tigers he tied poisonous snakes into knots. In abodes of spirits he wandered everywhere riding a wild elephant, terrifying and transfixing them all. In the great charnel grounds, when the great being began to dance, all the corpses and skeletons would rise and dance. In a hidden city of the ocean he lifted a great mountain on his head and danced, terrifying and bringing all to their feet. At Tendrapuri he displayed emanations such as fire from the upper part of his body and water from the lower part, and the sun standing still in the sky, thus frightening the *shravaka arhats* such that five hundred arhats paid him homage and all entered the Great Vehicle.

At the charnel ground of Kalingka, Mahakala offered him his life-heart and was bound to him by oath. Above Charicha, Pelden Lhamo Remati offered him the siddhi of speed walking. In the Grove of Bliss charnel ground, Yaksha Aparajita promised to be his benefactor. In the Cool Grove charnel ground he subdued male and female cannibalistic *rakshasas*. In the land of Môn he put the eight classes of worldly spirits such as devas and rakshasas under oath. His demonstrations of power over life and death and healing were extremely numerous.

When he was two hundred and ninety years of age, Arya Tara said to him, “Virupa! Go to Oddiyana charnel ground of the west at the waxing of this moon! There you will cut through all elaboration!” At the Oddiyana charnel ground called Glorious Sport of the Constellations, he entered the self-risen spontaneously established mandala of Shri Heruka that has not been dissolved. 41 There the great king of Oddiyana named Mahabala
invited many male and female siddhas. In the ranks of a great ganachakra feast Dampa sang songs of expansion of realizations. As a result, immeasurable dakinis as many as atoms of Mt. Sumeru gathered and gave Dampa many tantras and oral instructions that had never before been given in the human realm. Then they said:

Although attained to the citadel of the immutable, oneself,  
Light rays of compassion impartially  
Fulfill needs of our parents in the six realms!  
The time to put on the armor of your previous vows  
Now has come! SAMAYA!

Saying this, they urged him to benefit others.  
At midnight Chakrasamvara Father-Mother conferred on him the actual four initiations and then disappeared. At late middle of the night, Bhagavati Nairatmya Dagmema came to be his spiritual consort. He received the four initiations in the body mandala, manifesting the spontaneously born transcendent wisdom and attaining supreme mahamudra yuganaddha. Dagmema then rose into space to a height of seven chariots and gave him the empowerment of the vajra holder guru embodiment of all Buddhas. She bestowed upon him many tantras and oral instructions, and then disappeared. At dawn vidyadhara Keajra gurus such as King Chandraprabha came and gave him the uncommon oral instructions corresponding to those tantras given to him by Dagmema. Seven days later, Dagmema came again and gave him teachings such as the path of the profound secret guru mahamudra tantra, all of which Dampa understood precisely, severing all outer and inner preconceptions in suchness.
The Greatness of His Deeds

Union of the entire wisdom, compassion, and power of infinite realms’ Buddhas without exception,
The amassed qualities of the pandit-siddha wheel-turning Venerable Dampa
Are beyond the attainment of those slightly progressed as spiritual masters!
Thus he became renowned as the indisputable sole ornament of this world, famed as the sun and moon!
Solid appearances and minds of the eight worldly dharmas ground to dust,
All appearing objects perfected in the wheel of transcendent wisdom,
Nurturing all beings with an empty yet appearing illusory dance,
Lord of all who have become powerful siddhas,
Who, as a result of unique bodhichitta
And perfection of prayers made countless eons ago,
At a time of poor auspiciousness,
Boundless numbers of disciples gathered like clouds in springtime.
In accordance with all of their natures and wishes,
Seeing all that is hidden like objects in the hand,
With skillful means appropriate to each,
Exhibiting an unfathomable ripening liberating life,
His feet walked two thirds of this world,
Coming five times to this land ringed in snow.
Finally, prophesied by the deities and dakinis,
He came to Dingri, supreme abode of siddhas,
A place blessed by the truth of Buddha’s compassionate commitment,
Adorned with wondrous auspicious substances.
In that hub of siddhas known as Dingri Langkor, palace of realm protector dakinis, Dampa Sangye remained ripening and liberating beings with vast profound instructions Just like the supreme Buddha at Vulture’s Peak with his entourage. By just seeing his face or hearing his voice, or by his nonverbal actions, Even though it was a time of only slight auspiciousness, in a single moment, Receiving his blessing, fortunate male and female beings beyond number Became spontaneously realized and liberated! Every drop of instruction falling From the crystal vase of the powerful yogi Practiced by the males as heroes and females as heroines, It could steal the pride of Oddiyana! Thus, it being meaningful to even hear his name, From the ocean of qualities of the supreme siddha, This dew on a grass tip, flicker of an utterance, as well, Is a sign of the glorious joy of this fortunate eon!

As for the greatness of his deeds, this great lord of yogis’ mode of practice was such that he first demonstrated a beginner’s manner by listening to teachings; he demonstrated the shravaka period by relying on his guru for a long time and completing the threefold delighting of the guru. And through the profound path of guru yoga, by completing retreat of the four initiations, he attained impartial realization, cutting all preconceptions from within. At the pratyekabuddha period, that of practice, he completed austerities in full, established the ground and residents of the yidam deity, became familiar with the signified meanings, trained in the arising of pure appearance from within, and all realized qualities of the path arose unimpeded within him. Finally, at the period of the heroic great bodhisattva’s work for the sake of others, his being endowed with the treasure of blessings of the armor of compassion, cherishing others more than self, inspired the male and female dharma protectors to action, and pure auspiciousness arose from within him so that all beings with the good fortune and karma to meet him were benefited in direct proportion to the amount
of that exposure. It was widely known that by just seeing his face or hearing his voice there was no realization that could not be attained. Thus his mode of practice and conduct was especially distinguished and extraordinary. Again, by first relying on the guru and cutting preconceptions through listening and contemplation he indicated shravaka practice; in the middle period, as one is not yet able to benefit others, he indicated the solitary-realizer pratyekabuddha's practice; and finally, when realizations were brought to completion, he demonstrated the bodhisattva actions which require the great armor of compassion. It is an important point that these three periods are designated by those terms. This great being, lord of yogis, set foot on two thirds of the earth's surface enacting the welfare of immeasurable numbers of fortunate beings.

In particular, when he was the Bodhisattva Unconquerable Protector, the previous Buddha said to him, “Son of the lineage! Go to the north and work for the welfare of sentient beings!” In accordance with that prophecy, in each of six successive lifetimes he traveled to Tibet by way of his yogic miracle powers, but the time had not yet come for his disciples there to be subdued. In the lifetime here recounted the great being again went to Tibet a number of times for the benefit of beings. As for the first time, he was listening to Dharma at the feet of Avalokiteshvara in Potala pure land and was told by the Great Compassionate One, “Go to the Land of Snow in the north! It will be of benefit to many sentient beings!” Aryadeva spoke to him similarly. Virupa gave him a stiff cane, which, he said, was for subduing the vicious devas and rakshasas of Tibet.

In accordance with those prophecies he took the middle northern path to Ngari where there are accounts of his benefiting lay families. Some biographies state that he made this first trip to Tibet in the company of Padmasambhava and, as the master was conferring empowerment to the lords and subjects of Tibet at Samye, that Dampa acted as his “action vajra.”

Some biographies say that when the Bodhisattva Abbot passed away, he said, “There will come a time when harmful tenet systems spread in Tibet. At that time invite my disciple Pandit Kamalashila!” Accordingly, when the Chinese Hashang Mahayana spread harmful tenet systems that would stop production of virtuous acts of body and speech, and so forth, as an antidote for that, Kamalashila was invited from India, composing his three Stages of Meditation, and, by means of debate, opposed and annihilated those harmful tenets, thus causing Buddha's teachings to flourish and spread. To the
view and belief of some disciples he also demonstrated passing away. It is said that, in actuality, he returned to India and, when he again returned to Tibet, his name had then become Dampa the Indian. We may not find reference to this in Dampa’s own speech but in old texts of the Pacifier Tradition, generally, we do see that, in India, Precious Dampa was also known by the names of Kamalashri and Kamalashila.

Also, during ganachakra, Buddha Shakyamuni saw the eighty-four mahasiddhas and offered a verse of praise to each of them. In one of those verses of praise he says:

Wise in language, logic, scripture, reasoning, and oral instructions,
Vidyadhara who has attained the siddhi of immortality,
To that one named Kamala,
The Guru, I pay homage!

There it is quite clear. The writings of the Karmapas also state that it appears that Dampa’s name in India was Kamalashila. Great Pandit Patyashri, agreeing with them all, says that, having gone to India, he heard teachings that had been previously heard, as well as teachings never heard before, from male and female mahasiddha gurus, many yidam deities, and wisdom dakinis, receiving countless special blessings, transmissions, and oral instructions. Having practiced at many special sites, he benefited all beings of India by whatever means suited them such as through countless miracle emanations.

In regard to his second time in Tibet, in accordance with prophecies of the dakinis of the eastern isle of Tingtse that, because he would attain the state of an immortal vidyadhara, he would have power over life and death and would attain power of the five eyes and five clairvoyances, and the prophecy of Vajrapani and Yamantaka that he would benefit beings in Bartani of the north, he eliminated harmful forces from Amdo to Kongpo and Sumyül. Though he set foot as a naked ascetic throughout the three lower provinces, there was no one who was a fit vessel for teachings of profound Dharma. For auspiciousness, he benefited a few beings but, since he knew it was not yet time for him to give the Pacification of Suffering teachings, he turned back. When he went to Kham, a wisdom dakini said, “There will come a time when your teachings will definitely spread here.”

In regard to his third trip to Tibet, Arya Tara said to him, “Don’t stay
here [in India] because it will be very beneficial for beings if you travel to remote lands such as Tibet and China! Go there!” The lords of the three lineages exhorted him as well. Accordingly he went by way of Deer Owl Tiger Canyon and stayed at the Glorious Swayambhu Stupa. Two young girls appeared, one from the east and one from the west. They met, merged into one, and left. Then, two great snakes appeared flying in space, merged into one, and disappeared. Again, two wild boars appeared, merged into one, and disappeared. As the sun set, a voice came from space saying, “Attachment is purified!” At midnight, the voice said, “Anger is purified!” And, at dawn it said, “Ignorance is purified!”

He made prostration and circumambulation there at Swayambhu and then left for Tibet. Having slept at the Nyaro temple, at dawn he heard a voice call out, “Look at Virupa, all written in AH syllables!” When he looked up, he saw the vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet appearing in space. The letters gradually dissolved into the syllable AH, which then, itself, also dissolved into space.

He then went to the north, to Yeru, where he met the Bönpo Falcon Nest Dragon Deva. To compete in miracle powers, the two of them went walking on the Yeru River without sinking under the water. When they reached a whirlpool, however, because the Bönpo developed pride, he sank into the water. When he was on the point of drowning he called out, “Dampa, help! Help!” Grabbing hold of him, Dampa saved him. He developed faith in Dampa, requested teachings, and Dampa gave him teachings such as the Twenty Questions and Answers.

Then he went to Shang Shung Langka where he gave some teachings of the Pacifier Tradition but not much in the way of tantra or tantric commentaries. At that time he stayed for a long time among the lay people of Sa and Dra, exhibiting many miracles, generating faith in them, and he benefited beings on various auspicious occasions.

Then he went to Ngari where he set many people of the three regions of Ngari such as Lord Tsede onto the perfect path. He went from Shang Shung to Samye in Central Tibet in one day. In order to purify his mother’s previous karmic debt, he spent three years acting as a servant to the sangha in Penyül.

It is said that when he was sent to feed the cattle, sheep, and goats, he would scatter some pebbles when the animals were let out and when he collected the pebbles back, the animals would be, at once, reassembled. Also,
one day a dog carried off Elder Auspicious’s cheesecake which he had collected as alms for his daily meal. A Mönpa, a tribal mountain man, called out, “Get the dog!” and a knife came out, killing it. To the Mönpa’s protestation that he had been forced to kill the dog, Dampa rubbed mud over the dog’s wound saying, “Get out, get out!” and the dog got up shaking itself, without a wound. People said, “The Acharya is an illusionist!”

Another time he went to where many tantric yogis were drinking beer. They asked, “Do you know any powers?” Saying, “Those fit to be known!” he looked at the birds on the step and they all fell down dead. One of the yogis said, “Compassionless tirthika!” He replied, “The tirthika knows how to kill, not to revive! We know how to kill and how to revive!” and, snapping his fingers, the birds rose in a flock and flew off.

Except in such cases of his revealing miracle powers, most people had no idea that he was a mahasiddha. Still, he gave a considerable amount of Dharma to fortunate beings, and many with the karma for it attained liberation, although no holder of his lineage emerged. Again, he returned to India.

As for the fourth time he went to Tibet, Manjushri, Lion of Speakers, prophesied, “This falcon soaring in immutable space has the instructions! If he goes to the Land of Snow in the north he shall benefit beings!” Also, when Dampa was receiving teachings from Guru Suvarnadvipa and had made many vast bodhichitta offerings, Guru Suvarnadvipa said, “In the Land of Snow of the north, in the four provinces, Central and Tsang, especially central and southern, there are many fortunate beings with the karma for it who aspire to the essence of Dharma and are fit vessels for profound Dharma. Unless you go to fulfill their welfare, they shall not mature. Is there such a bodhisattva among my disciples?”

From among his gathered disciples, three of them, a well-prophesied monk, a novice, and a lay vow holder, volunteered to go to Tibet. The Guru was delighted and even escorted them for one day’s journey. The three of them arrived at a place in India where there were charnel grounds and thick forests. They had entered a frightful cave where there were non-human spirits and were performing ganachakra, comparing their miracle powers. Dampa sang:
I, and the sky, am without thought!
Knowing my body as the deity, I’m free of clinging to empty objects!
Knowing my mind as the Guru, I make no requests of others!
The dakinis are all present in my body! I do ganachakra nowhere else!
As appearances are purified impartially, I’m free of dualistic thought!
As the four extremes are purified on the spot, mind’s projections are exhausted!
As awareness has no coming or going, I don’t know how to speak of realization!

Then, the fully ordained monk left for Ngari, and the lay vow holder went to the entrance of Zar Pass. Dampa was the novice. From Bodhgaya he went to a guest-house in Nepal in one day’s time. While staying there he met Drang Lotsawa, who, thinking he was an Indian servant, asked, “Which patron’s servant are you?” Dampa replied, “I’m a servant of all sentient beings until samsara is emptied!” Then, thinking that he was a servant who had been released from service, he asked, “Are you like a Dharma practitioner?” Dampa replied, “I’m not like a Dharma practitioner! I’m a real Dharma practitioner!” “Well, where are you from in India?” He said, “I’m from Sri Lanka.” “Where did you come from this morning?” “I came from Bodhgaya.” “No one but Krishnapada has previously come that way in one day! So, are you Krishnapada the junior?” Smiling, Dampa said, “You could say that. Or you could call me Son of Virupa!” Then the lotsawa knew that he was a mahasiddha and made prostrations to him and offered his services. Receiving many teachings from him, the lotsawa then left for India.

In Nepal was one named Lama Yellow Beard, from Yarlung, worldly Central Tibet, who had been to India and returned. He was accompanied by a Tibetan monk, named Bötsun Geshe Ngödrup Nyingpo, who had trained in yogic powers in India and Nepal. He said that he had received the Six Yogas from a lotsawa in Mangyul, and had a bamboo cane with the forms of many sentient beings arranged on it. They stayed in Nepal for two months of winter. Yellow Beard received Varahi from the Lama in Nepal at Hangtu Karpo.

Then Dampa and Bötsun with masters and disciples arrived at Mang,
Among a gathering of many Indian merchants, there were some acharyas who prostrated to Dampa, offered him flowers, and venerated him with intense faith and devotion. Because of this Yellow Beard asked, “Who is this Lama?” They replied, “In India he is known as Kamala Shri. In Tibet they call him Dampa the Indian. He has been to Tibet a few times before. Now it seems that he has come again! Previously, Tibetans could not decide whether he was Buddhist or not and they didn’t request teachings.” Geshe Ngödrup Nyingpo then developed belief in Dampa and requested a teaching. Asked what his cane was for, he said that it was a tool with which tirthikas created magical illusions. Dampa said, “I know how to use it, too, but I’ve no need for it. How you must have fooled the Tibetans! Give it here!” He took it, broke it over his knee, and gave him these precepts:

- Don’t take outer appearances inside!
- Don’t project inner conceptions outside!
- Don’t enslave body to mind!
- Don’t occupy mind with body!
- Don’t attend to view or meditation!
- Leave mind unfabricated, just where it is!

The Geshe developed conviction in the meaning and took him as his root Guru. He returned to his own region and completed his practice.

Yellow Beard said, “Not seeking Dharma, seeking the worldly, I found nothing! Seeking Dharma all over the east and west of India I didn’t find it, and now returning to Tibet I’ve met a mahasiddha on the way! Now I must receive Dharma. Please give me the uncommon instructions!” Dampa said, “The time for you to be given Dharma is now beginning!”

In order to pay homage, they came by way of the northern route and when they arrived at Colored Tiger Mountain he stayed in retreat and received Dampa’s blessings. Many came and witnessed wonders such as the blind receiving their sight and the deaf, their hearing, and his fame spread everywhere.

At that time, in that region was a Geshe Kyo Shakya Yeshe, with two boys named Tsangpa Dragchen and Dragchung, Much Famed and Little Famed. Their parents had drawn the enmity of some tantrikas, and their father, who was afflicted with leprosy, had entrusted the two boys, who were also infected with leprosy, to Kyo with an offering of sixteen hundred
thousand. The Geshe, distracted by the large offering, had been unable to help them and, having seen signs that they were being harmed by evil spirits, was worried. He had heard that there was a blessed acharya staying in the Drang Kang hut and went there. Hearing that he was, in general, a mine of rigpa wisdom and, in particular, an especially blessed lama, he beseeched Dampa, “I have two children who are being consumed by spirits! Please bless and protect them!” Dampa said, “As you have leftover karma for it, this shall be done!” And to Yellow Beard, he said, “Now I will give you that Dharma you requested!”

Thus to those four, Kyo Shakya Yeshe, renowned as a Nyingma tantric siddha, Yellow Beard of Yarlung Möndro, and the two, Tsangpa Dragchen and Dragchung of Nyangtö, he gave the introductory Sky-Opener Initiation, the meaning commentary on the smaller treatise of Mahayana Chöd composed by Aryadeva, and the Six-Part Chöd with the eleven instructions which were set down in writing at that time and given a seal.

The two children practiced and became two yogi siddhas, completely invulnerable to harm from spirits. Dampa said that these particular instructions would not proliferate and they did not for long. They were later given to a few and have now spread somewhat as the Single Letter Instructions. Yellow Beard, having understood the instructions, went to his own region and after practicing for two days, achieved great realizations. He gave it to his disciple, Berey the Crazy. He passed it to Bugtön, the retreatant, who taught it to Kora Nyima Lungpa, and onwards it went in the lineage succession. Kyo Shakya Yeshe gave it to his own lord, Sönam Lama, who gave it to Machig Labdrön, from whom the lineage was passed on as described in the accounts of the Chöd teachings.

Then Dampa stayed at the Sun Cave of Penyül and, urged by the field-born dakinis, went to where Labdrön was staying at Dratang, circumambulated Machig and met her. She prostrated to Dampa and requested instructions by which all sentient beings could be liberated. He praised her vastly and gave her, along with Jomo Kargom and Chötso, the Sky Opener Initiation, the four initiations by way of samadhi, and such instructions as those on the measure of realizations, all completely.

To Machig he also gave the Pacifier and Six-Part Chöd Instructions, the Explicit Instructions on the HUM of the Pacifier Tradition; the PHAT Teachings; the teachings on signs; illusion; Two-Headed Varahi; Guru Yoga; Entering a Corpse by Transference of Consciousness; Illusory Body,
Dream, and Bardo Instructions; the Emanated Chöd Sealed to Secrecy; and all the rest, leaving nothing out.

Then Dampa left. Going toward Central Tibet, bringing great benefit to many on the way, he gave Magom Chökyi Sherab of Yarlung the ear-whispered lineage of mahamudra. To Sochung Gendun Bar of Yarlung he gave the instructions on Naked Vision of Natural Awareness. To Kamgom Yeshe Gyeltse of Penyül he gave the instructions on Taking Thought on the Path in accordance with the Perfection of Wisdom. He also gave to Drawa Ngönśhe of Yotö the Nine Teachings of the Pacifier Lamp tradition. To Chedöl Gangwa from Zang he gave instructions on the Application of Sutra and Tantra. To Jangka Dampa of Chim he gave the instructions of the Perfection of Wisdom without Letters. To Drogom he gave the Golden Spoon Expressing the Names instructions. To Gugom he gave the Hundred Body instructions. To Chugom he gave the Profusion of Heart Advice. To Margom he gave the Three Single Cuttings instructions. To Nyag Lot-sawa he gave the instructions on Solitary Hero Heruka. To Chemo Pel-drön he gave the Sixteen Collections of Dharma of the Mahasiddhas. To Ngom Jémpa of Nyeltö he gave Application of the Simultaneous Born. To Neten Dragjung of Chubar he gave instructions on the Heart Sutra. To Sherab Gyeltse of Ngagshe he gave instructions on Kalachakra. To Shangpa Udeb he gave the Four Letter Instructions. To Gyetön Kjiteseg of Nyemo he gave the Hevajra instructions. To Je Pagmo Drupa he gave the profound tantric instructions for dreaming. To Shangsa Chungwa he gave the instructions on accomplishing Secret Varahi. To Lama Gönkarwa he gave instructions on Vajrapani. To Ben Gungyel of Kyishö he gave instructions such as Heruka of the ear-whispered lineage.

Thus, giving various instructions to many, principally Machig Labdrön and those in the three lineages called by the names Ma, So, and Kam, he benefited numberless disciples such as the thousand who attained liberation. He stayed in Central Tibet for quite a long time.

Later, when he was staying in Dingri, Minyag Dragseng asked, “It’s said that Dampa stayed a long time in Central Tibet. How many lineage-holding disciples are there?” Dampa said, “The Acharya has planted four gardens! The root is in Central Tibet. In Kam, Kamgom Yeshe Gyeltse has attained verbal renunciation and talks of love. In Ma, Magom Chökyi Sherab Rigpa received initiation and left for Keajra. In So, So Gendun Barchö, by destroying objects, could not remain. Kyigom and Drochungwa both have just
gone into seclusion. The Venerable Lady Worthy of Offerings, who says she is a wild woman who has never practiced even a word of heart advice, that is Machig Labdrön! I have had Nyagom and Lhapo Ringpo stay to assist her. Gugom has left for Keajra mounted on the steed of the spontaneously born! The Acharya has no lineage holder as such. Those that have been liberated are many!"

Having liberated and ripened migrators throughout upper and lower Do Kham with teachings suited to their various temperaments, he left for the great land of China. At the Five-Peaked Mountain he met an old sage on the step path with a willow cane who was an emanation of Manjushri. He said, “In Bodhgaya, India, is the dharani of the Victorious Mother, Namgyelma! You retrieve it today and a great plague which is arising here shall be stopped by evening!” Dampa said, “Bodhgaya’s a long way! How could I get there in a day?” He said, “If you go to that cave up there you’ll accomplish it!”

Going to that auspicious cave he returned from Bodhgaya in an instant with the dharani and pacified the epidemic in the region. Then he directly saw Venerable Manjushri and his entourage in his pure realm of the Five-Peaked Mountain and did practice there, as well. He exhibited many signs of accomplishment such as pressing down the sun, and the emperor and all the ministers of China bowed to him with reverence. He set many fortunate Chinese people onto the perfect path. He built several temples called the Chichu Sara.

Finally, when he remained for a long time in samadhi of clear light in which the movement of his breath had ceased, they thought he had passed away. To honor him in the Chinese fashion as a realized master, they enshrined him in a jeweled vessel and sealed him into a tomb under the earth with a mountain of offerings. Rising from the samadhi after some time, he saw that his body had been sealed into the vessel. Thinking that this behavior of confused sentient beings was inauspicious, wearing his cloak and a single shoe, he passed out of the tomb and, unbeknownst to anyone, returned to India.

It is known that there are still some Chinese solitary meditators who live on alms without attachment, who are training following the lifestyle of Dampa’s lineage. Dampa’s image can be seen on Chinese tangkas as well as Dampa’s meeting with Manjushri of the Five-Peaked Mountain. Present-day pilgrims report seeing the cave hollow where Dampa meditated with a
lock of stone on the door. According to some sources, Dampa was in China for twelve years. Some say that it was following the fourth of his five visits to Tibet; others that it was after his final visit.

In any case, in regard to his fifth visit, as Dampa was staying in India, benefiting the beings of India, he was urged by the gurus, yidams, and dakinis to go to Tibet. His going to Tibet and the place of Dingri Langkor was prophesied. Though there had been some in Tibet who had had realizations through the impact of Dampa’s instructions, there had not been the courageous one who could practice precisely according to Dampa’s intentions, so he was saddened.

He went and knelt before the great self-arisen stupa of Shri Dhanyakataka and prayed. At dusk Guru Arasiti came and gave him a few instructions. On the evening of the eighth day, the great Brahmin Saraha came and gave him the Mother Sign Instructions of Mahamudra. He said, “Now you go to Tibet! Strive to benefit beings!”

At dawn Dampa heard a sound from the sky. It sounded like “Partana Maghihi.” Though Dampa thought about it, he didn’t understand it, so he asked Manjushri. Manjushri replied, “It’s the language of the Oddiyana dakinis. In Sanskrit it is PRETAPURI DIKI NAMA. In Tibetan, what it means is, there is a field-born dakini in a remote area in Tibet whom you should make a representation of, accomplish, and spread her practice to accomplish vast benefit for others!”

Then, in Nepal as well, traveling from lower Ley to Gungtang and from Tsang Yöru to central Yorü, he arrived at the Gyashörong confluence. Though he had not found the actual site he was looking for, in reliance on six signs that he saw and heard along the way, he realized their meaning and ceased all mental elaboration. He also knew that there was an auspicious reason he had come there. At the place called Yerüje lived Ensa Cham, one endowed with the lineage, who was the daughter of Dampa’s disciple Tsültrim Lama, an ex-monk. This woman acted as a medium for the goddess Künturika, who said in trance when asked, “Ah re nyam re! Best is up there, up there! In Latö, glorious Dingri, many dakinis gather! All day and night it is especially pleasant! There are four wondrous things there that make you want to stay! Since it is the abode of the Venerable Lady Künturika, the people there have clearer faculties than others. It is a place of great wonders!” Dampa went there in accordance with the prophecy.

Dingri Langkor is at the border of Tibet with Mön, a land of nomads,
a hidden homeland in an uneven landscape. In examining the area, the land of Tsama to the north is shaped like a mandala of turquoise set with a conch ornament but, having spent a day there, commenting that people from remote areas are in the center, he wouldn’t stay there. However, staying above Tsa Nyangen Mepe Pel, he said that there was someone possessing the vows and commitments who had been born there.

Then he spent a day at Menchu in the east. The eastern mountain was like a light-colored meadow adorned with a white silk curtain. Again, he didn’t remain there. However, he did say that there was an auspicious substance that dispels darkness there called Blue Light Endowed.

He then spent a day at Namar Gyi Tel in the south. It had a hue of red tinted yellow and the sentient beings were like raised conch mandalas. Again, he didn’t remain there but did say that there was a bliss-giving *kundha* flower growing on the back of the mountain there that, when eaten, gives rise to clear concentrated awareness.

He went to the west behind Pungkar. Those in the west were like dark red-colored rakshasa’s flayed skin. He didn’t remain there, either, but making a jest with the people of Pungkar, Dampa said, “Let’s make a bet to decide who should stay in this country, decided by who was here first!” Dampa told stories of what it was like when he first came there, and by telling successive stories of what it was like, convinced them that he had been there earlier, winning the bet as they all fell silent.

Having next gone to Chab, there, beside the Blue Light River, he found the blue-black round stone with the imprint of our Founder Buddha’s hand’s own ring finger that, when he was turning the wheel of Dharma in Varanasi long ago, he had thrown into the air with a prayer calling on the power of truth that, wherever the stone should fall to earth would become a place where the essence of the Teachings would flourish. It is a stone that dispels obstacles to spiritual accomplishment. Also, Venerable Manjushri gave him a round blue-black stone from the Five-Peaked Mountain of China that, if worn on the body, overwhelms all sentient beings. Thus, it was a place where there were many auspicious things, that celebrated palace of the dakinis with wings of the sun, moon, and wind called Dingri Langkor, great of wonders, a place of perfection! Fulfilling the prophecy, he stayed there.

At first, no one knew he was Padampa Sangye or offered him their services, and he fulfilled accomplishment of practices unknown to anyone, in a cave difficult for others to find, practicing austerities for three years.
Then he proclaimed the secret teachings with a loud sound, making the hidden manifest. Gathering the life energies inward, through the condition of external awareness, people, regardless of region, gathered. All the fortunate of Tibet’s four regions gathered to receive Dhārma and blessings. Not yet giving many instructions, but revealing miracle powers, some said that he was a tīrthika, a non-Buddhist.

At that time, the master merchant Dragpa Bar, in order to test Dampa’s clairvoyance, erected a throne over a Perfection of Wisdom scripture with letters of gold. He covered it with velvet and silk and a cushion. Then he prepared an excellent meal and invited Dampa. As Dampa approached the throne he snapped his fingers, saying, “MAHA PRAJNA GAGANA MU,” and ascended the throne. As they ate, thinking that he had no clairvoyance, everyone secretly mocked and ridiculed him. After he left, when they opened the scripture, except for the first page, every single printed letter on the pages had disappeared!47

The merchant and everyone were terrified and, with strong regret, again invited Dampa and again he happily came. Telling him why they had invited him before, everyone prostrated and confessed. Then they offered him a lot of gold. Dampa said, “I have no need for gold! If I want it, this is all gold!” and scooping up a handful of dirt, giving it to them, all the earth and stones had transformed into gold.

Everyone developed faith in him and all were completely awed. Requested that the scripture be restored, Dampa said, “It shall be so!” and looking up into space, snapping his fingers, intoned, “MAHA PRAJNA BHUMI NATZA TISHTRA VAIJRA,” scattering some flowers into the air. Everyone saw golden syllables descending from space, buzzing like a swarm of bees with the sound of their letters, and all the scriptures were restored to their previous state. Everyone gathered there was overjoyed and amazed. He became renowned as an undisputed great mahāsiddha.

Furthermore, there were the early four who had visions of him when he first arose from his austerities. First there was Crazy Chogro who, upon having a vision of Dampa, through the blessings of that alone, lost all attachment to food and clothing. Through samādhi arising in his mind, he gave answers to Dhārma questions in regard to degree of realization. After that there was Dromdaö who, through the blessings of having a vision of Dampa, destroyed all deception of grasping at true existence. He was thus freed from all thought of the eight worldly dharmas and experienced the
natural liberation of all appearances, it is said. After that there was Sumpa Kutsab for whom, through the blessings of having a vision of Dampa, all appearances arose as dharmata, day and night. After that there was Logkya Relwachen who, through blessings of a vision of Dampa, saw a great vision of all the clods of earth as gold. There were many similar cases in which people had visions of Dampa and were naturally liberated from deception. An early one whom Dampa entrusted with the substance of dependent arising was Chugmo Za Gendun. She as well, inspired with Dampa’s blessings, became a naturally liberated yogini.

Then, Dampa said to Charchen, “Since you are a bodhisattva, it would be auspicious if you first till the earth!” and set him to excavating the earth. Dampa himself emanated hundreds of bodies and erected the House of Dependent Arising for the sake of generating samadhi in the mind. To make it an appealing place to stay and for the successful completion of practice, he made a pond. In order that obstacles not arise in practice, he erected a sign of dependent arising. Thus acting with altruism he benefited various fortunate disciples without partiality.

No matter how much gold, silver, or wealth was offered by those who gathered like swarms of bees to a lotus grove, he treated it as piles of grass before a carnivorous animal, accepting nothing as “his.” His behavior was childlike. He gave instructions with symbols. He transformed people’s perceptions with blessings, not speaking essenceless words. Neither did he wear clothes, remaining naked. His elder disciples asked him to wear some clothing. Dampa replied:

I took off my hat in the land of Tingtse,
Destroyed an essenceless throne at the Lion Fort.
I put down a bearskin cushion at Tara Mountain,
Wore a Kasarpani snake for a belt.
At the river Ganges, I cast off the clothes of expectation.
Having come naked to Dingri, I don’t need clothing!

They kept insisting that, in any case, he should wear something. He said, “Well then, please bring me some clothing which is neither woven nor cut in pieces!” They offered him a cloak of some unworked sheepskin held together with rope that he wore with no need for any other clothing.

Though he traveled long distances, he did so with his legs of miracle
power, not riding mounts of horse and mule, etc. Wherever he traveled, he
carried no kitchen utensils such as a bowl. When he ate, he would do so as
if he were a servant, out of a skullcup with real wisdom fire blazing up and
nectar boiling over; his actions were in no way comparable to those of ordi-
nary beings! In short, no matter how you assess it, his incomparable life was
one of inconceivable great wonders.

Out of his gathered entourage, countless in number, various disciples
taught his lineage instructions, each in accordance with his or her own for-
tune and capacity. Four great yogis were designated as heart sons. Lama
Charchen was introduced to Meditation and No Meditation in the Per-
fection of Wisdom and, through Essence Drop Teachings (“Ka Choli”),
Applying Sutra (“Do Jor”), and Instituting the Meanings (“Dön Deb”),
he was able to bring cessation of mental projection. Charchung was intro-
duced to Nonduality of Tantra and the Perfection of Wisdom and went
into retreat on the four stages of approach and accomplishment. Saying that
he was on a blessed path, Dampa had Vajrakrodha continuously engage in
aspirational prayer and gave him teachings on the Heart Sutra with instruc-
tions called Compilation of Teachings. Saying that Bodhisattva Kunga was
suited to the graded path, Dampa gave him mind training and placed him
on the path of austerities in retreat on the Abbreviated Five Paths of Expan-
sion and Contraction. Saying that Lama Tzongpa was someone suited for
the instantaneous path, Dampa introduced him to the Single Empower-
ment of Mahamudra and set him on that path.

Dampa put Lama Gyagom into stainless retreat and gave him the instruc-
tions called Identifying Rigpa. Lama Chug was given the instructions for
Taking the Four Initiations of Liberation Through Signs onto the Path and
was set onto the path of remedy of the four initiations. Upa Drotön, in reli-
ance on both essence meaning and realization, was taught both the gradual
and instantaneous paths. At the midpoint break, Dampa taught him the
Three Rounds of Meaning Transmission. Lama Ye Zibar, in reliance on the
mirror of mind free of intellect, was introduced to the meaning of mahamudra. The lady Sham Chamsing was introduced to both the gradual and
instantaneous paths in reliance on doha scriptures. The heart disciple lady
Jomo Gyagom Ma was introduced to the profound instructions on Naked
Awareness of Rigpa. Thus, many fortunate disciples such as these were given
various different instructions and practically all of them were widely known
to have attained realizations and liberation.
Dampa remained in Dingri for twenty-one years, from the year of the Female Fire Bull up to the year of the Female Fire Bird [1097-1117], benefiting people of different types, placing them into practice villages, thus ripening and liberating them. He would give profound instructions to many upon meeting them without giving them empowerments and so forth. This caused Kunga to ask, “Dampa-la, these tantric instructions may be given without empowerments or blessings?” Dampa replied:

The chariot won’t travel an uncleared path.
Water won’t flow in a broken-up canal.
Reflections don’t appear in muddy water.
Nothing sticks to a pot that’s been fired.

Dampa continued, “Realized qualities will not arise if mind is not purified. Do you think the Acharya gives instructions to just anyone? I see the lineage of beings and give them instructions suitable for them. There are many with karma from previous lives whose minds have already been purified by blessings as well as many beginners whose mental continuums are not yet ripe. Seeing the Acharya and receiving initiation are simultaneous! None in the swallow’s family can compete with the flight of the garuda! After first bathing in blessings, we drink the nectar of the instructions!”

Once, a pandit came to examine Dampa. As he sat speaking about tenet systems using many Dharma terms, Dampa said, “Here’s a pandit who knows how to fabricate forms from empty space! Amazing!” He didn’t understand. Kunga asked to the side, “Dampa-la, what do you mean by ‘fabricating forms from empty space’?” Dampa said:

Out of Buddha’s impartial intention
He creates many partial views!
Buddha, in all his precious teachings,
Taught just a single ultimate intention.
The cost of not understanding the one is a lot of talk.
The many obscure the one!

Again, Dampa said, “This knowing a lot of Dharma yet it not helping to liberate your own mind, it’s funny when you think about it!” Asked, “Doesn’t knowing a lot of Dharma help to liberate your mind?” he said, “If knowing
a lot of Dharma liberates your mind, no pandit would wander in samsara!”

Asked, “What makes much learning ineffective for liberating your mind?” Dampa said:

Because of putting on worldly armor,
Transcendent Dharma will not grow in one’s mind!
Water of realization will not gather on the balloon of pride!
Without the moisture of ascertainment, one won’t drink the nectar of experience!
Without depth of realizations, one can’t break the chains of deception!
Not understanding phenomena as name only, one chokes on pride of self!
Not combining the vehicles in one, tenet holders discriminate!
Without having experienced view or meditation, they judge the level of others!
Subsisting on the eight worldly dharmas, they supposedly liberate others!
Without any experience themselves, they give introduction to others!
Their Dharma is lip service, their view, intense desire!
Their experience is wishful thinking, their conduct, pretense!
Their “fruition” is wealth, with concerns for this life alone,
Their whole life becomes the facsimile of a Dharma practitioner!

Asked, “But hearing eliminates preconceptions!” Dampa replied:

Without drinking water your thirst can’t be quenched!
Only hearing of the qualities of a jewel won’t get you what you need!
Just knowing Dharma doesn’t generate it in your mind!
You must drink the water!
You have to seize the jewel!
For Dharma you must act with a nature of Dharma!

Kunga asked, “But acting accordingly is assumed to be the deepest purpose of Dharma knowledge!” Dampa said, “Kunga, that comes not to one who
the greatness of his deeds

knows Dharma but to one who practices it. If you practice sincerely there is nothing unknown. How could anyone not at least know the six-syllable mantra? If you understand, one word is enough for practice. Hearing many teachings doesn’t guarantee generation of view and meditation in the mind.”

Kunga asked, “But all the scholars say things like, ‘Look here, I have meditation to offer!’” Dampa said, “That’s what we call the generic aspect. They aren’t practicing through experience of their own mind. The hungry man knows how to count the rich man’s wealth but he can’t use it. With real experience they wouldn’t act like that!”

Again he asked, “How do you act when you have experience?” Dampa replied, “If you generate view and meditation in your mind, deception will be released from its very base. He still hasn’t let go of partiality! If you separate from self-grasping it is as if the eight worldly dharmas also collapse. He still engages in various means of self-aggrandizement! If you separate from the eight worldly dharmas, praise and blame become like echoes to you. He still eats up praise! If you know words as echoes, you don’t fabricate greatness. He hasn’t stopped fabricating greatness!”

Asked, “Then is the way of the pandit inferior?” he said, “The way is not inferior, but many exponents of it are!”

Kunga said, “Ordinary people lack Dharma knowledge, but a pandit who has knowledge of Dharma and doesn’t put it into practice is indeed worse!” Dampa replied, “Kunga, there is no end to that type! In future lives they won’t seek Dharma. Because they perceive this life itself as pleasant, they are unable to practice Dharma. They don’t seek meditation out of awareness of death. They don’t fear the death that everyone knows is certain! They are not unfamiliar with the sufferings of lower realms; they see it with their own eyes, and yet don’t dread it. Everyone knows that householders’ lives end in suffering, yet they don’t stay alone. They plainly see that accumulation of goods will let you down, yet they don’t loosen the knots of avarice. Cultivating a neighborhood and the flush of pleasure will not result in happiness, yet they don’t give up desire. With no deeply felt intention to practice Dharma, from where could a code of ethics emerge? Their lives will be used up in meaningless endeavors, all of which will evaporate at the time of death!”

Kunga said, “Dampa-la, eyes wide open, their view is blind!” Dampa said, “All are blind! To take off our blinders we must first look! Having
looked we must see! Having seen, we must understand! Having understood we must practice! And we must bring that practice to completion!"

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Kunga remarked, “Dampa-la, yesterday, a monk said, ‘Not laying the foundation stone yet rushing to highest emptiness! Hurrying to the upper stories of a house missing its lower floors! Without a moment’s interest in the tenets of lower vehicles, not keeping even a single vow, they are introduced to the definitive meaning of tantra! It’s difficult for that to work!’ It made me uncomfortable!”

Dampa said, “If you tell them there is profit to be had, people will dive to the bottom of the ocean for jewels. If you tell them it is dangerous, people will even throw away the harvest of their father’s fields. I assumed that you could no longer be swayed like that. A frog in a well can’t conceive of the ocean. For that you need someone who’s seen the ocean. That monk is of the ‘ascending from below’ type. If the profound meaning were revealed to him he would flee in panic. That is why even Buddha taught multiple vehicles; they are suited to different types of disciples. If there were no gradations in the faculties of disciples, Buddha could have given just one teaching!”

“Isn’t ‘ascending from below’ the preliminary stage?”

Dampa said, “If you come out on the top floor, you had to have a complete staircase, of course! In fact, it is impossible for the top floor to exist without the foundation stone down in the mud! This present human life is not the only time you have entered the path. Much purification and accumulation have already been accomplished! Again, there are some of highest faculties who are spontaneously liberated. If you see ice, how could there be anything but water beneath? If a place is dried up it means there’s no water there. If someone is born into the meaning lineage, they have definitely previously practiced purification. Without purification it can’t happen for even the strongest hero!”

Asked, “Well, should I take on any of the shravaka vowed ethics or not?” Dampa said, “It is good to have! It is a step to liberation! Again, the many are included in the few. If the commitments of secret mantra are kept purely, even if you don’t take the lower vows, they are included in that. The three vows are not separate substances. Though they may be observed separately, all are included in the higher vow.”
Dampa said, “There are points where I differ from these Dharma practitioners of Tibet!” Asked, “What are they?” Dampa said, “If you want transcendent results you must give up the armor of worldliness, but they like the eight worldly dharmas! Taking negativity onto the path is a special method of secret mantra, but they abandon delusions with antidotes! Discordant conditions appearing as beneficial is the path of the yogi, but they avoid them! Craving attachment is the root of suffering, but their practice is for wealth, not Dharma! The instructions of experience have come through the words of idiots, but they fill the vessel with printed words! The purpose of hearing teachings is to become more peaceful and subdued, but their dharma contributes to their pride! Wanting fame of this life rather than the fruit of enlightenment, they throw out the purpose of Dharma!”

“Dampa-la, how do you act if you practice real Dharma?”

Dampa said, “Give up this life! Abandon desire for future lives! Expel embarrassment from your mind! The deity will bring the view and meditation.”

One day the benefactor Peldrag said, “Dampa himself is extremely great but I can’t help but think that Dampa’s entire entourage of Langkoriens are Buddhas as well.” Dampa said, “Thank you kindly, that’s what we call pure appearance. When you see only Buddhas, the blessings you receive will be none other than Buddhas.”

One day Dampa cried in a loud voice, “Ke! Buddhas of the student assembly see Buddhas! We who remain ordinary, when you check, it’s really funny! You with a measure of realization, express it!”

When the disciples had gathered before Dampa, Je Ngadag Chenpo Tripa said, “There’s no joy in Tushita as we feel here, today! Therefore, may each of you offer your realizations!”

Dampa was extremely pleased. Then, Tse Tsem Chungwa offered his realization in song:

Looking up at the high peak,
Center and limits of space are beyond thought!
Looking down into the depths,
The ocean’s water does not move!
Looking into the space between,
Center and limits of space are beyond thought!
The wind, without support, wanders everywhere!
Looking up to the light of sun and moon,
Without grief or fatigue, the four continents circle!
Looking within to the yogi’s mind,
It is dharmakaya, without coming or going!

Lama Charchung sang:

Discarding Guru and Buddha together,
I can’t find such a thing as faith or devotion!
Destroying both divine Dharma and worldly opinion,
I have no effort or practice!
Mixing Buddhas together with sentient beings,
I can’t find anything to adopt or reject!
I don’t know how to speak of realization!
Ask those of Central Tibet to explain!

Lama Dromdaö sang:

Over the eastern peak, the sun rises
From amidst the darkness, clearing it.
It’s the collective karma of sentient beings.
It’s the emanation of the Lord who’s the three times’ Buddhas!
His coming to the Land of Snow
Is the merit of Tibet's four regions’ peoples.
Those who do not follow that Lord,
Are left rock-climbing with no hands.
O disciples gathered here,
Attend to the revelation of his secret words of wisdom!
Thus he offered this song to Dampa Rinpoche. Dampa sang this song in reply:

I, of Tsara Singha with the conch garlands,
Cast away my crown at Rajagriha.
Of supreme Brahmin caste, son of the gods,
I translated secret words in the land of Oddiyana!
The important points of Mahasanghika's six volumes
I translated in Central Tibet.
At the Lion Fort I viewed dependent arising
And conversed about it with Manjushri.
The crown jewels of fifty-five teachings
I raised in Tibet, the Land of Snows,
Dispelling darkness of the three realms and all continents.
The mind's nature is stainless clear light,
Without coming or going like space,
Yet this substantial body composed of the four elements'
Coming together will finally definitely be destroyed!
The oil runs out yet the lamp's light is still bright!
Apply yourselves to dependent arising!

Kunga sang:

The end of birth is death, so look!
Does coming and going exist or not?
The end of meeting is separation, so look!
Does craving exist or not?
The end of accumulating is loss, so look!
Does attachment exist or not?
The end of production is destruction, so look!
Does passing on exist or not?

Vajrakrodha sang:

This body of dependent arising which comes to form,
How could it be expressed in words?
The blessings that enter the mind,
How could they be represented by speech?
The great bliss that blazes within,
How could it be externally revealed?
The exhaustion of experienced phenomena,
How could that happen through action with effort?

In this way and others, each offered up his or her own realizations. Dampa was very delighted with this and said, “What the benefactor Pel Dragden says is true! These disciples of mine are among the Buddhas themselves!”

Another time, Dro Lotsawa had been told that there was an acharya who said that one could be introduced to stainless awareness and that he should destroy him. So he came to Langkor. But when he jumped Dampa, he himself fainted. When he came to, he approached Dampa and addressed him saying, “I won’t compete with the Acharya!” Calling the Acharya’s entourage to gather, he asked, “What sort of view, meditation, and so forth are yours?”

In reply to him, Dampa Charchung sang:

In empty rigpa awareness are fabricated the views of tenet holders!
People! My view is liberated in the sphere!
In calm abiding apprehending emptiness, the industrious create meditation!
People! My meditation is beyond intellect!
In destruction of intentional fabrications are created packs of lies!
People! I have no practice or abandonment!
In once-made hopeful prayers are fabricated results of wished-for good things!
People! I have no hope or fear, practice or abandonment!

Dro Lotsawa said, “The Acharya is not wasting people’s time!” and left.
Kunga asked, “Dampa, who was that?”
Dampa said, “One called Dro Lotsawa. He’s known as the Kashmiri Tibetan. He abides in realized conduct. It seems he’s returned from China. His wife is in Kashmir and now he has left to return there.”
Another time, as the district lamas were conducting ganachakra, Kyü Josay Namkha Özer said, “Today many disciples and great disciples are gathered. As their wisdom must be compared, let’s have discussion in the presence of Dampa!”

Precious Dampa said, “All right, how should we do this? Though Virupa conducted discussion among many rainbow HRI syllables, it still didn’t go exactly as he wished. Henceforth, we must abide as one happy family. Though this is a land of crown jewel siddhas, if someone doesn’t understand, they may still develop wrong views. The Acharya has seen two thirds of this world’s peoples. When I checked for confident experiential practice of scholars, ordained, teachers, and meditators in Nepal, from one point of view, no one was happily satisfied. From another point of view, they led kind, peaceful lives. This evening, each of you, offer your realizations in the presence of the lama! Just staying quiet will not be of much benefit.”

Jetsün Gyagom said, “What Dampa has said today was not displeasure as such, yet we should have discussion of our views without judging the quality of Dampa’s transmission; not thinking about the words, please think of the meaning!” So saying, he sang:

Father Tülku, ornament of the world’s people,
A golden isle in an ocean of eloquence!
While one of lesser intellect would not dare speak
In the mandala of the sun of discernment,
What follows is thanks to the kindness of the lord Guru!
Form of sun and moon, or fifty leagues of water
Can’t be held in a horse’s hoof-print;
It’s just a reflected likeness.
Though I, the yogi, don’t know
The intention of the three times’ Conquerors,
I shall speak of only the very experience
Of the blessings of my kind lord Guru.
From the tree-trunk of empty mind
Grow branches of emanated samsara and nirvana.
In the recipient ground of alayavijnana,\(^{53}\)
Seeds of the five poisonous delusions are planted,
Resulting in fully ripened karmic effects
Experienced by sentient beings of the six realms.
For the yogi who has realized his own mind,
Samsara and nirvana are destroyed on that basis!
In natural experience without root,
Conceptual thought nourishes dharmakaya!
In instructions sustained by the essentials,
The five poisons arise as aids on the path!
Awakening natural awareness from within,
Appearing objects are realized to be buddha-fields!
For the yogi who has destroyed self-appearance,
All are Buddhas. Where are the sentient beings?

Lama Nyajo Gegyur sang:

To have obtained precious human birth from among the six realms,
The basis for liberation, what a wonder!
Coming from the path of deception
To the pure path of Dharma, what a joy!
Jewel taken from the crown of the king of the nagas,
To have met the nirmanakaya Guru, what a joy!
Precious lamp in a land of darkness,
To recognize consciousness itself, what a joy!
Comfortable cushion in a bed of thorns,
Suffering blazing up as bliss, what a joy!
Pure snow water from the mountain peak,
Unbroken transmission of experience, what a joy!

Dampa Charchen sang:

Is not the view, that king of fathers,
That which raises you to upper realms?
Is not samaya, that king of mothers,
That which propels you into realms of purity?
Is not self-grasping, foundation of deception,
That which keeps you away from objects?
Is not the root of the five poisons
That which experiences transcendent wisdom?
Is not the king of meditation tools
That which looks into the source of thought?
Is not the king of Dharma benefits
That which takes the five poisons on the path?
Is not the king of experiential realization
Seeing all that occurs as beneficial?

Majo Gyagom sang:

Workers leave ownerless crops
And those who idle are asleep!
Amassed wisdom and compassion causes thirsting to cease!
In realization you drink water from the snow-melt.
Abandoning worthless worldly profit and fame,
I remain keeping a humble position!
Worthwhile is practice of Guru yoga!
I make requests in isolation.
Realization is carried by this daughter of space,
Keeping commitments from her heart.

Jomo Chugmo Za Gendun Kyi sang:

The wish-fulfilling jewel of one’s own mind
And the wish-fulfilling jewel of the ocean:
Which accomplishes what is needed for lives following this?
This beggar suggests the jewel of elemental mind!
The two accumulations, provisions for time of death,
And material wealth, the provisions for life,
The wise one knows wealth with precision:
This beggar prepares provisions for death!
The physical enemy who kills you,
And mental enemy of the five poisons,
Each require courage, outer or inner:
This beggar subdues the enemy five poisons!
Citadel of a proud castle,
And citadel of unmoving rigpa,
Each are guarded fearlessly:
This beggar guards the fortress of concentration!

Lama Charchung sang:
If you realize the meaning of great bliss,
Even the beggar’s body is a kaya of the Conquerors!
If you realize the meaning of equality,
Even the six realms are buddha-fields!
If you realize the meaning of “great nectar,”
Every mouthful of food is nectar!
If you realize the meaning of being “baseless,”
Even the five poisons are the path of enlightenment!
If you realize the meaning of nonduality,
The reality of consciousness is perfect buddhahood!

Lama Tsetse Tsegchungwa sang:
That sun rising in the sky
Clears the darkness of the four continents!
Check! Can there be sadness anywhere?
Our kind Master’s having coming to Tibet
Is the merit of all Tibet’s four regions!
Check! Is your mind turning toward Dharma or not?
This mind itself, rootless to the base,
Is of a nature of the three times’ Conquerors!
Check! Do you understand or not?
All these conditioned thoughts arising,
Are the path, mind’s clear light nature, shining forth!
Check! Do you recognize them or not?
These various red and white appearances
Are the brilliance of great clear light itself!
Do you recognize it or not?

Majo Dargom Ma sang:
Though I’ve not realized my own mind is Buddha,
Self-grasping’s root has been destroyed!
Though I haven’t realized appearances as dharmakaya,
The knots grasping things as real have been loosened!
Though I’ve not practiced as much as the Guru’s fingernail,
I’ve given up all coveted wealth!
Though I don’t practice virtue of body or speech,
I’ve given up connection with all negative karma!
Though I’ve not reached the safety of the birthless,
I have no fear of lower realms’ abyss!

Lama Ram Gey Senge sang:

In dharmadhatu mandala of space,
The great garuda of rigpa sails!
I’ve never got a look at the view!
In the ocean of the sphere of purity,
Bubbles of thought burst in place!
I have nothing on which to meditate!
In the forest of illusory pleasures,
The horse of conduct happily wanders, ownerless!
I have no conduct to enact!
In the unobscured sky of rigpa,
Any miraculous reflection appears!
I have no experience to cultivate!

Lama Dro Jawò Go sang:

Though I’ve realized no exalted view,
I have no bias in regard to vehicle.
I guard no stainless morality,
Yet I’m unconnected to negative karma!
Though I’ve never studied much,
I have never doubted the meaning!
Though I’ve no experience of meditation,
I’ve never been lost to distractions!
I strive not in physical and verbal virtues,
Yet I’m never unstuck from the glue of mindfulness!
Lama Zi Nachen sang:

Harder to find than blissful transcendent wisdom,
I’ve obtained a form with leisure and endowments!
Sunlight rays of blessings
Clear darkness of ignorance in the sphere!
In appearance of pure primordial wisdom,
The six realms vanish, pure as the sky!
Realizing whatever appears to be illusion,
Knots of craving attachment are released!
The realization of “needing nothing”
Cuts back clinging vines of the eight worldly dharmas!
Having realized immutable confidence,
I am unafraid of lower realms’ abyss!

Master T umbu Gomchen sang:

This worker has left his ownerless
Crops standing and built a hut!
From midst the war of pride of name,
He gave up pride and stays alone.
From the ocean of revealed pitakas of scripture,
He sought the wish-fulfilling jewel of the ear-whispered lineage,
Watching with mindfulness without wandering,
He practices the undistracted continuum of consciousness.

Lama Namkha Yeshe sang:

At the boundary between mind and appearances
Is the seal of space of inner rigpa wisdom
Destroying the “truth” of misconceptions!
It abides equally in all six realms’ beings
Yet unrealized children are deceived by things!
Realizing it, you are naturally liberated, free of grasping!
Being it is being timeless!
It takes no striving with effort!
Lama Pagkyab sang:

The Lama remains the jewel of my crown!
I make strong requests with devotion!
My mind is placed within the innate.
I guard undistracted mindfulness.
Appearances are left as natural luminosity!
Attachment and aversion are sealed with the birthless!
Thought is left unborn!
Thus the root of concepts is cut!
In self-risen primordial wisdom
Thoughts cause great bliss experience to blaze!

Lama Di Tritog sang:

Though the aggregates are indeed the deity’s body,
I meditate uninterruptedly on generation and completion!
Though the six realms’ beings are natural luminosity,
I meditate on compassion uninterruptedly!
Though my mind is indeed Buddha,
I generate uninterrupted ascertainment!
Though I know appearances are illusory,
I turn away from works of this life!
Though there is no exertion at base,
My body and speech are uninterruptedly engaged in Dharma!
Though the varieties may, indeed, be brought onto the path,
I meditate alone, keeping to retreat!

Lama Shang Senge Ö sang:

Natural illumination’s mountain of illusion
Is just labeled the “six realms’ beings”!
I haven’t seen attainment come from reading!
For graduated levels of faculties,
Dharma is labeled as greater and lesser!
I don’t see different ultimate meanings!
One’s own mind, primordially empty,
Is just labeled “dharmakaya”!
I’ve never seen it to recognize it!
Natural effulgence of empty awareness
Is just labeled “discursive thought”!
I’ve never seen it to have self-nature!
Deception dispelled from natural illumination
Is just labeled “Holy Dharma”!
I’ve never seen anything to be done!

Lama Jungne Yeshe sang:

Like a fatally ill ascetic,
Seek to remember your own death!
Like a lone man struck with leprosy,
Seek realization of disillusionment!
Like a stone thrown into the sea,
Seek realization of irreversibility!
Like a bird seeking worms,
Seek realization of undistractedness!
Like meeting your only child,
Seek realization of recognition!
Like a lion coursing through the snow,
Seek realization beyond fear!

Lama Jonang sang:

Illusory objects and empty mind
Associate as relatives and part as enemies!
Subject-object duality is false, not true!
The body of elements and empty mind
Associate as relatives and part as enemies!
The aggregates are false, not true!
The innate state and thinking mind
Associate as relatives and part as enemies!
Production and cessation are false, not true!
Lama Kyungpo sang:

The brilliant space of clear light mind
And the rising sun of one’s own awareness,
Mixed as one, is dharmakaya!
Enjoyment of illusory pleasure
And body in nature of the deity’s form,
Mixed as one, is sambhogakaya!
Seeing the six realms’ beings as one’s parents
And altruistic compassion without clinging,
Free of discouragement, is nirmanakaya!

Lama Wangchug Drag sang:

Revealing the body of introduction
Cuts the limbs of the pitakas’ words!
In dharmakaya, ordinary knowledge
Becomes the meditator’s experience of quiescence!
Appearance of objects, undivided illusion,
Is cut into finest particles by the shravaka!
For the jewels of wealth and entourage,
Essenceless, suffering is gathered!
In human life, lasting the briefest instant,
The proud develop empty misconceptions!
For this uncertain life, like dew on the grass,
Mind becomes addicted to bad actions!
Though true it is a joke!
Relations in samsaric abodes are many!
Those with faith in the moon go there!
There is much experience of dukha there!
Those with faith in the planets go there!
There’s no reaching the end of samsara!
Those long in the human state go there!
Hot and cold diseases are unbearable!
Those that can bear the unpleasant go there!
Lama Bodhisattva Kunga sang:

Sickness is in the mind:
If I moan about it, I suffer!

Death is on the path:
If I get depressed about it, I suffer!

Temporary are close relations:
If I cling to them, I suffer!

Deceptive is illusory wealth:
If I hoard it, I suffer!

Home is prison of the five poisons:
If I’m proud of it, I suffer!

In this way, the disciples offered their realizations in song, and Dampa was quite delighted as well.

To mention here a few synonyms for the holy Dharma of the Pacifier Tradition, there were four specific yogis: Bodhisattva Kunga set down in writing probably three sets of Dampa’s teachings, calling them the “Choli” Teachings; Lama Charchung set down two and a half sets, calling them the “Dumrum” Instructions; Lama Charchen set down in writing what he called the Compendium of Sutra Teachings; and Vajrakrodha set down a summary comprising half a set of teachings that he called Instituting the Precious Meaning. All of those entrusted in a single lineage are said to be included in The Conduit (Shwachu), Kunga’s collections, because Kunga was the holy chief hierarch of Dampa’s lineage.55

Thus, Dampa came to Tibet five times, setting innumerable disciples onto the ripening liberating path. The most well known are the early, middle, and later lineages of the Pacifier Tradition. Just to mention the lists of these three lineages: the first included the Three Rounds of Lamp Instructions, Yamantaka, and meaning commentaries including the Sixteen Handbooks of Instruction, which were all given to the Kashmiri Jnanaguhya. They were translated by Ongpo Lotsawa and passed on to Shang Shung Lankawa and the Bönpo monastic college of Dragon Deva.

From the middle lineage, Ma, So, Kam and their subsets, the Ma teachings included both word and meaning lineages: the first includes teachings on bodhichitta, Condensed Teachings (“Tongtün”), Collected Teachings
(“Kator”), Unreserved Uninhibited Teachings (“Karpog Narpog”), and Graduated Teachings (“Targye”). The meaning commentary is made up of the Sixteen Instruction Handbooks.

Listing the So Dharma Tradition’s Word and Meaning Lineages: the Word Lineage itself has Great Lineages and Sub-lineages. The Great Lineages include fifty-four great, thirty-two middling, and seventeen small lineages. Each of these includes the stories of the respective mahasiddha, the nature of his instructions, and his way of guiding disciples, complete. Translated in classification of either fifty-four or a hundred and three tantras, they are referred to as the Great Lineage.

The Sub-lineage includes Five Meanings; Four Stages; Greater and Lesser Sessions of Concentration; the Eight Dragpa’s Well-known Ones; The Three Father and Sons; The Faulty and the Faultless, etc.—thirty-two sets of teachings in all. The Meaning Lineage includes two categories: the Partisan and the Nonpartisan. The first includes fifty-four mind transmissions of fifty-four male and female yogis; thirty-two mind transmissions of thirty-two lamas; and seventeen mind transmissions of seventeen Dampa Manifestations. The Nonpartisan Meaning Lineage includes teachings on Opening the Eyes and Dakinis. Opening the Eyes includes four sons, making a total of five, as well as The Secret Scripture Eye Opener. Its branches include instructions on times and sub-times; the Hundred and Six Introductions; The Unceasing; The Pure; and the Secret Path of Vajrasattva. The Dakini Teachings includes the Four Great Guides of So: Signs to Supreme Accomplishment; Four Letters for Common Accomplishments; Jagati for the Accomplishment of Both; and Teachings on Sessions. The first of these, the Sign Teachings, includes Heruka Sign Teachings; Sugata Sign Teachings; Vajra Ghantapa Sign Teachings; and Dampa’s Collected Sign Teachings. Second, Common Accomplishments includes Accomplishing the Three Red Ones and Mind Accomplishment of the Black One. The latter includes Varahi Dharmanakaya Sadhana, Sambhogakaya Sadhana, and Nirmanakaya Sadhana. Jagati Teachings includes the Single Wheel of the Inner Fire (Tummo) teachings. The Teachings on Sessions includes teachings on the Mode of Experience of Activities. The essential roots of those are the Meaning Lineage of the Lion of Expounders That Accords with the Dharma Language of the Tantras, and the Meaning Lineage of Four Lineages Whose Language Does Not Accord, Which Are Not Renowned; Measure of the Mother in Brief (“Ma Tse”); and Joining the Path of Natural Awareness, each of these being ear-whispered lineages.

As for the Kam Lineage, that is Kam Yeshe Gyeltsen’s Explanation of the
Eight Realizations According with the Instructions of Dampa. With explanations based on the Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutra and drawing from the extensive and middling-length sutras, an upper and lower lineage of disciples emerged. The upper lineage was of instruction on the four noble truths together with collected practices. In the lower lineage, beings are divided into categories of those capable of gradual and those capable of instantaneous attainment; introduction is to either essential meaning or clear realization; and all sutras, without exception, are explained in terms of dependent arising.

There were three traditions of intermediately arising sub-lineages. To the monk students, Dampa gave the Lamp of the Pacifier Tradition: Lamp on the Kayas; The Three Vehicles; Secret Mind; Right View; Precious Meditation; Enlightened Conduct; Basic Equality; Yogic Path; and Lamp on Resultant Attainments. Che Chandrakirti received the sutra transmission of the Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutra conjoined with reasoning and, in mantra, the Instructions of the Fifty-four Male and Female Mahasiddhas. The Jangka Instructions are the Perfection of Wisdom without Letters, including none other than a single Introduction. The lineage of the Collected Teachings and names of those involved have already been mentioned. All this has concerned the Intermediate Lineage.

Teachings of the Later Lineage were named the Stainless Drop Tradition and include common and uncommon sets of teachings. The common teachings include Sutra and Tantra with Practices; Ear-Whispered Lineages of the Hierarchs; the Stainless Drop; and the Silken Strainer and Hundred Thousand Explanation. The first of these includes the general sutra, River Valley Enjoyment Sutra; the specific sutra, the Heart Sutra; the general tantra, Clarifier of the Pitakas; and the specific tantra, Great River Valley. Practices include the Greater and Lesser Power Wheels and the longer and shorter Stages of the Path (“Lam Rim”). The Ear-Whispered Lineage of the Hierarchs includes the Paths of the Four Ear-Whispered Lineages; and Concerning the Stainless Subtle Drop. The Silken Strainer and Hundred Thousand Explanation include eight topics such as the Instructions on Nectar and the Instructions of the Lineage on the Hundred Thousand Explanation. The uncommon sets of teachings include Tantras in Condensed Forms; Initiations with Commentaries; the Three Treasuries of Secrets; the Five Paths; and Eight Collected Works. The Three Treasuries are Treasury of Secrets of the Gurus, Treasury of Secrets of the Yidams, and Treasury of Secrets of the Dakinis. The Five Paths
include *The Path of the Four Doors* with the method path of Virupa; *The Path of the Four Objects* with the method path of Saraha; the *Eight Paths of Serlingpa*; the *Eight Paths of Aryadeva*; and *The Path of Four Unifications* of Naropa. The eight collections are the *Profound Initiation Collection*; the *Root Introduction Collection*; the *Ear-Whispered Lineage Commentary Collection*; the *Four Door Points Collection*; the *Various Miracle Powers Collection*; the *Profound Mantra Collection*; the *Dharma Protector and Dakini Collection*; and the *Royal Instruction on the Three-Part Ritual* (“Cha Sum”). All of these are uncommon teachings kept under seal of secrecy. Divided still further, there are *Planting the Root* teachings; *Winding Trunk* teachings; *Growing Branch* teachings; *Cloaking Leaves* teachings; *Beautiful Flower* teachings; and *Ripened Fruit* teachings. If all of the subdivisions of these are explained, it is extremely extensive.

Furthermore, the Pacification of Suffering instructions on practice of the meaning of the extensive, middling, and condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutras lineage has amazing attributes of lineage not claimed elsewhere. First, in general, Dampa himself held six lineages of the Perfection of Wisdom: the lineage from Tushita pure land; the lineage from the land of the nagas; the lineage from Oddiyana; the lineage from east India; the lineage from Bedha of the south; as well as others. He held countless vast and profound lineages.

One time, Kunga asked, “Dampa, is your lineage something that has not been taught in Tibet previously?” Dampa replied, “I have four lineages that have not been taught in Tibet before: the Supreme Lineage, the Yidam Deity Instructions, which are like receiving orders from the king; the Common Lineage, the Fifty-five Male and Female Yogi Instructions, which are like a further refinement of the essence; the Miracle Lineage, the Thirty-six Great Beings Instructions, which are like a skilled physician’s strengthening the body, seat of illness; and the Special Lineage, which is like going to a golden isle of jewel treasure where the heart-blood of the dakinis is openly available. These four official lineages came down to me. Nothing among them does not liberate from samsara. These, like a father’s wealth passed down to his son, Kunga, I entrust to you!”

Again, having presented a condensation of just the titles of the early, middle, and later lineages, direct disciples of the early and late lineages included Kashmiri Jnanaguhya, Ongpo Lotsawa, and Shang Shung Langkawa, while the middle lineage had many male and female siddhas such as
those of Ma, So, and Kam. Among direct disciples of the later lineage were four specific great yogis who attained special realizations; a hundred and eight especially exalted great sons; twenty-five who realized the destruction of illusion; twelve disciples who were throne holders; twenty-four yoginis, and so forth, beyond number. He had very many disciples who were people of high position such as Je Tripa and the Nepali Bhala Bharo.

... 

It seemed that the power of his blessings was such that just seeing his face gave realizations. Even though the times were only slightly propitious for his teachings, many received supreme blessings; the minds of some were freed of craving; some attained the pure undefiled, immaterial “dharma eye” realization of the emptiness of all phenomena; some attained forbearance realizing the emptiness of created phenomena. Their numbers were legion, as described in *Refined Essence of the Pacification of Suffering Teachings*:

Kunga asked, “How many has Dampa himself liberated?”

Dampa replied, “As many as the grains of sand you can cup in your hands! That’s about how many I’ve liberated!”

“So, it’s extremely many?”

Laughing, he said, “Compared to the numbers of sentient beings in the six realms, it’s like the water in a kitchen crock next to that of the ocean!”

“How many have heard Dampa’s instructions here in Tibet?”

“Can you count the stars in the sky over Dingri?”

As the field of the sky over Dingri is especially vast, he was indicating an uncountable number. None became famous as lineage holders beyond their own regions, so it is difficult to know.

Thus, fulfilling the needs of innumerable supreme and lesser disciples with unique compassion and inconceivable activities, he drew many beings of the Land of Snow to the perfect path in general. And in Tö Dingri Langkor especially, practically all of his disciples, lay and ordained, male and female, became mahasiddhas. It became practically indistinguishable from Oddiyana, Land of the Dakinis.
The Greatness of His Miraculous Powers

Attaining the primordial sphere of reality,
Control over all outer and inner elements,
With miraculous emanations, finishing, subduing,
Illusionist, steersman of all that exists,
Even the earth and stones became
Heaps of jewels through the blessings of truth!
Wild animals set to work like the tamed precious horse,
Sending multiple emanations into space
Like vultures and collecting them back into one!
Signs of accomplishment, infinite,
Such as nakedly seeing all hidden places,
With play of various spectacles, countless,
Pure timeless wisdom, itself, arising!
Those of different aspirations and constitutions,
And especially those who are difficult to subdue,
Caught in a net of mistaken disbelief,
You released and set onto the perfect path!
The melodious sound of your name’s renown
Encompasses the entire round of space!

As for the greatness of signs of his miracle powers, though great miracle powers have been already mentioned periodically in this biography, to present a bit for this chapter heading:

One day Dampa said, “Kunga! In the land of Mön, there is a cave called Wara Kyong where all the dakinis gather like clouds. Let’s, the two of us, go there for ganachakra!” and he departed, leaving Kunga with a large load
of provisions such as meat and alcohol to carry. Dampa went by way of his miracle power and Kunga did not catch up with him for a long time.

When he arrived in the land of Mön at a forbidding jungle, Kunga was exhausted and, afraid of wild animals, made intense prayers, loudly calling, “Dampa knows, Dampa knows!” Dampa arrived in an instant saying, “Son, can you support your load? Are you not afraid of wild animals?”

“The load is hard to carry and I’m extremely afraid of wild animals!”

Saying, “Well then, I must do something like this,” Dampa turned his gaze on the forest and intoned, “BEGRA BEGRA TZA TZA!” Two tigers emerged, one of which he loaded with Kunga’s burden. He told Kunga to ride the other but Kunga said, “Forget riding, my heart won’t even steady itself!” So Dampa himself rode the other tiger to the Wara Kyong cave.

Kunga asked in wonderment, “How can you get even the vicious tiger of the jungle to do your bidding?” Dampa said, “It comes from realizing your own mind! If you attain control of your own mind within, since the appearance of objects is the emanation of mind, you can have complete control over all outer things as you wish! How sentient beings are frustrated by hallucinated appearances! Having manifested self-arisen transcendent wisdom, what power has the yogi who controls appearances!”

Then they performed ganachakra in the cave. The deities and dakinis gathered like clouds, and incredible visions appeared such as rainbow light filling space and flowers raining from the sky. Kunga’s realizations were deepened by all of this as well: it is said that on their return, Kunga also transported himself by way of his own miraculous power.

One day, Dampa went to the peak of Pungkar in Dingri. There were some youths competing in archery there. Dampa called, “Anyone! Shoot an arrow at the Acharya!” No one would dare but he strongly insisted until one strong youth loosed a fiercely shot arrow at him. It didn’t harm him in the slightest. He said, “It is impossible for the Acharya to be harmed by weapons.”

Another time Dampa went to a meditation house where many yogis and yoginis were meeting amidst a large mass of fire. As Dampa arrived it blazed even higher and Dampa immersed his entire body and limbs in it. He said, “For me, also, the fire is bliss!” He intoned, “Vajrakrodha burn!” and they could see that when they touched his body it was like a blacksmith’s red-hot coals. Dampa said, “The Acharya cannot be burned!”

One summer when the Öchu River was flooding, the people had to
cross it by bridge. Dampa laid a piece of cloth on the water, sat down on it, and floated across. Vajrakrodha exclaimed, “How light is Dampa’s body!” Dampa said, “Well, if it’s light, then lift me!” Sixteen yogis and yoginis took hold of the tarp he was sitting on and tried to lift him but could not. He laughed, “This body of the Acharya is even heavier than silver!” He moved across the water without sinking, made a threatening mudra with his hand, and the water rose upwards and reversed course. When Je Tripa saw this he developed clairvoyance. To Kunga, Dampa revealed a spectacle of himself flying through the sky holding onto a golden-tailed hawk.

One winter day Dampa was seen going around with a flower that had never been seen before. Asked where he had picked it, Dampa said, “I’ve been listening to teachings from Lokeshvara in Potala!”

Another day, Lhaje Shachungma came and asked Dampa to clear her obstacles to realization. Dampa pretended to listen to a piece of brown sugar. He said, “According to this sugar, your obstacle is the fault of not making offerings to the Guru when you received initiation!” She said, “But I did make offerings for the initiation!” Dampa said, “Your brother secretly held back one horse you were offering.” Applying a method to clear obstructions, he released her from the obstacles. Then he said to her, “You were King Indrabhuti’s queen! Do you remember when I did puja to honor the Guru?” She said, “No, I don’t.” Dampa clapped his hands once and she fainted away. When she came to, she could remember her previous life. Dampa said, “You couldn’t remember before because of the initiation offering not being made.” It is said that that yogini was a prior birth of the Lady Gyamo Zakong. She is apparently of one mental continuum with Machig Labdrön.

Dampa went to Pönlob Kyosang’s and they played hide-and-seek with each other. Dampa disappeared and no one at all could find him. Then suddenly he reappeared standing nearby. Asked, “Where did Dampa go?” he replied, “I went nowhere! I’m made of space!”

One day he gestured towards Vajrakrodha’s dog with the threatening mudra and the dog fell dead on its back. When someone said, “Oh, poor thing!” Dampa said, “If you’re unhappy,” then shouted, “Boti, Boti!” and the dog jumped back up, tail wagging. Someone asked, “What is this Boti mantra?” Dampa replied, “That’s what the Mön natives call their dogs.”

Another time, the son of one of the ladies of the Trom Gewa household had died. Over the body, Dampa said, “Son, get up! Don’t you have
anything to say?” The boy revived and spoke to his mother for a long time. Then, saying, “Now, I’m going to the land of the gods. Don’t cry, Mama!” he died. Someone asked, “How could that happen?” Dampa said, “It’s the power of the Acharya!”

A suffering person bloated with cancer in Dingri asked Dampa for a blessing. Dampa asked, “Is this a one-time wish or your eternal fervent desire?” “It’s my eternal strong wish!” was the reply. Dampa killed him by pressing on the heart cavity, liberating him without remainder of the aggregates.

On another occasion, Dampa killed thirteen of Je Tripa’s sheep, indicating that he would take thirteen victorious recognized incarnations. Je Tripa didn’t believe him and said over and over, “Stop doing that! It’s no good!” Dampa said, “If you don’t need them, then it’s all right if they die!” He scattered a handful of dirt and the sheep all rose and walked off, amazing everyone.

One day he took Je Tripa’s serving girl up on the mountain, entered union with her and she attained rainbow body, disappearing without a trace.

Another day he went for a walk up Tsugtor Ridge with Vajrakrodha. He took a bouquet of flowers in his hand and, like a shooting star, instantly disappeared into space. Vajrakrodha was frightened and prayed, and Dampa descended in an expanse of rainbow light. Laughing, he said, “Isn’t it amazing to see sights like this in the mountains!”

Another time, on Tsugtor Ridge, with a benefactress named Jormo Darma at Dampa’s assembly, when it was time for master and students to partake of nectar, a violent rainstorm ensued. She asked, “Should we go into the tent?” but Dampa didn’t say anything. They all fled the rain to hide in the yak-hair tents. When the rain stopped, they gathered together again. Charchen said, “Dampa’s gone home, he’s nowhere to be seen!” Then, lifting a yak horn from the ground he exclaimed, “Ab re!” shocked to find Dampa in tiny form, resting inside the horn. Saying, “KAYANA PADRA PADRA AH TSE,” Dampa reemerged and, in meditation posture, exhibited his form filling all of space. Looking up, they could not see space. Dampa then intoned, “KYANIHI,” and his body disappeared from sight completely. A long time passed as they all prayed with intense devotion. In an instant he was back in his original place, head wrapped in a wool turban. Having developed extraordinary faith, they asked, “Where did the Guru go?” “I went to Tushita and offered conversation with Maitreya, and went to Potala where I met Avalokiteshvara!”
Lama Gyagom asked, “Are such qualities that Dampa has attained otherwise nonexistent in our present world?” He said, “You can’t understand others’ qualities until you’ve developed your own! What you’ve seen counts for no more than the stars visible during the day!”

Another time, Dampa said, “Many sentient beings tormented by suffering are crying so loudly! Look quickly!” As he said this, he went outside where a beggar was sunning himself. He said, “The fleas are crying out in torment from the sun!”

Once, the Mongolian Datsa of Sumriwa, master and disciples, came to examine Dampa’s clairvoyance. The Lama came as the student and the student as the Lama. Dampa knew and said, “Why did you want to test the Acharya? You’re making things inauspicious for yourselves! Your master’s family line will become unable to support itself!”

One day Dampa said they should pulverize one boulder and when they did, it revealed an insect-like creature that had been experiencing a temporary hell trapped inside. Furthermore, many vicious ghosts such as the Four White Lotus Boys came to investigate Dampa, and he set innumerable human and non-human beings onto the path of benefit and bliss.

Another time, when Venerable Milarepa was staying at the Nya Nang cave, at early dawn, the Lion-Faced Dakini appeared to him and said, “Milarepa! The Indian Padampa Sangye is coming to Tong La! Won’t you go to meet him?” Although Milarepa had no need to go to dispel mistaken preconceptions, he felt that, because Dampa was a realized siddha, there would be nothing wrong with going to meet him. He did one session of holding the mind-energy and traveled to Nya Nang Tong La. In the pass he met some merchants from Mar. He asked them, “Is there an Indian Dampa Sangye who has come to your area?” They answered, “We don’t know Dampa Sangye. There was a dark old bent-over acharya who slept in the guest house last night.” Milarepa thought, “They don’t know him!” and went to the opening of the pass to look. Dampa had also been urged by the Lion-Faced Dakini to meet Milarepa, so he had come to the Compassion Guest House.

Thinking that he should check the rumors that Dampa had uncontaminated clairvoyance, Milarepa emanated his form as a bunch of flowers and waited. Dampa walked by without looking and Milarepa thought, “It seems it’s not true that he has uncontaminated clairvoyance!” At that moment Dampa turned around and gave the flowers a kick, saying, “Hey Milarepa, waiting in flower emanation! This is not right! Get up and give us a song
of the dakinis’ life-hearts! In this song-break you’ve taken, the flesh-eating
dakinis are going to pluck your life-breath and heart with its roots and we’re
going to feast on you in a mouth-watering ganachakra! Now your life will
last no longer than sundown! What confidence do you have that you’ll be
here later today?”

At that moment Milarepa suddenly arose and sang his song of “Evening’s
Six Measures of Confidence.” Dampa said, “There’s no need for that kind
of thing! Nothing’s achieved by setting forth external examples! If you’re a
real yogi you must resolve this present awareness!” In reply, Milarepa sang
this “Song of the Six Glad Resolves”:

In isolated places where dakinis gather with force,
How blissful to contemplate Dharma, alone!
Homage to that Hero who asks, Who am I?

Sailing deathless in birthless mind,
True “birth and death” is naturally released!
How glad the mind that’s resolved the view!
Of such bliss, Dampa, himself, is a treasure!

Undistracted, sailing in “non-meditation,”
Any “real” absorption is naturally released!
How glad the mind that’s resolved meditation!
Of such bliss, Dampa, himself, is a treasure!

Sailing unimpeded through force of conduct,
Truly existent “immorality” is naturally released!
How glad the mind that’s resolved conduct!
Of such bliss, Dampa, himself, is a treasure!

Sailing in non-reception of no initiation,
A “real” body of the deity is naturally released!
How glad the mind that’s resolved initiation!
Of such bliss, Dampa, himself, is a treasure!

Sailing thoughtless, without protecting samaya,
“Real” vows to guard are naturally released!
How glad the mind that’s resolved commitments!
Of such bliss, Dampa, himself, is a treasure!

Sailing fearless, without hope of results,
“Real” hopes and fears are naturally released!
How glad the mind that’s resolved fruition!
Of such bliss, Dampa, himself, is a treasure!

Dampa said, “I’ve completed those! Among Tibetan practitioners, to find one who’s unfabricated, here you are! Even in India there are no more than several like you! Now, I’ve no need of you, you’ve no need of me!” and he happily prepared to depart. Milarepa grabbed onto Dampa’s garment and said, “Dampa, please sing a song of your Pacification of Suffering teachings that, it’s said, by turning inward and meditating, Buddha’s intention may be realized all at once!”

Dampa replied, “I’ve sung songs before; they went unheard! Still, no one listens; I’ve given it up!” But Milarepa continued to insist until Dampa sang this song:

This sacred Dharma, Pacification of Suffering,
When subduing harmful spirits, male or female,
It’s engaging in the mandala of conduct!
When the body gets sick,
It’s mixing awareness and the sphere as one!
When subtle conceptions arise,
It’s releasing them to flatten delusions!
When sleeping, hidden, alone,
It’s settling in naked awareness!
When staying among many people,
It’s facing directly whatever appears!
If sinking occurs, it’s lifting it with PHAT!
If wandering occurs, it’s cutting the root!
If excitement occurs, it’s settling in the sphere!
If awareness chases objects,
It’s viewing their reality!
This sacred Dharma, Pacification of Suffering,
Takes bad omens as auspicious good fortune!
Any thoughts are a treasure of bountiful bliss!
If sickness occurs it acts as a boon!
The elements are a treasure of bountiful bliss!
If you die, it’s taken on the path!
The lord of death is a treasure of bountiful bliss!
This sacred Dharma, Pacification of Suffering,
Is the intention of the three times’ Buddhas!
Is the secret word of Vajradhara!
Is the life-heart of the four sets of dakinis!
Is the instruction of the four sets of tantras!
Is the oral pith instruction of the ear-whispered lineage!
That is the sacred Dharma, Pacification of Suffering!

Milarepa was delighted and started taking off his clothes. Dampa said, “There’s something to be hidden about the body! Don’t act crazy, hiding nothing!” Milarepa sang a song, “The Mode of Craziness,” which delighted Dampa greatly and he said, “Yogi! Your mode of craziness is excellent!”

Milarepa said, “Would it be good if I arranged ganachakra for we gathered yogis?” Dampa said, “All right, since you’re a Tibetan native, you can prepare ganachakra for me, the visiting Indian.”

Milarepa removed the crown of his skull whole, with the brain, supporting it on a tripod between his two knees and neck. Blazing tummo fire from his navel, the brain boiled up in five-colored rays of light. Dampa arranged himself in seven bodies resting on seven reeds. Milarepa emanated Heruka’s eight door-guardians as servers, and seven bodies, as well, each resting on a reed. Serving the seven bodies resting on the seven reeds, when it came time to experience the sixfold satisfaction of the ganachakra, the reeds that Milarepa’s emanations were resting on bowed their tips slightly.

Milarepa asked Dampa, “There’s no difference in our vase-breathing. Why did my reeds bend down?” Dampa replied, “There’s no difference between our qualities of abandonment and realization. It’s just the difference of your being born in Tibet. The two of us have the same view and conduct. Our disciple lineages will also have the same view and conduct!” Then, with miracle powers, each returned to his own abode.
Indian Mahasiddha Dampa Sangye and
Tibetan Mahasiddha Milarepa
Meeting together and having secret conversation
And enjoying festival of great bliss tsog:
If the amassed merit could take physical form,
Could even Tong La Mountain support it?
Rejoicing in such a wonderful sight,
The wisdom dakinis rose on their horses,
Like the rising sun and moon in the sky!
Those two yogi lords being at this place on earth,
No matter how you imagine it, it’s beyond comparison
In this world, renowned as the wind, beyond dispute!

Another time, rising in early dawn, Dampa said, “Today, I must go to many lands!” and, moving into the sphere of space, people had various visions, such as eight great Indian ships circling him for the briefest moment; some saw him, that day, attending Lama Tzong’s ganachakra in Tsang Rong, and so forth. In brief, Dampa was endowed with indescribable common and uncommon qualities and signs of accomplishment, such as miraculous deeds of killing and reviving, subduing to extinction, pacifying disease, taming demons, and unimpeded knowledge of past, present, and future.

Although parinirvana and greatness of his disciples are usually included in the chapter on the greatness of his enacted deeds, here, in a slightly elaborated manner, each will be presented below with its own chapter.
The Greatness of His Parinirvana

Alas! Midst darkness, since the lamp’s gone out,
The path’s gateway in Langkor has been destroyed!
Since that sole eye for beings to see the excellent path,
Protector Dampa, has left this realm, it is sad!
That source of benefit and bliss, the sun of the teachings, has set!
The lake of nectar that quenches torment of the delusions is gone!
Who is there for protectorless desperate beings,
In this dark land, during such degenerate times?
From Kechari, the heroes and dakinis
Invited Dampa, Lord of the Dakas;
From space, with rainbows and flowers raining,
The dakinis escorted him with music, dance, and song.
When that supreme guide of the three realms passed into nirvana
It is said that all beings on this earth became friendless.
The goddess of the earth and her retinue couldn’t stand it:
Even this whole great earth heaved and quaked.
Such beautiful illusory play of your wisdom mind:
If I say you passed away, you actually remained in this world!
If I say you remained, your form body withdrew into the sphere!
There’s nothing definite, you amazingly appear in any manner!
To ordinary view, your body was cremated.
Burned in spontaneously risen wisdom fire.
Massive stupa relics of your body
Proliferated, alleviating the grief of the devoted.
If your qualities could take form,
Even space would be too small to contain it!
If even omniscient Buddhas’ tongues
Would eventually get tired expressing
All of your qualities, how could anyone else?
Yet for benefit of the fortunate,
Though my effort is inferior, as well as I could,
I’ve prepared, with many authoritative old texts,
This brief, clear, and concise summary.
Yet because of my own ignorance,
What I’ve written will not please the scholars.
Yet, I thought I might plant a small seed
Of liberation for the faithful, like myself.
Though the lord of siddhas demonstrated passing away,
It was an emanated drama, a reflection of the moon
Appearing to countless lakes of disciples,
As many as exist. Who can deny it!
With the key of unaffected faith,
Having opened the treasury of compassion of this supreme guide,
Enjoy as you like, O fortunate ones,
Unending blessings and all wished attainments!
May any pure virtue here attained, through faith, great altruism, and
play of dependent arising,
In order to liberate illusory beings of the six realms from the dream-
like ocean of suffering,
Be dedicated to great enlightenment empty of the three spheres like
the sky,
That all beings may manifest unification of sky-like dharmakaya and
rainbow-like rupakayas.
This garland of pandarika flowers of wondrous realizations
Of the parinirvana of this undisputed supreme siddha,
Strung with the fingers of my faith and perseverance,
I offer as a great ornament for all beings and the gods!

AFTER COMPLETING infinite deeds, such as those of setting the disciples
onto the ripening liberating path, although he had said on numerous occa-
sions, “I’ve said that next year the Acharya’s corpse will be here! The great
purpose for its flesh to reach one’s mouth is no more! Those with no tenac-
ity have faulty minds,” no one really imagined that Dampa was about to
pass away.
Other times, Dampa expressed displeasure with the conduct of Tibetan practitioners with words such as these: “In India, people can’t tell who the yogi siddhas are! In Tibet, though they’ve not attained siddhi, they wave false claims of realization from the top of the flagpole. They fail, deceiving themselves and others.”

Again, he said, “These haughty practitioners have no Dharma! Tougheciseative, their whole life is distorted by the eight worldly dharmas. In reality, there’s hardly a practitioner among them. For the most part, they are letting themselves and others down. It’s really pitiful! What would our Founder Buddha do if he saw it?”

Again, he said, “All these Tibetan Dharma practitioners! Making statues of the Three Jewels with false, negative intentions, they say they’ve given up this life’s concerns! Marketing Dharma for the sake of wealth, they say, ‘I shun evil!’ Making tantric mandalas inside dog and goat pens they say, ‘This is nice!’ Their real aspiration lays the foundation for hell, yet they say, ‘My advice is so incisive!’ Using the Sangha’s provisions for themselves, they say they used them for urgent necessities. Hypocritically seeking wealth, they say, ‘I’m preparing for my meditation.’ The Tibetan practitioners are really funny! For the sake of food and clothing, they recite this and that, engage in this and that facsimile of practice! Ha! Tibetan style of listening to Dharma, working for sentient beings, attainment of siddhi, is deceitful, I know from experience. They teach and study Dharma for the sake of fame and reputation. They’re ‘bodhisattvas’ who work for the sake of their in-laws and nephews! Many are ‘siddhas’ of possessions and loans! These Tibetan Dharma practitioners spend their lives having a good time but, at death, they go down in defeat. If it were India, they’d also receive the King’s punishment!”

One day a patron sat before Dampa, tugging at a mala that he was not using for mantra recitation. Dampa said, “Essentially, there’s no difference between your unused mala and a lady’s necklace!”

“I never get any time to recite mantras!”

Dampa said, “There’s no need for a mala that’s not used for mantra recitation. There’s no need for mantra recitation unrelated to a deity. There’s no need for a deity that’s not conjoined with compassion. There’s no need for compassion that’s not connected with voidness.”
Someone asked for a mantra. Dampa said, “We already have a mantra!”

Asked, “What’s that?” he said, “It is this: ‘Back and forth wandering on a path of distraction, I age,’ and then finally you say, ‘SVABA!‘ to an empty wasted life! Everyone already knows that mantra! Now, do you still want a mantra?”

Uncomfortable with that, the person asked for a mantra to prevent rebirth in hell. Dampa said, “Well then, recite this:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{OM} & \text{ What’s wrong with going to hell?} \\
\text{AH} & \text{ As its nature is empty, what’s the difference?} \\
\text{HUM} & \text{ With the king of mantras, self-risen wisdom,} \\
\text{PHAT} & \text{ Conception, the king of obstructers, is destroyed} \\
\text{HRI} & \text{ Within samsara lacking inherent existence. SVABA!}
\end{align*}
\]

Remember and say that!”

One time in Dampa’s presence, a group of older youths received this heart advice:

All this is like clouds and empty husks!
Don’t take it to be permanent!
Fame and reputation are like echoes.
Don’t seek them! Practice Dampa’s Dharma!
Though you put on nice clothes,
They’ll disappear like rainbows.
Put on rags and practice!
This body’s a sack of lymph and pus.
Don’t hold it extremely dear!
Though you eat tasty food,
It’s nothing but excrement!
Don’t worry about how much food you get!
Village environs and mind states are adversaries.
Stay in isolated retreat!
Thorns of deception pierce the mind.
Practice equanimity!
You have the precious jewel to fulfill all your wishes!
Don’t harbor craving for wealth.
Lots of talk creates enemies!
Pretend that you are mute!
Mind tormented by desire,
You’re headed to be a preta!
Don’t hanker after food.
Threatening hallucinations arise in emptiness!
Don’t keep on wandering!
Blessings will come to your mind!
Beseech the Guru and yidam with all your might!
Though instructions are given, few practice them.
Don’t let go of the instructions!
Staying too long in your home environment,
You could find fault in even a Buddha!
Don’t stay long with anyone!
Your elemental mind is a mirror of Buddha,
So venerate your Guru greatly!
You won’t live long,
So quickly practice Dharma!
Keep a humble position!
Lower your pride!
Lots of guests are gathering
But don’t repair the guest-house!
So many lives spent meaninglessly!
Devote yourself to realization only!
You don’t know when your body
Will become food for the bugs.
Don’t cling to life as permanent!
Relations are like birds in a field.
Don’t cling so hard to being with them!
This green sprout of the mind
Can’t stand the drought of delusions.
Don’t get burned in the fire of anger!
Don’t give away samaya’s vantage point
For the glitter of hypocrisy!
Don’t let this ground of faith
Harden with delusions!
Don’t give up this wish-fulfilling body
To the enemy, *dukha*!*
Once the Vajra Master is gone,
You’ll have many questions to ask.
Don’t be lazy for holy Dharma!

Having instructed them thus, Dampa went back into his House of Dependent Arising.

Dampa said to Vajrakrodha, “I dreamt the field-protector dakinis were weeping, saying, ‘Our Hero-Vajra has gone to Tushita!’ I was giving Nagarjuna’s root teaching and the people of Dingri had all fallen asleep and lost their will! The Acharya is dying!”

Then, late in the tenth month of the next year, he said, “The yoginis are saying, ‘Remember! It’s time to ask the Acharya!’” He called Tönpa Chöseg and said, “Maitreya has told an old man from Mön that the messenger has arrived! There’s no time to stay in Dingri! We should also get ready to go!”

Another day, to demonstrate the external cremation ground, he created a reflection that set a white boulder in the west on fire.

One day, he remained as if he had already passed into parinirvana, frightening everyone. When he arose, he said, “I went to preside at a tsog of the Oddiyana dakinis! We can cook this!” and he held up a full skullcup. He caused it to blaze up and increase into a vast amount, satisfying all the large gathering of teachers and students. He said, “This is the Acharya’s last meal!”

Another time he said, “Again I had a bad dream last night!”
Kunga asked, “What did you dream?”
“The sun set at high noon and bad-natured beings didn’t understand karma! There’s bad danger for an old man from Mön!”

“Since Dampa is beyond death, please remain for the sake of sentient beings and me! What service can we perform for you to remain? I’ll do it!”

Dampa said, “When our Founder Buddha was passing into parinirvana, there is no mention of physical services being performed. My being a yogi enjoying realization of equal taste, how could something like that be suitable? Better than that, Kunga, you come here and perform an auspicious ceremony!” He placed mudras of the five families of Buddhas at Kunga’s five places and said, “Though the sun is setting, the moon is gradually rising!”

Also, to Gyagom Ma, he said, “This morning your father is dying! If you weep it will be disastrous for your practice! In your case, the yogini will not be conquered!” After finishing some austerities in the House of Dependent Arising, he went out and spoke to some elder youths:

No one knows where the lord of the army has gone!
Gyagom! Practice on the mountain!
Beseech the moonless night!
Appearances arise like dreams.
Empty mind is like space.
Practice in the natural abode!
This illusion-like body will be left behind!
The third day of the new moon has risen and aged.
A flood of light has turned in Kunga’s direction.
Understand that sign, O people of Dingri!
Kunga and Makyo must each stand firm.
Don’t be lazy! Do your practice!
Stay here before me and make your decision!
Later, accomplish others’ welfare as well.
Later you’ll find no one to question, O people of Dingri!
He’s referred to as the full moon.
Always gone in early morning.
Moon not seen in an empty sky.
Understand all this, O people of Dingri!
Come here, yogis of Dingri!
Ask the Acharya about all your problems!
One moment you’re fine; next moment, the elements are disturbed.
Like that, all things are impermanent!
Born over the eastern mountain, they pass away.
Formations are impermanent, the illusion of a body is discarded!
Outer appearances disappear
As awareness reverses without grasping!
Arising, non-self nature comes along!
You’ll be sorry later, people of Dingri:
Though you call, none will hear!
Though you seek, you’ll not find!
Still, if you pray, blessings will arise!
The Acharya’s way, though not wishing to emanate,
Arises by force of nature from previous births!
Mind is spacious, I have no wishes and desires.
You can’t stop the sun from rising in the east.
The sun has no wish to illuminate.
Understand this indication, people of Dingri!
If you want conviction, stay at the root of the ocean!
Emphasizing Dharma practice, go to Kunga!
If you make requests, blessings will come!
Rely, heart and mind, on the Triple Gem!
Blessings will definitely come, people of Dingri!
Strive in difficult practices while you’re young!
With age, the elements become unruly, people of Dingri!
Long reliance on the Guru is the door to blessings!
Always devote yourself to the Guru, people of Dingri!
When delusions arise the antidote is already there!
Don’t use willful effort to reject them, people of Dingri!
Never take off your good armor, no matter what!
Put all that happens to ultimate use, people of Dingri!
Those who strive with enthusiasm shall accomplish their purpose!
Willingly take on hardship, people of Dingri!
Faithful in all activities, contemplate dukha!
Dukha acts as your teacher, people of Dingri!
Distinguish the various masters gathered today
And make your decision about them, people of Dingri!
Without self-grasping, deception is destroyed in its place!
Don’t be partisan, people of Dingri!
Set your will and do your practice!
You’ve no other chance to prepare, people of Dingri!
If you practice for extended periods, siddhis arise!
Set the measure of your commitment, people of Dingri!
He is called the sun of Dingri side!
Understand this indication, people of Dingri!
Those with true yearning will always be illumined!
Yearn with all your heart, people of Dingri!
We call for sun, but the moon rises!
So, Kunga, don’t weep!

Kunga asked, “Isn’t your heart pained?” Dampa replied, “In truth, for me,
death is like the garuda’s egg?”

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In the year of the Female Fire Bird, in the evening of the fourth of the middle winter month, precious Dampa said, “I’m sick.” Lama Dharmachakra, who was staying in his presence at the time asked, “Dampa, what is sick?”
Dampa said, “In essence, emptiness is sick!”
“In what manner is Dampa sick?”
“In a manner inseparably mixing the birthless, ceaseless nature of all phenomena and the innate mode of being of mind and all things, I am sick!”
“How long have you been sick?”
“The hut of unknowing has collapsed where it stood! I’m sick until dharmakaya free of elaboration arises!”
“What can help your sickness now?”
“Outer objects all disappear! Inside, memory is annihilated! If, in between, you block the six sense faculties, it helps!”
Then Lama Dharmachakra asked, “Dampa is not dying! Isn’t Dampa kidding about dying?”
Dampa said, “When perfect truth has been realized, passing comes to the Lama. For the person who has not exhausted mental conceptions, he appears to die and pass away. Yet, I have forever left samsara. I am free of
the womb! Since I’ve finished the remainder of my work, now I am going to pure Kechari!”

Then Lama Dharmachakra went to the stone hut where Kunga the Bodhisattva was meditating and said, “Dampa is sick! Now, he’s close to passing away! What should be done?” Kunga arose and went before Dampa and asked, “Is Dampa sick?”

He said, “I’m sick,” and lay down.

Kunga wept into the pillow that Dampa’s head was wrapped in.

Dampa said, “Kunga, why are you crying?”

“Dampa is sick. Dampa is not dying, is he?”

Dampa said, “Son, you needn’t cry. There is no meeting or parting for you and I! I’m not leaving you to go anywhere! Now, don’t stay here! Go to the stone hut and meditate! I’ll come to you!”

When Kunga went into the hut, Dampa was there, waiting for him. Kunga split into joyous laughter and had fathomless realizations. Because Dampa had revealed what appeared from his side, that he and Kunga would never be separated, it is said that Kunga didn’t later feel that Dampa had passed away.

Then Lama Ghuranashri came from his mud hut into Dampa’s presence where, in Lama Dharmachakra’s view, Dampa was still there, sick. He asked, “Is Dampa sick?”

Dampa said, “I am sick.”

Saying, “Dampa can’t be dying! What will I do? Who can I rely on?” he took Dampa’s feet to the crown of his head and wept.

Dampa said, “Son, you don’t need to cry; remembering the Guru Jewel at the crown of your head, feeling aspiration and devotion, make requests; dharmata reality will finally arise! Meditating on the yidam and dakini in your heart mandala, practice recitation of profound secret mantra; the sun of clear light will dawn in the sky! Determining that your own mind is the Buddhas of the three times, rely on the meaning of profound dharmata; a spectacle of transcendent wisdom will arise from within! Remaining alone in isolated retreat, continually rely on an undistracted mind; a spectacle of experience will arise from within! Again, when you cut the bonds of the compounded perishable world, whatever you do brings peak fulfillment of aspirations. Isn’t that so?”

“Precious Guru, please remain three more years for my sake!”

Dampa said, “The yidams and dakinis have prophesied that I shall go to
Kechari! The fortune to be my disciple is also finished! I have remained in the human world for five hundred and seventy years! Now I’m going to the abode of pure Kechari! Last year I said that the Acharya’s corpse would be in Dingri! Still, if you make requests, there is no meeting or parting from me!"

Also, Dampa said to Lama Charchung, “Son, you are holding the Guru’s mind so you need my heart nectar instructions; keep these in mind!”

If you practice dharma with partisanship, that is a faulty path, son!
The specific vehicles are wisdom, son!
If you realize the many to be one, that is mastery, son!
If you realize all to be mind, nothing is in discord, son!
If you drink the milk of space, you shall be satisfied, son!
Letting go of activity and work, you attain bliss, son!
If you keep to solitary retreat, the dakinis gather, son!
If you practice alone, you will receive blessings, son!
If you meditate on the Guru at your crown, all your wishes shall be fulfilled, son!
If you rely on the dakinis of the three places, you shall accomplish the common and supreme siddhis, son!
If you give up worldly activity, that itself is virtuous practice, son!
If you cease desiring from within, you accomplish the welfare of others, son!
If you enjoy the conduct of rigpa clarity, grief comes to an end, son!
If you rely on the karmamudra, bliss-void is uninterrupted, son!
If you practice the instructions, you generate ascertainment, son!
If you fear the two doors of birth, train in rigpa energy, son!
If your body gets sick, release awareness from its support, son!
If misfortune is projected as an inner appearance, subdue it in rigpa, son!
If dullness and fogginess occur, eject awareness into space, son!
If your virtuous practice embarrasses you, place it in rigpa nature, son!
If you have many thoughts, discard them in life-giving nectar of rigpa, son!
If virtuous practice takes off, extend your commitment further, son!
If craving persists, cut bondage forcefully, son!
If you always rely on the Lama, realized qualities will come as a by-product, son!
Give up the perishable world and voluntarily practice, son!
Because the six realms’ beings are your parents, meditate on love and compassion, son!
Because it is meaningless, give up worldly activity, son!
Because all is illusion, attain through the seal of birthlessness, son!
Because the body is of earth and mineral, reduce cherishing of the body, son!
Because this life is a dream, seize that which is primordially eternal, son!
Since the lord of death will come no matter what, attain birthlessness, laughing, my son!
As suffering arises as an enemy, put wisdom to war with it, son!
Since body and mind are sure to be separated, never separate from your practice, son!
Since this residence will always be discarded, seize that which is innate and eternal, son!
Since death comes swiftly, keep the feeling of having no time to waste!
Since the bardo is a long precarious path, make much preparation for it, son!
Since concepts are a harsh poison, hold to undistracted mindfulness, son!
If you are without duality and partiality, that is the view, son!
If you realize your own mind to be dharmakaya, that is meditation, son!
If you are without pretentious or unconscionable behavior, that is conduct, son!
If you are without cunning or deceit, that is commitment, son!
If you recognize the three kayas as your own face, that is the result, son!
If you realize birthlessness and ceaselessness, you are liberated from the mara lord of death, son!
If you powerfully gather in the mind and energies, whatever you do becomes the path, son!
Without distraction, vigilantly emanate and gather back the ganachakra in space!
If you are vigilant in offering tsog and torma, the sworn guardian protectors gather, son!
If you do retreat of the yidam deity, immeasurable power will arise, son!
If you practice birthlessness, you stop the continual path of samsara, son!
If you realize the perfection of wisdom, blessings will pervade everywhere, son!
If you purify the life-supporting wind, you will overcome illness, son!
If you willingly take on austerities, you will experience bliss, son!
If your own mind is made serviceable, more bliss will arise, son!
If you do not hold your body and life in high regard, you will attain fame in this and future lives, son!
If you delight the Lama with wealth, forceful blessings will arise, son!
If you give up your flesh and blood as food for others, that is the sacred protection, son!
If you have avarice for Dharma, it transgresses the teachings of the Tathagatas, son!
If you sell the oral instructions outside, the dakinis will punish you, son!
If you don’t realize the meaning of skillful speech, you are the least of practitioners of Dharma, son!
Teachings don’t help; practice and subdue beings, son!
If you realize samsara and nirvana to be mind, that itself is Buddha, son!
If you realize there is nothing to attain, that is accomplishment of the fruit, son!
Give up cherishing this life and strive for the sake of future lives, son!
If you take the three poisons on the path, you attain the state of the three kayas, son!
Your own mind not wandering in samsara is attainment of dharma-kaya, son!
If you are unforgetful of the welfare of others, the two form bodies will arise, son!
If you know body and mind to be blissful, you attain the sambhoga-kaya, son!
By finding the three kayas within yourself, you attain the result, son!
If you follow these instructions, you are the very best of my children, son!
If attachment and aversion still arise in your mind, ask for help, son!

This was the last will and testament he gave to Lama Charchung.
Lama Charchenpa also came before the ill Dampa. Dampa, sick, was sitting down. Dampa himself was feeling more and more blissful. The lama cried, “On whom shall we people of Dingri rely? What can we do?”
Then, Dampa left his last will and testament for the people of Dingri:

Apply body, speech, and mind to the Holy Dharma;
That is the best of actions, people of Dingri!
Rely, body, heart, and mind, on the Three Jewels;
You will receive powerful blessings, people of Dingri!
Give up seeking goals for this life and strive for the sake of future lives;
Your ultimate aspirations will be attained, people of Dingri!
Family is fleeting like a chance meeting;
Don’t tease and fight, people of Dingri!
Illusory wealth is like something you’ve borrowed;
Don’t tie yourself in knots of avarice, people of Dingri!
The body is impure like a sack of filth;
Don’t clean it as if it were pure, people of Dingri!
Illusory name and fame bind the mind;
Don’t get caught in great longings, people of Dingri!
Land is like a nomad’s abode;
Don’t harbor craving and attachment for it, people of Dingri!
Land and country are the common lot of the six realms’ beings;
Don’t cling to them as your identity, people of Dingri!
The bird of death flies from the home of birth;
There’s no time to waste, people of Dingri!
Without distraction, strive in Holy Dharma;
At death you’ll remember the path, people of Dingri!
The results of action are certain to ripen;
Shun harmful acts, people of Dingri!
Actions performed are like objects in a dream;
Experience non-action, people of Dingri!
Even if you get what you want, you have to let it go;
You don’t need anything, people of Dingri!
Since you don’t remain in this world forever,
Make your preparations to go now, people of Dingri!
In the midst of the forest the monkeys are happy;
But a fire is engulfing the woods, people of Dingri!
There is no bridge across the river of birth, aging, sickness, and death;
Make your boat now, people of Dingri!
In birth, death, and bardo, that narrow pass so vulnerable to ambush,
You’re certain to be snared by bandits of the five poisons;
Beseech your Lama to escort you, people of Dingri!
Once held, you never fall—that’s the Guru!
Keep him at your crown, inseparable from you, people of Dingri!
With the Lama escorting you, you can go wherever you like;
For the fare, offer him your aspiration and devotion, people of Dingri!
Wherever there is wealth, there is avarice;
Let go of avarice that blocks generosity, people of Dingri!
Wherever there is power, there is negativity;
Push it away from you, people of Dingri!
In the world of the next life there are no friends and relatives;
Entrust yourself to Dharma, people of Dingri!
Wandering in distraction, you fail to reach your true goals;
Be determined now, people of Dingri!
You have no idea when the lord of death will strike;
So be vigilant from this very moment, people of Dingri!
The day you die, no one at all can help you;
So become self-sufficient, people of Dingri!
Just as shadows lengthen as the sun sets,
Yama, lord of death, continually approaches, never resting;
Rouse yourself to find a means of escape, people of Dingri!
The flower that is beautiful in the morning by evening has dried up;
You can’t rely on this body, people of Dingri!
Though your body is like a god’s while you’re alive,
At death it is destroyed by mara's armies;
This illusory body fails you, people of Dingri!
Guests at the fair leave for home when business is concluded;
Friends will certainly abandon you, people of Dingri!
This conjured image of a person is sure to collapse;
The auspicious time is now, people of Dingri!
This vulture of mind is certain to fly one day;
Soar to the heights now, people of Dingri!
Sentient beings of the six realms are all your kind parents;
Meditate on love and compassion for them, people of Dingri!
Friends and enemies are the deceptive appearances of karma returning;
Abandon longing desire and hatred for them, people of Dingri!
Mantras and prayers of refuge purify negative speech;
Stop ordinary conversation and gossip, people of Dingri!
Prostration and circumambulation purify physical negativity;
Give up worldly activity, people of Dingri!
Fervent aspiration and devotion clear negative mental propensities;
Carry the Lama on your crown, people of Dingri!
You'll part from the flesh and bone that's been with you since birth;
Don’t grasp life as permanent, people of Dingri!
Consider everlasting primordial mind your highest object;
You are never apart from it, people of Dingri!
Enjoy the treasure of elemental mind, best of wealth;
It is never exhausted, people of Dingri!
Enjoy the supreme taste of samadhi, best of food;
It dispels pangs of hunger, people of Dingri!
Drink nectar of mindfulness, best of drinks;
Its flow never stops, people of Dingri!
Seek inborn transcendent wisdom, best of friends;
There is no meeting or parting from it, people of Dingri!
Seek rigpa's child, best of children;
It is beyond birth and death, people of Dingri!
In emptiness brandish the spear of rigpa;
Your view is beyond defeat or impediment, people of Dingri!
Within forcefully arising expanse, train the unceasing energy;
Conduct has nothing to accept or reject, people of Dingri!
Watch undistracted, in a state beyond thought;  
Meditation lacks torpor and agitation, people of Dingri!  
Seek the four kayas, indivisible, in your own mind,  
Without doubting or expecting results, people of Dingri!  
The root of samsara and nirvana is your own mind;  
Mind has no reality, people of Dingri!  
The luminosity underlying attraction and aversion  
Is like the sky, free of tracks from the flight of birds;  
Don’t crave and abhor experiences, people of Dingri!  
Unborn dharmakaya is like the essence of the sun;  
You can’t illumine or obscure its light, people of Dingri!  
Discursive thought is like a thief in an empty house;  
There is nothing to actually gain or lose, people of Dingri!  
Feelings leave no tracks, like drawings in water;  
You can’t hold on to illusions, people of Dingri!  
Conditioned thoughts are like rainbows in the sky;  
You can’t identify anything to crave, people of Dingri!  
Movement and clearing of thought is like clouds in the sky;  
There are no fixed reference points in consciousness, people of Dingri!  
Naturally released without grasping, like the wind;  
It doesn’t attach to anything, people of Dingri!  
Unreal awareness is like a rainbow in the sky;  
Nothing obstructs it, people of Dingri!  
Seeing reality is like a mute person’s dream;  
It is beyond words and conventions, people of Dingri!  
Dawning of realization is like the bliss of a youth;  
It is beyond description, people of Dingri!  
Unified awareness and emptiness is like the moon reflected in water;  
It has no solid reality, people of Dingri!  
Indivisible illumination and emptiness is like empty space;  
It is without center or periphery, people of Dingri!  
Unwavering mindfulness is like a beauty’s mirror;  
It has no philosophies, people of Dingri!  
Indivisible rigpa and emptiness is like the reflection in a mirror;  
Nothing really arises or disintegrates there, people of Dingri!  
Bliss-void free of concepts is like sunshine on the snow;
It doesn’t identify things, people of Dingri!
Deluded talk vanishes without a trace, empty like echoes;
You can’t hold on to sounds, people of Dingri!
Bliss-emptiness experience dawns like music from the body and strings of a lute
When karma meets with the right conditions, people of Dingri!
Samsara and nirvana are naturally released, like the play of a child;
Consciousness is unborn and unceasing, people of Dingri!
Outer projections gather back to consciousness within;
Brittle ice melts into water, people of Dingri!
The workings of ignorance are like a spring in a meadow;
Not stopped by trying to dam it up, people of Dingri!
The deceptive display of samsara and nirvana
Is like coming face to face with the enemy;
Call your ally of virtue, people of Dingri!
The five kayas, naturally illumined,
Are like having arrived in a vast land full of gold;
There is nothing else to want or fear, adopt or abandon, people of Dingri!
Free human life, rich with the practice of Dharma,
Is like reaching a treasure island;
Don’t leave it empty-handed, people of Dingri!
Mahayana conduct is like the wish-fulfilling jewel,
Rarely found even when it is sought, people of Dingri!
Whatever provisions you make for this life, it’s all left behind;
Focus on meaningful Dharma, people of Dingri!
Engage in austerities while you are young;
You won’t be able to when you are old, people of Dingri!
When delusions develop, apply the antidote correctly;
Their “realness” evaporates in their own natural state, people of Dingri!
Sometimes think about samsaric suffering;
It clarifies your dedication, people of Dingri!
With enthusiasm, seize the natural state now, while alive;
That will guide you on the path at death, people of Dingri!
Life doesn’t last, like dew on the grass;
Give up sloth and laziness, people of Dingri!
Buddha’s teachings are like the sun peeking out of the clouds;  
It’s only clear for a moment, people of Dingri!  
Impressing others with eloquent teaching yet not living up to it at crucial times,  
The hideout of faults is within oneself, people of Dingri!  
Faith can very easily change due to circumstances;  
Meditate on the faults of samsara, people of Dingri!  
If you rely on bad friends you are infected with bad action;  
Seek witness of your own conscience, people of Dingri!  
Unknowing mistakes are the root of disaster;  
Be introspective and mindful, people of Dingri!  
It is easy to get swept up in the three or five poisons;  
Rely on potent antidotes, people of Dingri!  
Weak perseverance causes loss;  
Don your armor well, people of Dingri!  
Long-conditioned tendencies continue to return;  
Don’t follow old habits, people of Dingri!  
If you have misconceptions, pray to the Guru;  
Samadhi will dawn from within, people of Dingri!  
If you want happiness later, bear hardship now;  
Buddha is close by, people of Dingri!  
The Acharya is going, he’s not staying in Dingri;  
Clear your preconceptions now, people of Dingri!  
As for me, I persevered in undistracted practice;  
Follow my example, people of Dingri!

Thus he gave his last will and testament to the people of Dingri.

... ... 

Then, Jomo Kyurmo Jangchub Drön dreamt that as she was meditating, staying at Dagjar, the realm protector dakinis, leading Manjushri’s lion, encircled Dampa playing inconceivable music, engulfing him with incense, many flags, banners, canopies, and so forth. Then Dampa himself, riding the lion, holding damaru and bell in his hands, with many hosts of tantric deities leading in escort and the sounds of it all, flew away into the sky. As soon as she awoke she hurried to the retreat, but, having reached the House of Dependent Arising, she couldn’t see it! When she went to where
Dampa’s bed was, Dampa was lying down with his head covered. She said, “Dampa?”

He said, “Yes,” and raised his head.

She said, “Is something the matter?”

“I’m sick.”

She said, “I dreamt something like this! They can’t be taking Dampa away! For a woman like me, who first through lack of accumulated merit took lesser birth and though having practiced has so far gained no attainment, if Dampa doesn’t stay, what will I do? Oh, please!” Taking his feet to her crown, she cried.

Dampa said, “Listen, Ange Jangchub Drön! If you don’t meet the ultimate Dharma of elemental mind, even if you’re born in a high caste, you’ll reap unwanted misery through the force of negativity! With faith in the mind, sustained by the Lama’s instructions, accomplishing both your own and others’ purposes, your courage surpasses a man’s! Without faith, high birth serves no purpose! Listen to me, Jangchub Drön! If you want to receive blessings, you must tame the Three Jewels through faith and refuge in them! If you want to develop samadhi in your mind, you must tame the Guru with devotion and prayer! If you want to attain siddhi, you must tame the yidam with generation stage and recitations! If you want to realize your own mind, tame your mind with the instructions and antidotes! If you want to attain enlightenment, tame body and mind with perseverance and austerities, Jangchub Drön! The principal practice is: Give up worldly activities! The principal instruction is: Hold the root of mindfulness! The principal practice is: Place awareness in the base! The principal antidote is: Hold the root of mindfulness! The principal conduct is: Keep a humble position! The principle of the hermitage is: Throw out busyness and distraction! Ange Jangchub Drön! Life is impermanent and death comes swiftly, you know not when! Is there even one example of a permanent life? When this thief, the mara of death, strikes, can you give one example of someone who has more time for practice? What if you hadn’t determined that this life’s compounded eight worldly concerns are fallible, and had no vowed discipline to base in that understanding? In the actual face of illusory impermanence’s danger, what if you had no way to create a reliable body? There are no more than four fingerbreadths between this life and the next; what if you had no way to cast off a future life? Since now is the time for cultivation for the long term, what if there was no example of having
free time for practice? As there’s nothing that helps at death but Dharma, who would willingly engage in harmful actions? What if you had no example for not being afraid of death, even as you know all born must die; what if there was no example for the monkeys who would happily remain with no thought of escape in a forest encircled by fire in all directions, Ange Jangchub Drön?”

Again Jangchub Drön asked, “Well, if Dampa doesn’t stay, will he dispel obstacles of unhappiness on our way? From what Lama should we receive instructions?” Dampa said, “What rises in the sky is the sun and moon! What flows down the middle is the river! Equal to me is Kunga! He has my realizations! Also, my lady, beseech with uninterrupted faith and devotion; a Lama who reveals everything will arise from within!” Having said that, he suddenly covered his head and lay down.

Throughout this time, Dampa remained with Kunga, appearing well and free from sickness. Lady Dütsi Kyipa, hearing that Dampa was ill, came to see him. Dampa was lying down. She asked, “Dampa?”

“Yes?”

“Why are you lying down?”

Dampa said, “I’m sick.”

“With what is Dampa sick?”

“A sickness of body and mind, nondual!”

“Dampa, in my dream, I saw Dampa setting in the sky! I wondered if you had died! What should I do?”

Dampa said, “If you compare Dütsi Kyi’s mind and that of someone who has spent their entire life distracted, wouldn’t that person feel regret at the time of death? Having cultivated bad actions, what dread comes to the heart of that person whose life is over! For that person who has become self-sufficient in the long run, by relying on the eternal Dharma, what divine delight is born at death! When, because of inflicting only harm, fear of Yama, the lord of death, arises, that’s where great arrogance meets its great downfall! Unable to escape, wondering what to do, these people who, though they know right from wrong, don’t shun the results of such actions, shame themselves! Your spiritual aspirations having gone well, don’t grieve! Repeatedly pray in joy!”

Again, Dampa spoke, “Lady, an example for taking difficult conditions
onto the path: it’s like clearing rocks and finding a turquoise! An example for feeling sad with samsara: it’s like a mother giving up her only child! An example for feeling nauseated by suffering: it’s like returning from a mistaken path you didn’t know! An example for thoughts being liberated in the expanse of reality: it’s like snow falling on a lake! An example for whatever appears to the five senses arising as helpful: it’s like fire breaking out in a dense forest! An example for finding transcendent wisdom by taking the five poisons onto the path: it’s like ice melting in water! Keep those in mind, Ange!”

Again, Dampa spoke, “Again, until you know how to take whatever appears as enhancing understanding of reality, don’t fabricate within or without! Until you have well understood profound reality, don’t consult with Buddhist logicians! Until dual awareness is released in place, don’t mix Dharma and non-Dharma! Until you’ve attained the resultant three bodies as your own mind, never stop the flow of compounded roots of virtue! Until your mind is free of ignorance’s pride, don’t carry your view as so much talk! Until you attain the state of forbearance, don’t ignore the law of karma! Until you realize selflessness of the person, make your mind inseparable from the antidotes! Until mind itself is mixed inseparably with space, don’t be prejudiced about Dharma on account of one vehicle being true from your perspective!”

Again, Dampa spoke, “Dütsi Kyi! The deities and Three Jewels of Refuge abide in the sphere of elemental mind; go for refuge with faith and devotion; you will be protected from danger of the lower realms! Meditate that the mahasiddha lineage gurus are at your crown and pray with devotion and aspiration; blessings of their body, speech, and mind will arise! The deity host of the yidam mandalas abide at the center of your heart. Energize your body, speech, and mind; you will attain common and supreme siddhis! Offer tsog and torma to the dakinis of the three places! Keep your commitments as close as your shadow and cut open the sack of fear; all outer and inner hindrances will be dispelled, Ange!”

Once more, Dampa spoke, “Ange! Again and again, look at the unreality of your own mind, thinking, ‘The Lama that is neither myself nor separate from myself arises as whatever appears!’” Then he lay down.

. . . .
Shangpa Tönpa also, hearing that Dampa was sick, broke retreat and came to see Dampa. Dampa was sick and passing. He asked, “Dampa-la, definitively, what conduct should I take on?”

Dampa said, “Tönpa, this material form aggregate is sure to fail you! Don’t believe in this illusory village at the crossroads, Ange! Tönpa, wealth, that signal of mara, is sure to ruin you! Don’t rely on the eight mundane concerns of this compounded world, Ange! The army of the distractions of wealth is sure to destroy you! Don’t rely on illusory material wealth, Ange! Tönpa, the bandit, the lord of death mara, is sure to come! Even this illusory village of the body will one time be discarded! It’s time for rigpa, this king of minds, to escape to the fortress of emptiness, here and now, Ange! Tönpa, wherever you’re born in the six realms, there’s no happiness! Meditate on the intention to swiftly stop this round of the evil abode of samsara, Ange! Tönpa, thinking that there must be something such as enlightenment as a result of the path, if you wish to attain that, stay alone, and continually watch your mind, Ange! Tönpa, for practitioners, wealth is the ruinous ghost who hurls them into samsara! If you want liberation from the round, stay alone in remote retreat, cut off relations with society, Ange! Tönpa, no matter what you eat or wear in this short life of just an instant, it is left behind! Focus on only the ultimately meaningful holy Dharma, Ange! Tönpa, temporary relations are like travelers on a road or birds in a field, so don’t be overly tormented by family brought together by karma, Ange! Tönpa, that hated enemy is like a blister on your foot; it’s pacified by itself! Don’t let your mind engage in the delusion of hatred, Ange!”

To Jomo Rongchungma, Dampa said, “Rongchungma, dance on the tip of a spear! Race your horse on the edge of a knife! The time is now! Accomplish your purpose! There’s danger of losing the path in the rocks! You must see if you can attain liberation this time in the crevice where the water hits the rocks! You don’t come out on this isle in the ocean over and over again! When a captain is to be found close at hand, don’t return empty-handed from the island of jewels! Rongchungma, you can do difficult practices! The harvest will come when it’s ready! Try to accomplish activities! Inform yourself on dharmic conduct! Strive on the steed of practice! Eat delicacies to the cackling of the charnel grounds! Introduce mind to the clear light! Cut off tremulous doubt at this time! You don’t come out in the
peaks of the mountains again and again! Now, look well, forgetting appearances! This beggar Acharya shall move from his home! For a traveler on an unknown road who has once found a way over the water, it’s important not to be turned away, Ange!"

Again, Dampa spoke, “Your spouse is admiration and devotion to the lama; for instructions, it’s practice; for companions, it’s aspiration; for sentient beings, it’s compassion; for accomplishment, it’s perseverance; for meditation, it’s endurance; for conceptual thought, it’s destruction; for the five poisons, it’s antidotes; for delusions, it’s meeting them face to face; for your mind, it’s birthlessness; for dharmakaya, it’s free of projections; for secret mantra, it’s commitment. Keep those in mind, Ange!”

Again, Dampa spoke, “Rongchungma, sail unceasingly within birthless dharmakaya! Signs of real birth and death are released where they are!”

“Is talk of view and tenet systems somehow lesser?”

“Sail without distraction within non-meditation! Signs of real dullness and agitation are released where they are! Meditation or something else, it’s up to you! Sail, self-releasing, within the forcefully arisen state! Signs of real pretension are released where they are! Action or talk, it’s up to you! Sail, spontaneously accomplished, within the state of the three kayas! Signs of real hope or fear are released where they are! Results or talk, it’s up to you!”

Again, Dampa spoke to the meditator Gom Ma Jangchub Ö, “Gom Ma, samsara is experienced as bliss! Don’t take a path of wandering your whole life! Rigpa is a mind with few requests; don’t practice the dharma of infants! Appearances will trap you cleverly; you take measure of yourself! Delusions are a serious disease; extend your activities in a wisdom existence! Predispositions are very old; don’t follow thoughts of the past! Bindings are hard to cut; have no appetite for the dungeon of dukha of want and desire! If antidotes are of little power, thoughts will wander as they will! This life is short; don’t be lazy and slothful! Suffering is a critical problem; don’t saddle yourself with it! Working for the short term is a bad condition; don’t be wild of thought! Previous karma is long embedded; don’t act nonvirtuously! Laziness is deep-rooted; pierce through with the perseverance of iron! Ignorance is naturally very dense; go with the lamp of wisdom! Craving attachment is hard to part from; cut the bondage of desire! If samadhi
is of little force, plant the foundation of faith and devotion! If the delusions are forceful, summon help of the antidotes! If self-grasping is difficult to uproot, cut through to the liberating path of nonduality! Desire is a sharp-edged weapon; put on the armor of contentment! Craving attachment is difficult to part from; cut the rope of duality! Laziness is deep-rooted; uproot it with a sense of urgency; it is a condition for loss of perseverance! Hold with undistracted mindfulness! It is easy to become used to deception! Hold mindfulness with introspection! It is difficult to subdue your own mind! Cultivate aspiration and devotion for the instructions! The predispositions are a serious problem! Nurture mindfulness and heap up the antidotes! The antidotes are too weakly gathered! Keep your pouch of admiration and devotion with you! The lord of death is waiting in ambush! Nurture your faith and keep on the path of aspiration and devotion! Anger is very powerful; stop it with the aid of love and compassion! Sentiment of virtue is too weak; realize its intensity of empty nature! Desire is long embedded; develop power of the antidote, destroy the mind of desire, and establish the mind of needing nothing! Self-grasping is very durable; don’t willingly accept suffering! Ripening of karma is truly certain; don’t look down on the law of cause and effect! Hell is a lack of compassion; don’t commit risky, hurtful actions! The five poisons are rooted in something good; seek the hiding place of transcendent wisdom! It is hard to move to liberation; lengthen abiding in the stages of the vehicles! The lower realms are close by; don’t take a wrong turn! Gompa, again, if you feel sadness for samsara, that is the best of faith! If you lose your appetite for suffering, that is the best of nausea! If you remember death, that is the best mindfulness of impermanence! If you see the Guru as Buddha, that is the best of faith and devotion! If you meditate on love and compassion, that is the best of armor! If you give up worldly activity, that is the best of virtuous practice! If you give up cherishing the body, that is the best of protection! If you overwhelm appearance of duality, that is the best of accomplishment! If your own mind is without defilement, that is the best of samaya! If you meet with nothing obstructive in appearances, that is the best of realizations! If you realize your own mind definitively, that is the best of siddhis! If you have contentment of mind, that is the best of wealth! If you cut preconceptions of samsara and nirvana, that is the best of wisdom! If you know all as mind, that is the best of philosophical views! If mind itself is made serviceable, that is the best of meditation! If you know how to use what-
ever appears as beneficial, that is the best of conduct! If you know the three kayas to be your own mind, that is the best of fruits!”

Again, Dampa spoke to Jomo Shangchungma, “Shangchungma, externally, look at appearing objects; they are a dream itself! Internally, look at the thinking mind; it is unreality itself! Look at the limit of samsara; it is suffering itself! Look at the body of four elements; it is illusion itself! Look at this grasping; it is deception itself!”

Again, Dampa spoke, “Shangchungma, though one talks a lot about the view, continually viewing the mind, it is what it is, like an elegant lady and her mirror! Though one talks a lot about meditation, placing mindfulness without distraction is what it is, like the mirror’s reflection! Though one talks a lot about conduct, taking whatever appears as beneficial is what it is, like adding wood to a fire! Though one talks a lot about the result, being sustained by mindfulness of all appearances as dharmakaya is what it is, like arriving at a sea island of gold and jewels!”

Again, Dampa spoke, “Shangchungma, since samsara’s defining characteristic is only suffering, from now on vow to escape! Since the appearances of this world are illusion itself, don’t let your life be used up in deluded action! Since all activities are meaningless, don’t do much work of this compounded perishable world! Since human life is wasted in wandering, strike again and again with the iron of perseverance! Since there’s no free time in human life, don’t age with laziness and indifference! Since the mara lord of death has accompanied you from birth, it’s important to act without mistake to accomplish your ultimate aims! Since there is nothing besides holy Dharma that is of benefit at death, strive in Dharma before all other activities! Since there is no need for mundane aspirations, transform all discussion, ultimately, into Dharma! Since the time for ultimate cultivation is now, don’t let your life be used up in mundane work! Carry the holy Guru like a hat stuck inseparably to your head! As for the yidam, meditate on the yidam in the center of your heart like a mother nurturing her only child! Rely on the dakinis like a wish-fulfilling jewel! If you still crave mundane activities even when old, it is like an old tree trunk, dried out inside and falling over! The young girl without faith is like a flower about to be taken by frost! The rich lord of wealth not remembering Dharma is like a forest about to catch on fire! The energetic hero inflicting harm is like a tigress about to be caught...
in a snare! The Dharma practitioner not heeding karma is like a vulture about to fall in a pit of ashes! Wealthy people becoming distracted are like leaves carried by the wind! All is impermanent like dew on the grass! Therefore, keep in mind that the five outer objects, the five sense faculties, and the mind within are all impermanent! Keep selflessness in mind! Remember illusory nature! Remember sickness! Remember grief! Remember non-virtue! Remember fear! Remember what cannot be relied upon! Therefore meditate with mindfulness of death! Meditate on perception of foulness! Meditate on perception of redness! Meditate on perception of everything eaten! Meditate on perception of everything disintegrated! Meditated on perception of everything burned! Meditate on perception of everything rotten! Meditate on perception of being an exile! Then meditate, recollecting Buddha! Meditate, recollecting Dharma! Meditate, recollecting Sangha!” Having said that, he covered his head and lay down.

. . .

Then all the great disciples gathered with ganachakra and strenuously requested Dampa to remain but he would not accept. They asked, “If you are going to pass away, tell us what we should do! Who should preside over this seat of learning? What memorial should we build?” and other questions.

Dampa said, “Langkor, this home of ours, is like a Bodh Gaya, blessed by the Gurus and dakinis, making it auspicious and powerful with siddhis close at hand! Even young children born here could be venerated by others! There’s nothing else for you to do but remember what the Guru has told you before and practice accordingly! As for the seat of learning, if Sochungwa remains, people will be able to attain enlightenment! From Drogpup on up, beings will go to Keajra! Since they have the dog-monkey talisman, they won’t be staying here! Kunga is guarding the Guru’s seal so there will not be proliferation of texts! Charchen is going to Tushita so he is not free to stay; he has to get on his way. Nagpo Charchung will remain!”

Having said this, he gave Avadhuti Brahmin his skullcup and Gyagom his braided wool garment. Curved knife, trident, and cane he gave to Vajrakrodha. His bag of dependent arising and overwhelming pellets he gave to Kunga. His sleeping tent and cup he gave to Charchen. To Charchung, he gave his woven wool and rhinoceros-hide mats. He completely divested himself of all possessions. For four days he continued to interpret the signs.
Asked, “What are you doing?” he said, “Buddha himself did likewise when he passed into parinirvana!”

At early dawn of the tenth day he wrapped his body in a roll of white cloth. Asked, “Why are you doing that?” he replied, “Buddha did the same when he passed into parinirvana!”

Some elder disciples asked if they should build stupas in various places to inspire respect and devotion. Quoting from the Mahaparinirvana Sutra, he refused. When pressed again and again, he assented to memorials offered out of devotion. As it became light, he lay down on his right side facing west, with his head toward White Rock. Asked, “Dampa, why are you doing this?” he said, “Buddha did the same when he passed into parinirvana!”

Then, as the sun rose, in order to show the impermanence of all things, as a sign that this world’s appearances are mere convention, in order for desirous beings to reverse their craving, so that the lazy can develop effort, as a sign that there’s nothing that can be relied upon, as a sign that these compounded aggregates as a basis cannot be relied upon, Precious Dampa, although beyond death in reality, to ordinary view displayed consciousness dissolving in dharmadhatu and going to the Pure Land of the Dakinis. At that time the assembly of tantric gurus of Dakiniland, deities of yidam mandalas, field protector dakinis, heroes and heroines, and dharmapalas, all escorted Dampa with parasols, victory banners, flags and fans, canopies, drums and horns, damarus, cymbals, tamboura, bells, and the limitless sounds of music. A tent of rainbow light enveloped the area. Flowers of the gods rained down from the sky and the Dingri people continued to see visions throughout the day and night. The great disciples and all men and women of Dingri gathered and offered vast ganachakra and remained for some days in intense prayer.

All the Dingri people could not agree on how to cremate precious Dampa’s holy body. Some thought it should be done at Dampa’s own residence. Others had different ideas. Dampa appeared in a vision to Lama Gurnashri and said that if the people of Dingri ate his flesh it would fulfill their ultimate aspirations, but they do not have the karmic good fortune for that and it will not happen. He instructed them, saying, “Prepare the site where the reflection of burning earlier occurred!”

The Dingri people started to try to eat Dampa’s flesh but no one would dare stick a knife in his body. At that time Dampa himself went to Oddiyana and told them he had just discarded his body in Dingri. From Oddiyana
Land of Dakinis, three yogis with miracle powers arrived to take Dampa’s body, but Lama Tzong stopped them. They constructed a cremation building and throne of eighteen-pillar size, five arm spans on a side. They didn’t use ordinary wood to build it but sandalwood heaped with silks, medicinal butter, brown and white sugars, and various precious things such as gold, silver, and pearls. When they wanted to bring the body, because they held his form so dear, none of the disciples would dare take hold of it. So on that evening of the sixteenth, dakinis carried his body to the cremation site. They had built one hundred and eight mandalas in it but, since the root mandala of Künrig was missing, the dakinis created an emanation of it. No one would dare light the fire so, spontaneously, the dakinis of the sphere lit a wisdom fire and fire emerged from the great being, Glorious Calf, abiding at Dampa’s heart, as well. Many wondrous signs occurred. The earth quaked and flowers fell from the sky. In an expanse of rainbows in space innumerable heroes and dakinis made various offerings; all the people saw such things with their own eyes.

As Dampa’s body was being cremated, because of the hubbub in Dingri, three yogins from Central Tibet had come to look, and when they arrived at lower Dingri, there was a large gathering of the people of Langkor. There were waves of smoke and a faintly appearing red fire. Before the three of them there appeared a naked acharya with blood-shot eyes rolling. The three said to him, “Lama Acharya, what is the name of that monastery up there?”

He said, “It’s called Dingri Langkor.”

“What is that large gathering encircled with rainbows doing?”

“One acharya has died and they’re burning his corpse. Since you Central Tibetans have come such a long way, you must be tired! Go up there and you will get food and drink.” Then the naked acharya disappeared without a trace.

Wondering who had spoken to them, they went up. When they heard Dampa had passed away and saw the cremation pyre, they thought it must have been his emanation and made prayers for his blessings. Unseen by anyone else, to their eyes appeared the Acharya seated on the roof of the House of Dependent Arising. He taught Dharma to them and blessed them so that the hallucination of their ignorance’s deception was destroyed for all three. Mundane appearances dispelled, they all three became naturally liberated yogis.
Also at that time, first, at Zanglung, the great hero Dharmabodhi was meditating and three ladies appeared. One said, “Look at the sun! In glorious Dingri, one called Dampa Sangye is leaving for the Pure Land of the Dakinis! Lama, are you going to stay comfortably sitting here?” Since he had attained the siddhi of fleet-footedness he covered two months’ journey in one day. When he arrived there, Dampa had passed away and was being cremated. The lama wept with emotion. From amidst Dampa’s burning body, his right foot came out marked with an eight-spoked wheel. He prayed intensely with it touching his crown and a relic came forth from Dampa’s heart into his lap. When he again prayed, a double of Dampa’s form, the size of a pea, came forth and a voice said, “Don’t linger in body throughout the three activities! Don’t linger in speech reciting the three syllables! Don’t linger in mind of the three absorptions and risings!” When he heard this, his torment was pacified.

At that time, Patsab Tsültrim Bar and Nyama Penmo were still there to experience the reliquary body. Taking one drop of the liquefied body and making a prayer, Penmo went to Dakiniland. Patsab remained to practice with the elder disciples and spread the teachings of the later lineage.

Yet, although Dampa passed away or gave the appearance of passing away, in actuality he was beyond death. His passing was on the tenth and the cremation was the morning of the seventeenth but, during that time, to the south side, at Namar Tel, he had audience with men and women benefactors and gave them teachings. To the west, in Pelmo field, he met Dingri traders such as head trader Shang Shung Triwo. He told them, “I’m better and feeling fine. All the people of Dingri are fine. If you get up there quickly, there’s an acharya who has died in Dingri and they are burning the corpse! It’s a big spectacle!” He accepted the sweets they offered and then disappeared. In the north he met Lama Kyije and gave him ablution and blessings. To the east, in Bongshö, he met head trader Denmi Okara and accepted a gift. In Central Tibet, at the peak of Pungkar, he met lady Shang-cham Bumkyi and sent a message to the disciples, and so forth. Many great wonders occurred.

Then, when they began to take the body and relics, instead of obtaining many relics and wondrous objects, one part was taken by the Oddiyana dakinis while another part was spirited off by the nagas to be their object of worship. A few relics were obtained by human beings. Scholar Tumbo Gompa got an image of the Great Mother that came from Dampa’s
crown. Mönlam Ö got a Medicine Buddha image. Nepali Bhala Bharo got a right-turning conch that emerged from the hair curl between his brows. Tsawa Ogya Gompa got the Glorious Calf that emerged. HUM and HRI syllables that appeared on his fingers were obtained by Vajrakrodha. Majo Gurchungma got four HUMs that appeared, one on each of his eye teeth. Charchung got the Sanskrit consonants that appeared on his right ribs, while Tönpa Chösen got the vowels that appeared on his left ribs. Tzongpa received the vajras and bells that appeared on his toes. Furthermore, two nuns distributed some of the relics to each person there and divided up the ashes in five portions. Gyagom took one portion and a third of the skull to put in a white stupa in front of the former residence. One portion was put inside a stupa called the Relshima, a stupa constructed by the four [heart] dakinis, who actually came and built it in honor of the Guru by braiding together saplings on the cremation site. Later this was, at first, made white with the relics; nowadays it is has been covered with gold and is known as the Serkang.

Another portion of the relics and a third of the skull directly appeared to a sculptor as Dampa himself, so that the sculptor could make a statue in Dampa’s likeness for the whole community’s veneration. It spoke to the sculptor saying, “If you don’t know what I look like, make it look like this!” The speaking image, identical to Dampa himself, entered into the heart of the statue.

Another portion of the relics and third of the skull were put into a porcelain cup with a dragon design and put into the great enlightenment stupa at White Boulder. One portion was used to make great enlightenment tsa-tsas in large numbers, which were taken home by all the disciples, ordained and lay, as objects for their faith. Lhugtön received a reliquary stupa base and a “Sher”-style Kadampa dharmachakra. Gyagom received a triple-tiered conch stupa.

Each of them made offerings secretly. One heart disciple named Kampa Gocha, in an isolated place was praying when Dampa came holding a rice plant and bouquet of yellow flowers. He said, “Those who have received my stupa relics should guard this as secret and keep samaya!” Gocha supplicated, “I am dying with yearning for Dampa! What should I do?”

“Practice my teachings, the Pacification of Suffering! Receive many instructions from my Langkor elder disciples. Then again, when you have the heartfelt wish, visualize Langkor and pray:
I beseech Lord Dampa Sangye!
Bless this child who prays to you!
Whatever experience and blessings
Are called for, pray make it so!

In the time it took to put away a flower Dampa had given him, Dampa disappeared. Gocha told Gyagom and the others what Dampa had said. Gyagom brought out all the stupa relics and arranged them with the throne base that Chugtön had received, a “Sher”-style Kadampa parasol, and the dharma-chakra. The arrangement fused together seamlessly and they took it to the House of Dependent Arising. All the Dingri people made extensive offerings and it was enthroned in Langkor Monastery as the principal object of veneration. Up to this day it is still there as a field for beings’ accumulation of merit.58

At that time, Dampa’s disciple Lama Minyam Dorje was staying in the country of Jang Tinglo. Having heard that Dampa was sick, he went to see him, but Dampa had already passed and his body was at the cremation site, so he became very sad and wept greatly. This became like a boon for him because, when he stopped crying, mundane appearances had been obliterated. That night, Lama Minyam Dorje went to sleep in the House of Dependent Arising. Just after midnight he heard a damaru sounding, and Dampa himself appeared and gave him many teachings and auspicious substances. Lama Minyam Dorje pleaded, “May I die and come with you?”

Dampa said, “This year there are many sentient beings to be benefited, so work for their sake without distraction! Next year on the tenth of the twelfth month I’ll send the field-born dakinis to escort you!” Again the damaru sounded and Dampa disappeared just as it got light.

Lama Minyam Dorje then benefited countless beings. In the year of the Dog, when the prophesied time arrived, he was teaching in a Nepali village. That evening, as they offered ganachakra, music of the damaru and other instruments came from the sky, and Lama Minyam Dorje transferred his consciousness to Kechari amidst many wondrous signs.

Dampa also appeared directly to Gyetön and spoke this “Transformation of Thought to Transcendent Wisdom”:

All that appears externally is inner awareness appearing;
Therefore, what appears to mind is conceptions!
By looking into them, the five poisons dawn as transcendent wisdom; That is the intention of Buddha. 
In order to understand that, through the Lama’s instructions and practice of your own meditation, 
Light the nondual wisdom of your own rigpa, innate awareness. That is what illumines the mind of all-knowing Buddha! 
That which the yogi strives for in innumerable ways arises forcefully within! 
Conceptions are overcome by themselves and delusions naturally cease. 
Transcendent wisdom powerfully arises and the view is powerfully realized. 
It is unimpeded by any convention. 
Practice in the mind and it is completely inexpressible, 
Like the bliss of a youth or a dream in which you’re mute. 
All sentient beings have it but don’t recognize it. 
That’s why it’s so important to rely upon the Guru’s instructions. 
And if you don’t familiarize yourself with it, you won’t take it to heart. 
No one has seen a harvest without a field of earth. 
Without planting the seed, a fruit won’t ripen. 
Without putting something into your mouth, you can’t taste it. 
Therefore, without relying on a cause, the effect is difficult. 
Without relying on mind, clear light is difficult. 
Mind not penetrating vital points is difficult to catch. 
Without relying on the path, Buddhahood is difficult. 
Without relying on transmission, instructions are difficult. 
Therefore, the five bodies of a Buddha are not attained 
Without relying upon the five poisons, themselves, being transcendent wisdom! 
So if you want to realize suchness, realizing your own mind is very important!

Again, a few days later, Dampa directly appeared to the monk Jangchub Ö and spoke, giving instructions on pure morality, saying it is the basis for attainment of enlightenment. He similarly revealed himself to many suppliants on various occasions.
Three of Dampa’s disciples from India, having felt signs that Dampa was passing, arrived in a hurry, and finding that he had already passed and been cremated exclaimed, “The Tibetans have no good fortune! They have created a great disaster!” and all three cried in grief.

Asked, “Why is that?” they said, “Even though Dampa Rinpoche has left his body, if it had not been burned by fire, it would have accomplished the welfare of many sentient beings, but now, that can’t happen!” Asked why that was so, they said, “His holy flesh was a special siddhi substance! If it was mixed with fragrant flour and made into pills the size of mustard seeds, any sentient being whose mouth it reached, even greatly sinful beings, would be forcibly enlightened!”

Lama Charchen asked the reason for that. One of them replied, “In general, there are four ways in which someone who has not made a great practice of Dharma in this life can attain enlightenment. One is the person whose training from a previous life’s karma is awakened. Another is the enlightenment of someone who practices transference of consciousness using a relic of the Tathagata. Another is a mantra-born lotus-type mudra consort, one endowed with the marks of excellence, still having periods, who knows how to take the four blisses on the path. The yogi who knows the four types of mudra consort, by relying on the consort, will be spurred to realization of the fourteen grounds of tantra and, without great effort in meditation, is enlightened by force of the method.”

Asked, “Why is that?” he replied, “It has to do with the channels, winds, and drops. The fourth of these is that if the flesh of a great being who has been a bodhisattva for seven incarnations is eaten, even the greatly sinful are enlightened. Since Dampa Rinpoche was a seventh incarnation bodhisattva, he was exceedingly exalted. The Tibetans have made a big mistake!” So saying, they returned to India.

Thus, precious Venerable Dampa Sangye, whose unique wonderful deeds are difficult for anyone to fathom, manifested passing away in Tibet. Yet there were numerous southern Nepali traders who reported having seen him, without doubt, giving teachings in India at Magadha, placing him elsewhere even as he was being seen to pass into parinirvana in Tibet. Even now, at a great stone fort in the mountains called Gyatso Langri, Dampa is well known to be actually residing with other immortal mahasiddhas such as Tilopa and Shawari. Apart from putting on an illusory spectacle to common view, in actuality precious Dampa was completely beyond death.
Venerable Dampa, who was endowed with such wondrous greatness, traveled over two thirds of the world accomplishing the welfare of beings. There are, indeed, extremely many sites blessed by his presence. As for that supreme site in western Tibet known as glorious Dingri Langkor, like Bodh Gaya itself, where Dampa remained for about twenty-one years: First it is auspicious for being well subdued by the great Buddha families; second, the good construction of Dampa’s House of Dependent Arising made for clear awareness of its inhabitants; finally, because of the good swirling of the Lake of Dependent Arising, obstacles there are few. Because of its auspicious human-shaped stacked form, frost and hail don’t reach it. Moreover, the yakshini Jangchub Dorje took a seed of nectar-giving *Macrotomia* plant from the so-called Mar Trang fort in Muyül and planted it there. People say that eating any amount of its sprouts that grow there dispels sickness. In short, it is an emanation of all twenty-four sacred sites with the palace of Tangzung, king of the nagas, below, and an abode of the field-born dakinis above. If you practice in that place between the two, where Dampa Sangye’s practice abode was built, it boosts your practice immensely.

Dampa Sangye is a great being who was a seventh incarnation bodhisattva, a heart son of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, endowed with many qualities prophesied by the deities and dakinis. With transmission from the likes of Maitreya and Asanga, he is a Guru with the unbroken meaning lineage of the Paramitas. Since his teachings are authorized by the Tathagatas, it is a close lineage. Having many instructions from fifty-four male and female mahasiddhas, it has many modes of practice. Since one is cared for by a wondrous Keajra Lama, there is broad access to it. Since it is a teaching of dakini realization, the path is swift. It is said that these instructions pack in more and more in less and less.

It is well known that by just seeing the seat of learning of Dingri Langkor, people are blessed! When Shigpo Nyiseng came to Dingri, Dampa and his disciples manifested to welcome him and escort him from the bank of the Öchu river. When the Dalai Lama Gendun Gyatso came on pilgrimage, Dampa manifested out of the White Stupa, showed his face, and gave him blessings. When Karmapa Rangjung Dorje came, an image of Dampa in rainbow light showed his face and blessed him. Similarly, in later times, many fortunate beings have had visions of Dampa in that very place and the wondrous stories of how they were blessed and cared for by him are many, though written accounts have been mostly destroyed.
In brief, Dampa himself said, “In the future I will always show myself to those who long for me. Make intense requests, people of Dingri!” So, it seems that he has made a promise to that effect.
The Greatness of His Disciples

Mother and father tantra and Prajnaparamita’s path,
Culminating through infinite Dharma experience,
Sole Father Dampa, with diamond-vajra-like realization,
Destroyed inner and outer forces of mara!
Like a lord of the gods at Indra’s crown,
Revered as crown jewel by all this world’s
Sages and siddhas, a peerless supreme siddha,
Renowned as Dampa Sangye (Holy Father Buddha),
Throughout space, his name true to the fact!
His heart instructions are the quintessence
Of all of the Conquerors’ eloquent Teachings,
Loosing a rain of Holy Dharma nectar,
Pacifying the suffering of beings without exception.
Coming to the land of Tibet three times,
Weeding out delusion and torment of countless beings,
And irrigating the earth of a pure land, he ripened their minds
Into rows of grain of uncontaminated wisdom!
Mother of the sphere giving birth to all Conquerors,
In the dance of a Tibetan woman named Labdrön,
Whose pure white banner of renown flies
To the peak of existence, whose heart nectar instructions
Like butter churned from the milk of hundreds of cows,
Collected points of the vast profound 84,000 Teachings,
Essence of means and wisdom, this Chöd, Stopping Mara,
Is unique, a supreme pinnacle of all the vehicles,
A path that, if practiced properly, puts enlightenment
At your fingertips in a single lifetime.
Yet some, blinded by ignorance, acting without heed,
Mistake it to be a means for this life’s gains,
Just carrying the drum and thigh bone and sounding PHAT!
The Chöpa is not deceived by his own arrogance,
Life is given to the two supreme bodhichittas,
Accomplishment of enlightenment’s two bodies is celebrated!
Stories of the masters and siddhas bearing these teachings
Known as Pacification of Suffering and Chöd,
And their enlightening influence swept over the earth.
By giving such unique and wondrous accounts,
Letting sound this drum of the gods,
For fortunate beings and the deities,
May the celebration of Dharma increase!

As for the greatness of his followers in general, because Dampa’s teachings are an uncommon great lineage of the Prajnaparamita, it is said in the biographies, “There is no other Dharma not included in Dampa Sangye’s teachings and, when other teachings disappear, his will remain long after.” The thinking behind this is that in all of Buddha’s teachings it is said that the activities of the Perfection of Wisdom, the Prajnaparamita, will flourish for a long time even in the age of degeneration. Furthermore, Dampa Sangye’s Essence Instructions, the Pacification of Suffering tradition, through the force of karma from previous lifetimes, brings the swiftest pacification of beings’ suffering of lower status, disease, poverty, and spirit affliction, making profound yogic practices bearable. That is why it is called the Pacification of Suffering tradition. That is also why it is named after the Heart Sutra’s proclamation, “the mantra that fully pacifies all suffering.”

Although Dampa had extremely many disciples in India who were sages and siddhas, I don’t know their stories. As for a brief account of those of the early, middle, and later disciples who came to Tibet, the first lineage includes Kashmiri Jnanaguhya, Ongpo Lotsawa, and some young monks whose stories are not certain. Kashmiri Jnanaguhya gave the Pacifier Tradition instructions to Puhrang the younger. Puhrang Lotsawa exclusively practiced glorious Hevajra single-pointedly, attained the rainbow body, and went to Keajra. Practices included the Red King of Dharma and its later forms. This comprises the first lineage.

As for the middle lineage, Dampa gave Nyag Lotsawa the instructions
of Solitary Hero Heruka Samvara, and then took care of Ma. Dampa’s Ma [Magom] was born in the Female Wood Sheep year, the son of one named Narma Mönlam in western Tibet. He took ordination at a young age and was given the name Chökyi Sherab. When he was nineteen he became unwell. He was on the roof of his room one day when there came a black acharya with a single cloth draped over his shoulder surrounded by a great many extremely ferocious dogs that were not attacking him and had their tails all curling around him! Seeing that, Ma was amazed and sent for his helper, saying, “There’s an acharya! He’s special! Ask him in!”

Knowing what was happening, the acharya came into his room without using the door. Ma asked for a blessing and by just receiving the blessing was cured. He requested an instruction. Dampa replied, “Because of our karmic connection through many births, I shall instruct you!” and asked him, “What Dharma do you know?” Ma replied, “I know the Father’s [Nagarjuna’s] lineage and mahamudra!”

Dampa said, “That’s the mahamudra of words! Now I’ll teach you meaning mahamudra! ‘Mind ceased without closing the eyes, energy-winds stopped, this the glorious Lama knows...,’ and quoting such scriptural citations, he gave him the root Introduction [to the nature of mind]. Ma developed special realizations but did not follow Dampa as an attendant. Later he went to Dampa at Penyül. Dampa gave him the Sixty Pebbles teaching (Köpa Drugchu Deu). Again Ma went back to his country and, giving up wealth, as a complete renunciant, practiced single-pointedly, staying for one year in the Ma cave and for nine years in Kongpo at the Three Boulder Lake Castle. He brought reconciliation to a conflict in the region with manifest help from the spirits of the land. Then he went to Dagpo Tzongka where he taught a large entourage. Then he went to Yarlung. Many disciples gathered and he nurtured them with teachings and oral instructions. His five major disciples were Gangpa Rashen, Shüpu Lotsawa, Lama Sheuwa, Shingandenpa, and the Mongolian Sogpo Dode. Sogpo Dode was a tax collector. He knew both Dharma and medicine. At Kyerna Cave he met Magom, who told him, “I met an Indian mahasiddha who told me that the corpse of ordinariness was coming from the bed of a feast of unhappiness!” Sogpo Dode asked the reason behind that, gained understanding, received instructions, then gave up other activities and became a practitioner.

As for the Ma teachings, there is a word lineage and a meaning lineage. The meaning commentaries include the Sixteen Explicit Commentaries
The word lineage includes Bodhichitta, Condensations, Disparate Sayings, Striking Various Points (Karpog Narpog), and Increase to Completion (Targye). Apart from Togden Trulshig, these are not reported to have spread elsewhere. This concludes the section on the Ma lineage.

Next, as to the So system: Dampa’s So [Sochungwa] was from Yarlung Ramowa of the So family. Since the younger brother was taller he was called Soringwa, and the elder brother was shorter so he was called Sochungwa. In a year of bad harvest, his parents took him begging.

At Yartö Kyernar, Magom said, “Bring your eldest boy to me! I’ll keep him fed and clothed!” Accordingly, they left Sochungwa there and the rest of the family went on to Yarlung. Magom made him a monk and named him Gendun Bar. After about twelve years, Magom became unwell and took him looking for Dampa. The two of them arrived at Ragmay Dar. Sochungwa went looking and Dampa, knowing, came to him. He took Sochungwa’s hand and said, “You’ve been my disciple for three lifetimes! Now follow me!” Dampa took him to Jekung and, having given him just a brief Introduction, it was just about daybreak. A very powerful stainless awareness dawned in Sochungwa. Having returned, Ma and he were grinding popped barley. Sochungwa was remaining in prolonged periods of speechless amazement. Ma said, “You’re acting strange! You’ve received instructions from Dampa, haven’t you?” Then both of them went to see Dampa and Ma also received some teachings. Ma said, “Let’s the two of us go home!” Sochungwa suggested that the master go first and that he would come afterwards in a month, but he didn’t go. There, he received from Dampa the complete meaning lineage teachings. He served Dampa wherever Dampa went, so it was he who received the instructions of the fifty-four mahasiddhas. He also asked if he could write them down and, having received permission, wrote down the instructions “Ka” on the “Vajra Renowned Collection” writing board. He accompanied Dampa everywhere, and then Dampa told him to go home. Going back, he arrived in Lhasa. To assess his rigpa-awareness he focused on a bell. It started ringing by itself! Then he went to Yarlung thinking to offer Ma some instructions. He went to Uru where Ma was staying, and Ma said, “Now your awareness is completely unimpeded by anything! Your parents are begging! You should really take care of them!” Sochungwa cared for many sick people, always knowing if they were afflicted by ghosts or spirits, and he subdued many spirits. He received many offerings for this and obtained wealth. Buying land from Yarda he put his parents and fam-
ily there. He entrusted the instruction texts to Ama Shungmo Shaka Drön. Though not all eight lineages are complete in it, what is extant in Sochungwa’s own handwriting is vast. Later, Chüpa Dartsen put it into verse. Three ounces of gold and an excellent horse that Sochungwa had received from healing people he brought with him when he arrived to see Dampa in Dingri. Dampa was in the bazaar. He tossed the gold into Dampa’s lap and, with delight, jumped into Dampa’s lap, even knocking one of his hair-knots out. Everyone yelled, “Get him!” but Dampa said, “Don’t hit him! Here is a pure good one!” One woman who came and forcefully took the gold is said to have been Sukhasisddhi taking it for the dakinis’ ganachakra. Sochungwa then arose and sang a song of realization and all knew him to be a mahasiddha. Dampa gave each of them the Fifty Dispelling of Extremes instructions. Then Sochungwa went back to Central Tibet.

Third, as for the Kam system, Kam [Kamgom] Yeshe Gyeltsen was Geshe Drapa’s disciple. He was a fully ordained monk with knowledge of the Perfections. After giving Bhampa Vajrapani initiation to one of Drapa’s patrons who had become possessed by a landlord spirit, he made a hundred fire-puja offerings together with Kamgom Tsültrim Gyen. This angered an evil spirit and [Kamgom] Yeshe Gyeltsen got a tumor. [Kamgom Tsültrim Gyen] was also afflicted by a spirit and got leprosy. Kamgom Tsültrim Gyen then asked Dampa for an instruction to help with his disease. Dampa gave him the Perfection of Wisdom instructions and, to his amazement, he was cured simultaneously. Kamgom Tsültrim Gyen wrote to Kamgom Yeshe Gyelsten, “This is an amazing mahasiddha of India! My disease has also been cured! You must receive teachings from him, also!” Kamgom Yeshe Gyelsten sent his older brother to make insistent requests to Dampa, who finally assented saying, “Okay, it will be given!” That night it snowed. Just as the sun was coming up the next day, an acharya came. From inside the house they asked, “Is it the Lama?” and he replied that it was. “Is the pathway impassable with snow?” He replied, “It doesn’t reach my feet!” “Doesn’t the door open?” Saying, “I’m not impeded by walls!” he entered the room. All Kamgom Yeshe Gyeltse’s relatives and friends gathered there made prostrations and venerated Dampa. In the middle of the group Dampa gave the Sign Introduction and Kamgom Yeshe Gyelsten understood the meaning. Dampa did not give lengthy teachings that day but short teachings on doha. First he gave Introduction on the basis of sickness and meditation. In the mid-time he gave the four noble truths, refuge, and assorted teachings. At
the end, Kamgom was no longer listening even though he was attending to the teaching. As Dampa was getting ready to leave he said, “Meditate for eight years. Then clairvoyance will arise. After that, compose commentaries to the long and middling Perfection of Wisdom sutras!”

Kamgom Yeshe Gyeltsen said, “I don’t have that long to meditate! I have nine tumors! Geshe Drapa’s clairvoyance says I will die in three months! I’ll only get a headache from meditating on Prajnaparamita!” Dampa then left. Kam then went into meditation and his tumors were instantly neutralized. After eight years the clairvoyances arose. He gave commentary on all eight clear realizations, the subjects of Paramita. In addition to the condensed sutra his commentary included citations from the long and middling Prajnaparamita. There are two lineages known to have come from him: an upper lineage and a lower lineage. Because they include many names and categories of teachings they cannot be set down in detail here. Since there was no extensive textbook, Tangchungwa, Gyetön Shönu Senge, wrote an extensive textbook for the Kam system instructions entitled *Practicing Perfection of Wisdom Mind, Jewel Garland of the Ear-Whispered Lineage*. Kam gave them to the Indian, Josay; he gave them to Repa Lhariwa; and he gave them to the two Sumtön brothers. These are renowned as the “Kai, Ke, and Ho” of the Kam system lineage. They then instructed Rinpoche Gyeltsen. The lower lineage comes through Dro. Dro was from Pentö region. The son of Drotön Pengyel, he was ordained at a young age and studied Perfection of Wisdom with Geshe Jegen. When Jegen became ill, he invited Kam[gom Yeshe Gyeltsen] who, by giving him Introduction with signs and blessings, cured him and he gained understanding. Dro wanted to accompany Kam and asked Jegen, who said, “Go! He’s a wondrous Lama!” So Dro went with Kam. Kam introduced him to both the *Heart Sutra* and the extensive Perfection of Wisdom sutras. Receiving those, Dro was filled with wonder. He then wanted to go to meet Dampa himself, and Kam told him to go. He could show himself in any form. Arriving in Langkor, Lama Dro found Dampa in the village. Rather than making prostrations and offering, he took a bolt of purple silk he had and tied it to Dampa’s hair, delighting Dampa. Then he cut the silk and tied it all through Dampa’s hair and woolen robe, again delighting Dampa. Dampa then gave an indication in reliance on medicine, marrow, and measures of weight at Kunga’s request.

Dampa then asked if Dro had any questions. Dro asked questions he had previously formulated concerning tenet systems and Dampa didn’t
answer. Kunga told him to ask something based on his own experience or the Lama’s instructions. Dro did so, asking about the Perfection of Wisdom, and Dampa happily gave him answers. Then Dro went back to Kam’s residence. Later he practiced amidst poor conditions for a long time. He had visions of Avalokiteshvara. Completing his intentions, he passed away at seventy-five.

As for minor lineages that arose in the meantime, these include three: the Drapa, Che, and Jang systems. Dampa had gone to Dratang. Thinking he was an ordinary acharya, they paid no respect. The next morning, the unhusked grain of the acharya’s cushion stuffing was scattered around. Asked about it, Geshe Drapa said, “That was Dampa Sangye! Rushing to do my bidding, he has already cleansed Dra. Although he didn’t accept the gold I offered him, he is accepting my invitation to come back in the future!” Accordingly, Dampa returned and gave the Nine Tara Teachings. Geshe Drapa instructed Sum Tünschung. He instructed Nyangtö Dowo, who instructed Shabkyi Lachung Özer, who passed them on to Chüpa Dartsön in Shang. He composed a commentary to the Nine Taras. He passed the lineage to Chüpa Tsöndru Senge, who passed it to Rog Sherab Ö.

Second, as to the Che system, in Zang, there were two Geshe Chewas, a father and son. The son, Dadrag, was born in the Male Fire Dog year. He was ordained and trained perfectly in the realizations of sutra and tantra. When he heard Dampa’s name he was deeply moved and, investigating, heard he was staying in Yerpa. From space, the dakinis told him also, “This Venerable Kamalashila is a yogi possessing the three vows! He understands Buddha’s intention without mistake! He has the unbroken practice lineage instructions in the line from Arya Nagarjuna and his disciples! Therefore, you must receive teachings from him!” Then Döl Gangwa, father and son, took what gold they had along with the father’s high quality clothing and many woolen robes, and went to Yerpa. They offered the wealth, including a mandala of gold, before Dampa. Giving not the slightest glance at the offerings, Dampa and his new disciples met like mother and child, with great smiles and mutual affection. Dampa displayed a manner of asking Che many questions and was extremely delighted. Then, with instructions discoursing on mind, Dampa gave one hundred and eight different teachings from the common and uncommon Prajnaparamita and the common
and uncommon teachings of Secret Mantra, continuing for nine months. When he asked to follow Dampa as his attendant it displeased his parents, so Dampa said, “Go home and practice meditation!” Che single-pointedly practiced accordingly and gave birth to realization. Che’s uncle on his father’s side, Nyima Jangchub, also met Dampa at Dingri but received sign language teachings rather than verbal instructions. Therefore, he offered a horse to Che Chandrakirti, who gave him several teachings including uncommon tantric teachings on enlightened body, speech, and mind and penetrating the sole point of mind itself. Che’s father, Shateng, and others requested instructions and he gave them a few. Che gave the complete instructions to his close student Lobpön Rahula Vajra and told him, “Meditate like me! Don’t teach others!” placing a seal of secrecy on his transmission. One named Gelong Jangchub Yeshe listened to teachings from Che. He knew a great deal of Dharma: the Kadampa teachings, madhyamaka, abhidharma, and both old and new tantras. He received all of Dampa’s Nyima Jangchub instructions and understood all of the important points of Dampa’s Dharma instructions. He was staying in the elder Che’s practice hut, feeling great devotion and aspiration. He dreamt that Chandrakirti came out of the sky and gave him instruction. Next morning Lobpön Rahula called him to come. Rahula told him, “Last night, Chandrakirti told me this is prophesied!” and gave him instructions and a text. He put a restriction on the instructions not to give them to bad vessels without commitments. Jangchub Yeshe gave them to Chüpa, father and son, who instructed Rog Sherab Ö. The instructions include an uncommon conjoining of the *Tantra Expressing the Names of Manjushri* with the *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*; and the tantric instructions of fifty-eight male and female mahasiddhas.

Third, as for the Jang system, Dampa gave to Jangka Dampa of Chim the Perfection of Wisdom Without Letters. Jang taught this to Jang Chungwa, who gave it to Chüpa, father and son, who taught it to Rog Sherab Ö. It is said that the instructions include not more than a single complete Introduction. That completes the account of these secondary lineages.

. . . .

The names of the Gurus and teachings of the lineage of diverse (*torbu*) teachings have been already mentioned and I have not seen extensive biographies of them, but they are most all reputed to have become mahasid-
dhas. Most all seem to have gone to pure Dakiniland without leaving their physical bodies behind, like Ben Gungyel of Kyishö. This concludes the explanation of the middle lineages. Explanation of the great qualities of the profound Chöd lineage included in these middle lineages will be explained below.

Next, as to the later final lineages, there were four great yogis who were Dampa’s chief disciples. The first of these, Dampa Charchen, was a great Dharma king with dominion over the entire Land of Snows, born as a son of the five root sovereigns. Turning his back on wealth rivaling the glory of the gods, he became a monk. When Dampa later came to Dingri he had audience with him and Dampa cared for him with affection. Just being given the instructions, he had special realizations. He consecrated the ground for the House of Dependent Arising. Dampa said, “If one of the lineage of the Conquerors consecrates the ground, it is auspicious!” and was pleased. This first Dampa is that of the eastern door, renowned as Charchen. That of the southern door is Vajrakrodha and the western door is Dampa Charchung: of none of these three have I seen extensive biographies.

That principal hierarch of the lineage, he of the northern door, is Bodhisattva Kunga. For five previous lifetimes he had been cared for by Dampa. In this life he was born in Tsagung, east Dingri; his father, Töpa Trizang; his mother, Jomo Trima; in the year of the Male Water Tiger. When they named him Töchung Bumay, he cried, bawling, “No! I’m Kunga!” so his name became Kunga. He married Jomo Kyurmo and they had a son, Golden Light. Having no karma for worldly work, he ran out of money. When Kunga was thirty-nine, three years after Dampa came to Dingri, in the year of the Iron Dragon, Kunga lied to his wife, saying he was going on a night raid for grain, and went to Dampa in Langkor. The next morning Dampa proclaimed in a great voice, “Monastics, listen! Today, Pawo Dorje is coming! Everybody sweep the floors! Arrange offerings! Escort him here with music!” Everyone did what he said. Keeping watch in every direction, they saw no one at all. Finally, as evening fell, a man with poor dress in a torn coat, with few and inferior possessions, unobtrusively approached. Laughing with embarrassment, everyone went to escort him. Dampa was very happy and when they arrived called, “It’s good that Pawo Dorje has come! Charchung, set up a throne for him!” Charchung not understanding
the indication, Dampa himself heaped up some dirt. Lacing four arrows together on top of that, he said, “Kungaway Bu (Son of All Joy)! Now it’s good if you would sit upon this!”

Lama Bodhisattva Kunga took hold of Dampa’s robe and asked, “What is the character of samsara?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, It’s just like flies in the middle of dog shit!”

“Is there any chance of happiness for sentient beings born here?”

Linking his fingers together in his lap, Dampa said, “They’re chained in suffering!”

“When will they be released?”

“Not until they enter the path out of the cul-de-sac of duality!”

Knowing certainty, Kunga remained to enter into austerities with never a glance back to his homeland.63 Beseeching the Lama alone, he was blessed and seized the root of the path. Dampa was delighted, and said, “Hero from Tsagung! You must be victorious in the battle!”

“What kind of armor do I need?”

“Sleep in the cave of just your own vacuity! Wear rags of just the wind’s protection! Work just enough to survive! Practice until just before you get too tired! Go just with people you don’t know!”

“How should I practice?” he asked.

“Turn your view toward signs of transcendent dependent arising, sit down, and meditate!”

Meditating, he trained without partiality in the energy of rigpa, becoming proficient in the signs of dependent arising, pleasing Dampa immensely.

Dampa summoned him to his presence and said: “If initiation is conferred on a bodhisattva’s crown, is there weight of even sitting on a cushion? If you’re made to climb an emanated staircase, is there blissful lightness of just a person moving? If you’re made to compete with a chakravartin king, can you control the four continents?”

Kunga said:
Worldly activities, though you know them, you don’t!
Nothing will, does, or ever has happened!
So understanding and striving in Dampa’s divine Dharma is nothing!

Dampa was extremely pleased and said:

At first, since the Buddhas’ treasure is stolen, crush the game pieces!
In transition, you’ve struck a fire in the darkness, so hide your sharp flint in a corner!
Finally, the ferryman to cross the river has landed, so get your best oars ready!

Revealing the way of the five paths and the three austerities, Dampa entrusted him with the meaning lineage of the Prajñaparamita and gave him the river of the initiation and the ear-whispered lineage of the four texts. He stayed with Dampa there for eighteen years. In addition to that, for four years he taught the meditators as Padampa’s regent. He lived for three more years when, in the spring, on Tsugtor Mountain, with all the important leaders present, he gave his last will and testament in a song of realization and, that very evening, went to Keajra.

Furthermore, there were twenty-four yoginis who were direct disciples of Dampa who, by the Guru’s blessing, realized release simultaneously. First of their stories is that of Jomo Sangye. She was a woman from Tsiбри Chusang. Though not intended for Dharma by her parents, because of her great faith, she wanted to go with Dampa. She came with eight or nine other women. Feeling deep devotion, she never returned home, receiving instructions from Dampa and meditating for nine years. She had realizations and became a mahasiddha.

Knowing that she was dying, Dampa asked Kunga, “Today on your rounds you saw someone that looked like a Buddha! Do you know who that was?”

“Wasn’t it Dampa?”

“It wasn’t me! It was one like me!”

A little later, Jomo Sangye passed. As her body was being cremated, rainbows filled the sky.
Second is Sertsünma. She was from Shampa Drugpa, the aristocratic wife in a minor household in the village. She said, “I’m going to go be in the presence of Dampa!” As she left, her father said, “Yogis and the Dharma of the monks are not alike!” Not listening to him, she went and received teachings.

Dampa gave her Introduction by uttering a word as a sign and realization dawned in her.

She was extremely persevering in practice. She would always say, “Here comes the thief! Here comes the thief!” She lived to be a hundred. When they cremated her behind Lama Char’s house, rainbows filled the sky, and they found a Vajrasattva among many other relics.

Third is Jomo Lenchungma. Of the Len family, she was from Tötag Deng Ngö. Receiving teachings from both Dampa and his disciples, she attained siddhi. She stayed in Langkor for two years after Dampa passed. She lived to be eighty-two and was cremated at Zenmay Gotsa. Numerous people saw many dakinis come from Oddiyana. Lama Charchung, Charchen, and others even danced for joy! Many holy relics were left from her cremation.

Fourth is Jomo Barma. She was from Nyangtö Tsugpa. Becoming Dampa’s consort, she received teachings directly from him. For three years she lived like a deer in solitary retreat on the mountain, practicing day and night. She had realizations and became a mahasiddha. When Dampa was dying he told her that she would return to her home region. She did and remained in Nyangtö for the rest of her life. She left many relics.

Fifth is Jomo Rima. She was the cherished daughter of a family in Tsangrong Nawa. She entered married life but her husband was deceitful, physically abusive, and a thief. Taking a dislike to his wife, he left her. On a business trip, she met Dampa in Latö. She received teachings and meditated for seven years until realizations arose. Others didn’t think she was a mahasiddha, but when they were about to cremate her body, Dampa circumambulated her cremation site many times, so the gathered people of Langkor brought large amounts of butter and made many prostrations. Many relics emerged from her reliquary body and everyone was amazed.

Sixth is Jomo Yeshe Cham. She was from Mangyül. Referred to as “the
Little Mistress of Gungtang,” she was famed as a female mahasiddha. She lived to the age of a hundred and was not in Dampa’s immediate circle. She had mastered Guru Puja and her conviction in Dampa, in particular, caused realizations to arise. She passed away at Gungtang amidst many lights, sounds, and rainbows.

Seventh is Jomo Chödrön Ma. She was from Latö Gepa. She had become Lama Bodhisattva [Kunga’s] wife but remained angry with him for a long time in Dampa’s presence, and finally became doubled over to the point of death. Kunga carried her to his Teacher of Patience, who said, “May that which is without fault move! Move! Are you satisfied this time?” but the lady, afflicted with bad samaya, continued to experience suffering. She was cremated at death yet there were no special signs, making her the worst from among the twenty-four.

Eighth is Jomo Machö. She was from Latö Mangkar. She was the sole sister to seven brothers. A cherished daughter of the lord of Domang, Kunga took her as his wife and she received instruction from both Dampa and his disciples. She practiced intensively and became a mahasiddha. She later went to Mar and passed away in Nyangtö Jangri. When cremated she left a Vajrasattva among many other relics.

Ninth is Jomo Chökyab Ma. She was from Nyangtö Kuley. She had married and was wealthy but, feeling faith, she went to Langkor. Abandoning great wealth in her homeland, she spent twelve years only drinking water and, by practicing, attained realization and became a mahasiddha. When she passed she was cremated amidst illumination. Rainbow light and many relics emerged.

Tenth is Jomo Chökyi Ma. From Yardrog Koblen, she had a brother known as Geshe Nyeltön. She had married and accumulated much wealth but, feeling faith, gravitated towards Dharma. Her brother told her, “If you would practice real Dharma, in a place known as glorious Dingri in Latö there is an actual Buddha known as Lord Dampa the Indian. Go there!” She went and remained for a long time in Langkor. She passed away two years after Dampa and was cremated below the Bodhisattva’s stone hut. Many relics came.

Eleventh is Jomo Gurmo. She was Lügurwa’s sister, from Latö Tsubri Chusang. She abandoned her homeland to stay twelve years in Langkor and passed away there. She was cremated at the Kyeri Stupa and many relics came from her body.
Twelfth is Jomo Lhamo. She was a wise woman from Uri Tölung. Since she was descended from the Be family she was also known as Jomo Bermo. She left her own homeland behind and lived for six years in Langkor. She went home after Dampa passed, stayed for three years, and then came back to Langkor to live there a long time, passing away there. As her body was carried to Jangri, much rainbow light appeared.

Thirteenth is Jomo Nyangro Ma. Although she was from Rongwa at the base of Shab, since she stayed for a long time in Nyangro, she was called Nyangro Ma. Because she acted as steward with thousands that her father had bequeathed her, she was also known as Tongmo Darma Ten, “the Maid with Thousands.” She felt faith in Dampa and went to meet him. She lived ten years in Langkor and passed there. She was cremated in the area between Lama Vajrakrodha’s house and Lama Chug’s house. A two-headed Varahi, rainbow light, and many relics emerged.

Fourteenth is Jomo Wangchug Cham. She was from Tölung Tongkung. On her way to Nepal she met Dampa and developed conviction in him. She remained for eleven years in Langkor and passed there. She was cremated at Dingri junction and many excellent signs appeared.

Fifteenth is Jomo Dorje Gyen. She was from Dingri Dongwa. Called “Palms Adorned with Vajra” (Dorje Gyen), she was extremely elegant and, believing in Dampa’s teachings, stayed in Langkor for fifteen years. She later went to Trulshig where everyone recognized her as a teacher and donated great quantities of melted butter. When she passed her body became a burning “Goddess of Aspiration.” That night everyone saw a body of light emerge and go to Jangri peak. They said that was the dakinis’ prophecy. The next morning at dawn her body was carried to Jangri amidst rainbow light. For three weeks all the country people saw the light body remain without disappearing. Amazed, they regretted not having served her more and made purificatory confessions.

Sixteenth is Jomo Namkha Sel. She was from Ölka in Central Tibet. She was light of complexion and had clear awareness. She stayed at Dampa’s for six years in Langkor, receiving instructions, meditating, and became a mahasiddha. She remained for a year after Dampa passed, even transforming Drichu river water into honey that was coveted by all. Then she went back to Central Tibet and, when she was eighty-two, passed in Yoru Jang. When she was cremated, the dust of her entire body became relics.

Seventeenth is Jomo Drön Ney. There is no certain knowledge of her
birthplace or family line. She was fond of flattery and had had a large entourage. Because she lacked conviction, once when she was doing practice Dampa appeared and greeted her. Her practice improved. She developed faith in Dampa and was inspired to give up her retinue and enter into practice. She later became an excellent yogini.

Eighteenth is Jomo Pagmo. She was from Penyül in Central Tibet. She was extremely elegant and devotional. She was learned and industrious in honoring the Three Jewels. Because she made a lot of incense, many Nepalis and Khampas came to offer medicinal herbs. She and her serving lady both stayed in Langkor for many years. When they both passed away there at the same time, the countryside smelled like incense. Many auspicious signs occurred and everyone was amazed.

Nineteenth is Jomo Jeu Ma. She was from Ongpo. She was persevering, skilled in means, and cheerful. She heard Dampa’s teachings and stayed in Dingri a great deal. Later she lived for many years in Gungtang and passed away there. Her body was carried up onto the mountain and, where it was left, a Tara appeared.

Twenty-first is Jomo Shangchungma. She was from Shangpu. She was physically beautiful and stayed close to home. Because prospective husbands were not very spiritual whereas she had great faith, she remained aging at her parents’. Going to a local theatrical performance, she met Dampa, felt great devotion to him, and entered the door of Dharma, taking ordination. She stayed in Langkor for six years. After Dampa’s passing she went back to live in Shang. She remained chaste throughout her life, abiding purely in the vows. She was cremated, leaving behind a huge heap of buddha images and relics, amazing everyone.

Twenty-second is Jomo Shachungma. She was from the back of lower Dingri. One of seven siblings, her older brother was Shama Tönpa. She was a beautiful woman, and Lotsawa Mabe Chobar made her his attendant. She received the complete Path and Fruit (Lam Dre) initiations from Pandit Gayadhara and meditated on them. Then Dampa corrected a fault in her meditation and she became a mahasiddha. When Dampa passed and was
to be cremated, impersonating a wood gatherer, she offered wood and gold for Dampa’s cremation building. On her return she is said to have become a pigeon and flown away.

Twenty-third is Shōnu Ma of Dingri Dong. She was originally from Yoru Dong. Her father was Minyag Könseng, a head trader. Having gone to Payda for business, she met Dampa. Feeling conviction in his teachings, she received blessings and realization dawned. She became like a young girl and stopped talking, remaining completely mute, so that no one knew who she was. She died before much time had elapsed. When she passed, Dampa said, “This early morning a mahasiddha of ours, here, is passing on!” and, that morning, without any illness, the young girl, amidst auspicious signs, passed away.

Twenty-fourth is Nyama Kyimpamo. Her homeland, in lower Tibet, was known as Nyama Dorje Sel. She had lots of children, husbands, and wealth and was rich in faith, enthusiasm, aspiration, and wisdom, as well. She meditated in accordance with Dampa’s teachings. When she passed, her entire body became rainbows, light, and relics, amazing everyone.

This concludes the accounts of the twenty-four yoginis. Other than these, I have not seen written accounts of disciples’ realizations, though there were extremely many men and women who attained siddhis transcending their human state, such as Dampa’s heart disciple Jomo Gyagom Ma.

As for the principal disciple who held Bodhisattva Kunga’s lineage, Patsab Gompa, he was born in lower Penyül to father Ba Tsabtön and mother Yemo Peldren in the year of the Female Fire Snake. He took ordination at a young age from Drochungwa. Ye Düldzinpa taught him vinaya. By the time he was nineteen he had completed retreats. He heard teachings on bodhicitta and the stages of the path from Geshe Potowa. With Gyamarwa of Tölung he studied madhyamaka and pramana, with Patsab Lotsawa he studied the teachings of Maitreya, with Bodhisattva Drom he studied abhidharma, and with Yonggey Wangchug Drag he studied Zangkar tradition Heruka Chakrasamvara, and so forth. His learning was vast.

Thinking that he would now accomplish a retreat and inquiring as to who gave the greatest instructions for that, he was told it was Kamgom. He remembered that he had also heard from Geshe Potowa that Kamgom gave perfect teachings on Prajnaparamita, so he requested them and received
profound instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom from him. When he asked him who he had received them from, Kamgom told him he had received them from Dampa Sangye in Dingri. Patsab transformed some wood into gold, turquoise, and silk, and went to Dingri. When he arrived, Dampa had already passed and been cremated. Crying out, “If only I had the karma!” he fell to the ground and wept. A beggar who was actually a hidden yogini comforted him, gave him a prophecy, and sent him to Kunga. As he was making prostration at the door of Kunga’s stone hut, Kunga said, “Son of Yemo Peldren! Did you fall down?” and Patsab felt intense faith arise. Beseeching Kunga to care for him, he offered him all the gold and bolts of silk. He was told to come back the next morning.

When he did, Kunga had arranged volumes of texts and was meditating. He conferred on Patsab the Scripture Volume Initiation. He said, “In regard to tantra and the perfections, the initiation for the ripening path is conferred on the tantrika first, and then the liberating path is revealed. Revealing the ripening and liberating paths simultaneously is not known to have existed prior to Dampa and is a distinguishing quality of the Black Acharya’s incorporated in the river of these four initiations.”

Patsab finished mind training in one year. Told to prepare still more and go into retreat, he left Len Nga village. Told, “If there’s any way to generate realizations, it’s conviction!” he said, “Though I previously understood all phenomena’s freedom from elaboration, I was groping on a dark path of inference! Now suchness appears to direct perception! I’ve had a decisive realization!” Kunga approved.

Taking a scroll of paper from his hair knot, [Kunga] said, “Salt is good but no one in Latö knows how to taste it!” Giving Patsab the scroll, he told him to open its seal. In the scroll were the Nine Questions and Answers on the Root of Pain; the Three Meaning Lineage Teachings, the Entwined Stalks; the Examples and Small Pieces Teaching, the Branches of Delight; the Sixteen Leaf Petal Teachings; the Five Sets of Beautiful Flowers Teachings; and the outer, inner, and secret Ali Kali Teachings on the Ripened Fruit. He received the entire Black Instructions and Settling of Fine Points, which he wrote down.

Then Kunga said, “Now go back to Central Tibet! Your mother is crying, saying, ‘It’s as if my son has died!”’ Having given him all the Metaphors, as well, later, from the right bank of the great river, Kunga said, “The owner of the Metaphors has come; I’ve entrusted them to him!”
Patsab promised he would go into retreat for twelve years. He offered Kunga three ounces of gold and Kunga said, “I’ve no need of gold for the Acharyas lineage! Still, I’ll take it so that you can complete your accumulations!” and flung the gold up into the air.  

As he was leaving, Patsab asked, “Will I not have obstacles to my practice?” Kunga gave him the five-peaked (mountain) overwhelming stone azure pills and the black stone ghost expellers and said, “Never parted from bodhichitta, ask the Guru!” escorting him on for some way.

Going to Mar region, at the conclusion of his retreat, since he had heard so many teachings, he accumulated a large entourage. Having given the instructions to one named Jangwa Böngom, he attained Keajra rainbow body at the mountain pass of Namtso. Then, having given the instructions to Patsab Gomnag, he went to the border region between Tibet and China where he passed away. His reliquary stupa is still there. Because he gave the instructions to Bushong Gompa who was honored by the King of Minyag, the lineage came to pervade all of Jang and Kham.

Furthermore, the ultimate revered one was Tangsag Töntsül, the ultimate scholar was Ngoge Ser, the ultimate important personage was Shangyuyu Dragpa, and others who received the instructions, each had extraordinary results. The one named Patsab Gomnag became a mahasiddha and lived to the age of a hundred and eighteen. When he received the instructions, Shengom Retülchen attained rainbow body and went to Keajra. When Drog Jangchub Sempa received them, dakinis actually came and took him to Keajra. Instructed for three years, Ugyen Repa’s mind was liberated and he came to have clairvoyances. The one who completed the entire instructions of the Word Lineage was Gyelwa Tene.

Patsab himself, having become accomplished, passed into nirvana at the age of eighty-two. His principal disciple was Gyelwa Tene. In the region called Yarda, Gyelwa Tene was born in the year of the Female Fire Sheep to father Josay Kyab Be and mother Tsurza Mang Kyi. At the age of three he spoke of memories of his past life. Soringpa came to Yarda and received blessings from him. Telling his mother, “Jomo, this son of yours will be a mahasiddha! I must make him the holder of my lineage!” he gave him transmissions of the completion stage of the Great Compassionate One and the six-syllable mantra.

At the age of five Gyelwa Tene met Jerey Chungwa at Larmo Menchuka. He also said that the child would be a mahasiddha and gave him the Tipu
system dohas. When he was seven he met Nyame Gampowa in Yarda, who
said the same thing and gave him mahamudra. At the age of nine Nagtsö
Öngom gave him Atisha's system Tara instructions, etc. When he was fif-
ten, he studied the Father’s Dharma, Three Stakes for Decease Mothers.65
In his late teens he acted as Jowo Lhachen and Lhatsün Ngönpo’s minister.

At twenty-five, wanting to visit the home of his previous life, he arrived
in Yardrog. There he met an old woman with realization and clairvoyance
named Crazy Woman Gyele Cham, who took his hand saying, “You of the
Jo Jo clan, Tene, nurse from this breast of mine! Don’t go to Lhodrag Rong!
Your house has been destroyed, there's nothing there! To the north of Cen-
tral Tibet is the son of Yemo Peldren and his retinue! Go there!” His name
had previously been Rinchen Drag and it was at this point he came to be
known as Tene. In a dream, also, Tara told him, “In Penyül, a nephew of
Patsab’s is teaching reasoning and revealing the path!” With foreknowledge
of his arrival, the Guru came out to escort him when he arrived saying,
“Josay of Yarda! I’m happy you have come today! You are the most capa-
ble of all!”

He asked to receive the profound instructions from Dampa and Kunga.
“Though that would be all right, to ripen the unripened, initiation is
needed! Make whatever arrangement you have for it!”

He set a skullcup on the palm of his hand. Passing a square piece of silk
through the eye of a needle, he placed it into the skullcup and offered it.

“Josay’s gift means that he is a vessel fit to receive the profound teachings!
He will attain the path of the faithful but not material body or wealth!”
Saying this he blessed him with the Dharma text. At that moment Josay had
a special realization merging meditative state with post-meditative state.

The Guru said, “Though you see the emptiness of things well, you need
path-signs and qualities; so do recitations for seven days. Until signs appear,
apply effort of body, speech, and mind.”

Then, having completed mind training, he requested texts. The Guru
replied, “Having been nakedly introduced to the Acharya’s stainless aware-
ness, you cultivate it! There’s no text! Seek a few of the conditions to find
that view that accords with the Guru’s tradition!”

Going north, he found six female dzos and two blue-paged volumes.
He offered the six dzos to the Guru, who accepted two. He was guided on
the path for one year, received initiation, and set down notes of the Guru’s
teachings, and classified them in four groups. He was given the Metaphors
in succession. Having gone to Tölung, he also received Dharma from Mön-
lam Bar and Chen Shwa Rewo as well as from Nyagchungwa and Shang
Gom. After four years the Guru said, “Josay, it’s time for you to go home.
Don’t give profound instructions without considering samaya. An incapa-
ble Dharma master cannot spread the four texts!” Reading him many trans-
missions, he then sent him to Yarda.

Having gone there, he practiced single-pointedly. Though he completed
all the path-signs of realized qualities, he hardly spoke about it, telling one
person just a bit. He could even enter his consciousness into the body of
a corpse. He then undertook tantric conduct for six years. Having taught
the three commentaries that include Lhatsün Ngörmo, he was offered the
robes and enthroned as Dharma Master. He remained mostly in retreat and
composed a large collection of commentaries to Dampa’s teachings. See-
ing being Dharma Master as a cause for distraction, he remained alone.
Although many important people received teachings from him because of
the fame of his instructions, he kept his Guru’s bond to secrecy. He hid the
Metaphors for the most part, in places such as Shentog rock mountain.

Only the Nyima Senge brothers did he enthrone as Dharma Lords. He
passed away at ninety-one. His entire reliquary body was placed into a
stupa.

As for the line of Gurus of the Dependent Arising Meaning Lineage of
the Perfection of Wisdom scripture that was placed under sevenfold seal
of validity at the time of Sadaprarudita’s seeking Dharmodgata, these are
Asanga, Vasubandhu, Brahmin Aryadeva, Dampa Rinpoche, Kunga, Pa-
tsab, and Tene, making seven. It is said that these Gurus were the sole lin-
eage-holders during their respective generations.

Gyelwa Tene entrusted the perfect Dharma lineage to the three Rog
brothers. The first of these, Rog Sherab Ö, was born into the family of a
great tantrika of the early spread of the teachings in Tibet named Rog Nam-
khá Yeshe. At the age of seven he had so mastered reading that he could
recite more than the entire Twenty-Thousand-Verse Perfection of Wisdom
Sutra in a single day. When he practiced Vajra Kilaya, the deity appeared to
him saying, “With the power of Vajra Kilaya I have transformed your body
to be like iron! Now the thousands of ghosts cannot overcome even your
retinue!” Not to expound further, as the manner of his receiving and gain-
ing realization of instructions from many Gurus is a vast subject, in particu-
lar, he received all of the Pacifier Tradition Teachings and, practicing them,
experienced the arising of unmistaken transcendent wisdom. He was lib-
erated in the knowledge of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana being
name only.

Then he practiced in seclusion for three years in Tsetang, living on
“essence” pills, wearing rags, and keeping silence. Through his perseverance
as a realized practitioner, he severed the continuum of contamination. In
the initial stages he saw the yidam deities; in the middle, received prophe-
cies of the dakinis; and at the end, was commanding the yakshas to action.
Though his name was originally Gyamön he became known as Sherab Ö,
Wisdom Light, because of being victorious in many debates.

At the age of thirty he met Kyitse Shigpo, who gave him some nectar to
drink which, when he did so, filled his entire body with bliss. Saying, “I am
one for whom there is no difference between samsara and nirvana! Take
this!” Kyitse Shigpo gave him a figure of Vajrayogini that appeared by itself
from his fingernail. All conceptions of good and bad, antidotes and things
to abandon, meditative and post-meditative states, were purified. Meeting
Kyitse Shigpo another time he received the Six-Part Chöd instructions.66
Because the Lama was quite aged, he received further specifics from the
Lama’s daughter, Kelden Tso.

Having gone to Tsegang, because of not having completely fulfilled the
course of his vowed retreat previously, he bled from the bowels for seven
days. With no conventional methods helping, he prayed to the Guru. His
Guru, So Darma Senge Drenpa, in particular, appeared in space wearing a
blue woolen robe and, just touching him between his eyebrows, stopped
the bleeding completely.

Rog Sherab Ö then invited Gyalwa Tene, who gave him the common ini-
tiations and instructions for three months. Then, with ganachakra, he gave
him the uncommon sealed teachings. He told him that, since the Guru had
put a sealed condition that the lineage up through that conferred by him-
selves had to be conferred upon only one lineage holder he told him, “I’ve
not given it to anyone to promulgate this initiation except you. Now I’m
entrusting it to you! It must not leave your lips before I die. After I die
you can use your own judgment!” Saying this, he gave him the transmis-
sions and Metaphors. Otherwise, he gave him the entire teachings of the
three Pacifier lineages. Whenever Tene was asked by other Lamas, “Who
possesses the complete Dharma?” he would answer, “That could be no one but Master Sherab Ö!”

At the age of thirty-nine, Dampa appeared to Sherab Ö and told him not to speak of his experiences. Up to the age of forty-nine he worked with altruism for others. Once Tene had passed away, he opened the seal of secrecy and gave the instructions to quite a few disciples. When he was sixty-eight, he taught at thirty great seats of learning. He passed away at the age of seventy-nine. When he was cremated many relics were found including Heruka and Vajrayogini images. It is believed that this mahasiddha was the incarnation of the east Indian Pandit Sherab Drup.

As for Rog Sherab Ö’s younger brother, Dharma Lord Shigpo Nyima Senge, he was one who had attained siddhi through the profound conduct of secret mantra, who had been Dharmadeva, king of Oddiyana, in his previous life. He was born in the year of the Female Iron Hare. At the age of three he understood the suffering of samsara and was possessed of many other such realized qualities. At eighteen he went to stay alone in an empty cave. Hearing an owl at dusk he was not comfortable at first. By examining the entity of that unhappy mind, he then directly realized mind’s emptiness of inherent existence. Following that, he received many teachings and instructions from his older brother. He also received various instructions from nine excellent wandering Lamas. At twenty-six he went when his brother invited Tene and received many initiations and instructions. Lama Tene said one must practice in retreat, so he went into a mind-training retreat, fasting for twenty-five days, and completed all signs of realizations. When he related those, the Guru scolded him greatly, saying things like, “Not pleased with the father’s marrow! Not pleased with the mother’s fat!”

Thinking that the Guru would no longer give him instructions because he didn’t know how to gauge progress in mind training, he went just out of hearing range and sang this song:

Precious and venerable Guru,
Have compassion for your devoted disciple!
Fully qualified Gurus are few!
Disciples who are vessels are even more rare!
This sad beggar, myself,
Has not a thought that’s non-dharmic!
I’ve just offered up my retreat commitment,
Prostrating to the Lord Spiritual Friend.
Emphasizing causal collection of merit,
I strove with my three doors in mind training.
Three signs appeared that the obscurations,
Difficult to purify, were, at this time, purified!
All signs of path realization described in tantra
Then arose even outside of meditation!
Though dreams are, indeed, predispositions,
Six omens of transcendence arose!
Though this beggar without Dharma or intellect,
Has no need for written texts,
I revere the Father’s ear-whispered lineage!

The Guru displayed arousal from his meditative state and sang:

Though there are many who practice Dharma,
Those who’ve encountered the unmistaken practice lineage are few!
Others, though they’ve encountered it, don’t receive commentary,
And go running to look at texts!
I’ve found none to whom I can entrust
The Lineage of Dependent Arising!
I don’t sense the correct signs or qualities!
I don’t know if you can serve the oral lineage or not!
Check to see if there are any other lineage holders!

By singing the following song in return, he recognized the validity of the Guru’s words, and again properly offered his retreat commitment and veneration:

From Mother Goddess Nairatmya
Down to kind father Patsab,
These are the instructions
Coming through single lineage holders!
The bridge to its realizations is unbroken!
The river of experience is undiminished!  
Every Guru had the signs and realizations!  
I bear the lineage of the hierarchs  
But there is none but one who confers it!  
Though many have previously wanted it,  
They shrink from making the commitment!  
There’s only one Guru and disciple in accordance!  
Sustaining the yogis’ natural state,  
I’ve never petitioned demons for powers!  
I’ve never made prayers to deities!  
I’ve never uttered secret words!  
I’ve never exposed the hidden to others!  
I pray that this treasure of the king of instructions  
Meets the disciple with the right fortune!

The Guru made his own examination, as well, then gave him the complete instructions. Though he had many Gurus, he held Tene to be his root Guru. Though he was told by the great Dharma Lord Drikungwa, “Hold my lineage!” he excused himself saying, “I must hold the lineage of my Guru, one yogi!”

He was ordained in Drikung by Abbot Pelchen and others. He was extremely cherished by Dharma Lord Chöje Drikungwa. He also received teachings of Chakrasamvara, Guhyasamaja, Chöd, and Dzogchen from many Gurus. Then he did single-pointed practice in isolated places such as Chu Shampo in Tsari. Then he cared for an entourage of disciples of better, worse, and middling faculties. He had the Kagyu scriptures made in gold.

When he went to Dingri he was met by Lord Dampa and Kunga saying, “Son, it’s great you’ve arrived!” Both their forms and their voices manifested to his direct perception. He then made vast offerings at their stupas. He pleased all of the male and female yogis with gifts and Dharma. When he went before Dampa’s reliquary, many wondrous signs appeared and relics manifested. He taught petitioners whatever Dharma they sought. Then he returned to his home. At the age of seventy-five he passed, after giving much parting advice. When he was cremated, many divine forms came out of the relics.
As for Kepa Mawe Senge, in his past life he had been a non-Buddhist in Kashmir who had gone to east India for debate. Debating with Pandit Sherab Drup, his arguments were refuted and he converted to Buddhism. Receiving Yamantaka initiation, he was given the secret name Jigme Tsel. He and his master went to Oddiyana where they were attended to by King Dharma Protector Dharma Deva. The master and two disciples performed ganachakra and, in accordance with prayers for future lives that he made, Jigme Tsel was born in Tibet in the year of the Male Fire Horse.

From the age of eight he was already learned in subjects such as literature and astrology. He trained extensively in the dialectical subjects such as madhyamaka and pramana one by one. He went on monastic debate tour in Tsang region, defeating many great scholars and becoming renowned as an expert scholar, which is why he became known as Mawe Senge, Lion of Expounders. At twenty-two he was enthroned as master at Nye Do. Thinking of the kindness of his two older brothers in caring for him materially and spiritually and in revealing to him his own mind as Buddha, he worked happily in both temporal and spiritual fields. Residing in the city of the five paths he completed all outer and inner signs. He remained in the state of dharmata day and night. He passed unimpededly through things such as walls. Experience of bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality grew like wildfire. Practicing Expression of the Names, he had a vision of Seven-Deity Manjushri with entourage emerging amidst the opening petals of a lotus. There are countless stories of the special realizational experiences he had seeing visions of deities. There was practically no teaching he had not received. There are many biographies recounting his perfectly pure accomplishments. At the age of sixty-two he passed away with many wondrous signs appearing. When cremated, his body became a massive reliquary object.

These [three] Rog brothers, who were like the lords of the three lineages, had two principal successors that held their lineage: Trulshig Rinpoche and Tamche Kyenpa. Trulshig Rinpoche was born to father Great Tathagata Sherab Ö and mother, yogini from Karchu, Jangchub Drön, in the Female Water Sheep year. He was prophesied by the dakinis before and after his birth. Because he had many learned qualities and complete detachment
from a young age, he was named Trulshig, Deception Destroyed. Saying, “To practice Dharma from the heart you must complete retreat of the yidam deity,” his father gave him Kilaya initiation and instructions. His father also gave him every teaching he possessed and then told him, “To accomplish Secret Mantra you need a qualified consort,” so he took Bum Drön as his consort. Practicing the Pacifier Tradition he completed all signs of basis, path, and result. When he received teachings from Shigpo Nyima Senge, the latter said delightedly, “A capable holder of my teachings has come!” When he was being given Heruka initiation he developed an especially fierce devotion for the Lama. When his father passed, it oppressed him with grief, and when they cremated the body a figure of Avalokiteshvara and the heart, unburned, came to his hand. Even so, it was all snatched and carried off by Consort Yarde. Consort Yarde was one who, though surrounded by a lot of animosity from a young age, was never unhappy. The reliquary stupas were well made with help of Ugyen Repa.

Tamche Kyenpa of Nye Do also cared for the monastic seat at the Rog brothers’ request. At the age of thirty-two, having gone to Drikung, he took ordination from Lord Chen Ngawa and Lha Könchog Pel and made many offerings. He pacified disease and conflicts in many places in Nyel such as Tölung and Karchu, benefiting many beings through such activities. Having gone to Pagdrur Bülkyel, he pleased Rinpoche Bayang, performing many practices and offerings. He received many commentaries from him and also satisfied him with instructions such as Vajra Mirror of the Siddhas, in return. From fifty-one to eighty years of age, he stayed in Zurtö devoting himself to meditation alone, and passed into nirvana at eighty-one in the Water Hare year. He took birth in Sukhavati as a bodhisattva named Dorje Mizepa. When they cremated his body, many relics emerged. He had five sons: the oldest, Sangye Rinchen, lived to fifty-eight; the second, Chenga Pelchen, lived to seventy-nine; the third, Düsum Kyenpa, lived to seventy-one; the fourth, Chenga Tselpa, lived to seventy-three; and the fifth, Kenchen Tsültrim GyeltSEN, lived to the age of seventy-five. They were all realized, special great beings who benefited the teachings and sentient beings.

As to the greatness of the eldest of Mawe Senge’s three sons, he was renowned as Tamche Kyenpa, All-Knowing, because of knowing every teaching after
having seen it just once. His life story was incredible. The eldest of Tamche Kyenpa’s three sons was Kunga Zangpo, who from the age of six spoke of being Milarepa and Götsangwa and became renowned as being Milarepa’s incarnation. There are many biographies of his wonderful life but, fearing too many words, I cannot include it here.

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This has been an abbreviated, rough account of the lives of the lineage holders of the Pacification of Suffering tradition.

. . . .

Because of his bodhichitta and prior related prayers, Lord Dampa’s kindness for Tibetans surpasses that of others. Even that pillar of the Practice Lineage Teachings, Karmapa Düsum Kyenpa, is certainly of the same mental continuum as Dampa. When Dampa was introducing Lama Ye Zibar to mahamudra he told him, “This was revealed to me by the Great Brahmin Aryadeva, who told me that Saraha and he were of the same mental continuum as myself!” Also, since Düsum Kyenpa is celebrated as the incarnation of Saraha who will attain enlightenment as Buddha Lion in the future, there is no doubt that he is of the same mental continuum as Lord Dampa.

Karma Pakshi and Rangjung Dorje are also known to be Dampa’s incarnations. Karmapa Mikyö Dorje said, himself, that he was Dampa’s incarnation. From their biographies it is clear that many such great lamas of the Practice Lineage were Dampa’s emanations.

Great Protector Manjushri Sakya Pandita also received Pacifier Tradition and Chöd teachings from Chiwo Lhepa and Jangchub Ö and when, as a result of practicing them, he had a vision of Manjushri, he saw him as Dampa Rinpoche mounted on a lion coming to care for him.

Lord Döndrup Rinchen, whom the great Tsongkhapa regarded as his crown jewel, after having devoted himself to many wise and accomplished Gurus and cut through preconceptions by studying with them, finally received the Pacifier instructions from the supreme being Samten Pel and, practicing them, gained limitless experiential realizations to become a learned great mahasiddha. In Tsongkhapa’s secret biography it is described how he had a vision of many mahasiddhas, including Saraha, among whom appeared one named Peme Ngangtsül, Kamalashila in Sanskrit, whom he identified as Dampa Rinpoche. The great Tsongkhapa apparently had
visions of him several times.

Mawe Senge Rongtön Chenpo taught *Abhisamayalamkara* and its commentaries without interruption and later made the Pacifier Tradition instructions his principal teachings. At an advanced age he founded Nalendrā Monastery. Up until his passing he benefited beings greatly through his teaching and other activities. Considering Dampa’s Pacifier Instructions to be the heart essence of all of the teachings, he made them his essence practice.

Omniscient Gendun Gyatso, as well, received the early, middling, and late lineages of the Pacifier Tradition from his father Kunga Gyeltsen and, in particular, received and practiced the initiations, subsequent authorizations, and oral instructions of the later lineage in their entirety. It is clear from his biography how Dampa later cared for him.

Even in more recent times, once when our Guru Künkkyen Jigme Wangpo was very frail with illness an old acharya with hair tied up came to his bedside and blessed him. Kuwo Togden, who was there, saw and asked what had happened. He replied, “That was Precious Dampa the Indian!” and immediately recovered.

That our Guru Protector’s third incarnation had visions of Dampa is clear from his secret biography. When the fourth incarnation was extremely frail from illness he displayed regret over being without a likeness of Dampa and would always offer the first portion of whatever he ate, and so forth. The devotion to Dampa in the limitless biographies of these previous great beings illustrates how, apart from now abiding in a secret manner, Dampa guides them just as before, like the sun, equal over all. Though there are many stories of his guiding fortunate beings I’ll not elaborate further, completing my comments related to this subject here.

As to the source of that particular portion of the Pacification of Suffering teachings, the profound instructions of Chöd, just as the source of all rivers traces back to the snow line, here again, that source is precious Lord Dampa. The etymology of the teaching’s name, *Chöd*, “Cutting,” refers to self-cherishing’s bondage being cut by bodhichitta, love and compassion; and the root of grasping at self and true existence being cut by the view of shunyata. *Yül*, as in *Chö Yül*, “Sphere of Action,” indicates that sphere of conduct of the bodhisattva on the path unifying skillful means and wisdom.

The essence of the Chöd instructions is Prajnaparamita in tantric action.
In the *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, Buddha says:

Through four causes, the bodhisattvas are endowed with mastery and power.
The four maras cannot overcome them; they cannot be moved!

The four causes are abiding by way of emptiness, not forsaking sentient beings, practicing just as one is taught, and the blessings of the Tathagatas. The first two of these indicate the actual practice of Chöd. The third indicates the root of the path: proper reliance on the Spiritual Friend, the Guru; and the fourth indicates the practices of refuge, seven limbs, and mandala offering in relation to the field for accumulation, the third and fourth being the preliminaries of practice. “Being unconquerable by the four maras” indicates the measure of Chöd, Cutting, having been taken to the ultimate degree. Having “mastery and power” means being endowed with the profound practice of one with bodhichitta and wisdom’s skillful means that has the power to overcome all problems of samsara and nirvana.

How is it similar to tantra? As is said in *Two Examinations*:

Meditating by a lone tree,
In a charnel ground or house of *matrika*
At night or in remote, isolated places,
Is said to be good meditation.
Having practiced generosity giving your body,
Your conduct will, afterwards, be perfect.
Certainly, prior, no matter what humans
Or gods such as Indra should arrive,
Be not afraid of them,
Moving with a lion’s form.

These pronouncements indicate, respectively, where the practice is done, when it is to be done, how it is done, and how, in dependence upon it, “disturbing signs” and “measurements of cutting” appear.

Machig has said:

Having, with immeasurable compassion, purified the mind,
Merge baseless awareness with space!
Cast off the selfless aggregates as food!
Naturally settle in absence of projections!

The first line indicates the trainings in common with sutra such as renunciation and bodhicitta. The second line indicates the specialty of this path: the equipoise mixing awareness with the sphere. The third line indicates the post-equipoise activity of casting out the aggregates as food. And the fourth line indicates that one must cultivate a continuous flow of yoga with the view of the Mother [shunyata] free of projections of true existence, regardless of being in or out of meditation. If you know essential points of the instructions such as these, it gives you a special practice complete with actual practice, preliminaries, and concluding stages.

In general, the Chöd instructions are variously classified: four rivers of Indian Chöd, Male Chöd, Female Chöd. Many terms have developed, but they are all, in fact, what can be called “the six lineages of Machig’s Instructions.” Grouping them all together here, like a hundred rivers joining underneath a single bridge, the Fully Commissioned Lord Mistress of Dharma whose actions were vast, who spread these instructions throughout all of Tibet, was Machig Labkyi Drönma. She was the Great Mother of the Conquerors emanating in the form of a human female. Lord Buddha clearly prophesied her in both sutras and tantras, such as the extensive Manjushri Root Tantra and the Sutra Discerning the Pure and Defiled.

To present her biography just in brief, she was born in Eh Lab, Central Tibet, in the village of Tso Merwa. She was born to father Kege Chöda and mother Chugda Bumkyi, in the year of the Sheep, amidst indescribable wondrous signs. Her body was extremely beautiful. She was skilled in reading from infancy. At the age of eight she received the name Labkyi Drönma, Lamp of Lab, and when she was sixteen, she took ordination. From Drapa Ngönshe, Monk Clairvoyant, she received Paramita and Kadampa teachings. Proclaiming the brief, middling, and long Prajnaparamita sutras, she became worthy of receiving offerings. On the basis of the teachings she realized the view of shunyata. From the “Actions of Mara” chapter of the Twenty-Thousand-Verse Prajnaparamita Sutra, she realized five destructions of partiality.

From Kyotön Sönam Lama she received Mahamaya empowerment with the wisdom being coming in actuality, and she attained the wisdom that overwhelms the four maras.
She likewise received, from Sönam Lama, Dampa’s complete Chöd empowerment and commentary.

Then, when Machig met Dampa in person, Dampa sang:

Endowed with the four prajnas,
Great Mother, dakini emanation,
Having opened the three doors of liberation,
Mother, you defeat the four maras’ forces!
To you, Labkyi Drönma,
I and the deities pay homage!
The creative energy of your realizations and compassion
Ripens and liberates degenerate age beings!
Still, for the sake of future generations,
I’ll also give you some instruction!

Thus, he considered her a great tantrika, gave her the complete Pacifier system and Chöd initiations and teachings, and made many prophecies for the future.

From Shüpu Shamar she received the five texts of Maitreya and many tantric teachings. From Yangtsewa she received many mahamudra teachings and, from Lama Betönpa, she received the entire Dzogchen teachings. Through her studies she cut through all preconception. She married Töpa Bhadra, a tantrika, and with him had three children. Finally separating from him, she left her children and wealth completely, and from Tsang Latö to Central Tibet and Tsang, throughout Tibet’s four regions, she enacted the conduct of living on alms.

Fulfilling a prophecy of Venerable Tara, she went to a hundred and eight springs and frightful places such as the twenty-one great snow mountains, practicing Chöd, giving birth to realizations as vast as space. Venerable Tara gave her all the initiations and teachings from the Udumbara Tantra, placing a seal upon the transmission that it be kept to a single lineage holder for ten generations, then taught her the entire Tantra. Tara then predicted, “As for the banner of complete renown of your teachings, unifying the method of the four mudras I have explained and the view of the meaning of the Prajnaparamita sutras, they shall spread vastly. As Buddha has prophesied, your teachings will spread forth like the rising sun! Now is the time for you to subdue all beings, human and non-human, in the Land of Snows!”
There are extensive wondrous biographies of her sons, Gyelwa Döndrup and Tönyön Samdrup, and daughter, Gyenema, which I cannot include here. There was an unbroken line of many male and female siddhas of Chöd among her sisters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, as well. Her oral instructions were also gathered in *The Great Collection of Three Recitations on the Steps of Essential Points for Practice* and other titles in the many volumes of her collected works. Because she had overwhelmed and overpowered the doubtful disputants who had come from India, ten collections of her teachings such as the *Great Collection* were translated in India, enabling Machig to say with bravado, “All the Teachings are Indian Dharma translated in Tibet! Mine is the only Tibetan Dharma translated in India!” When she was young and not yet fully renowned many ignorant people defamed her but demonstrations of signs of her accomplishment and miraculous abilities continued to bubble forth irrepressibly. When she was in her forties she arrived in Zangri Karmar, there helping countless people afflicted with disease and spirit obstructions, setting beings beyond number on the path of benefit and bliss, accomplishing the welfare of limitless human and non-human beings. Her fame spread all over the face of the earth. With her enlightening influence coming to pervade space, her environs became a place where all the masters gathered and all negative influences were attenuated. It was profoundly meaningful for all who saw, heard, touched, or had any connection with her. At the age of ninety-eight she manifested passing into parinirvana and went to Pure Dakiniland. Her reliquary body and relics’ infinite wondrous omens and signs evoking conviction should be known extensively from the long biographies.

The disciples who held her lineage were beyond number. Principal among them are sixteen: the four sons, the four daughters, and the eight disciples who equaled herself. The four sons are Gyelwa Döndrup, her own actual son; the lineage-holding son, Tongde Ngagkyi Wangchug; the son who realized her mind, Drölde Gyelway Jungne; and the fortunate son, Kugom Chökyi Senge. The four daughters are Drotsa Gyene of Lab valley; Shecham Pelgyen of Gangwar Tsedrong; Dotsa Bumgyen of Nönda; and Nyangmo Sönam Gyen of Penyül. The eight disciples who equaled her are Kyeme Gayen of Dagpo Rong, who equaled her wisdom; Ponyön Dorje Senge of Latö Padrug, who equaled her realization; Nyönpa Rangnang of Jang Miti, who equaled her blessings; Dölpa Zangtel of Samye, who equaled her tantric conduct; Shigpo Turbum of Lhodrag Tamshül, who equaled
her power; Kelden Senge of Penyül, who equaled her compassion; Gyagom Lhagtön of Meldro, who equaled her clairvoyance and miracle powers; and Jetsün Zilnön of Kongpo, who equaled her benefit of sentient beings.

As to where the teachings of these lineage holders flourished, those in the lineage from son Gyelwa Döndrup spread in Central Tibet; the lineage from Tongde spread in the Lhodrag area; that of Drölde spread in the Kongpo area; and Kugom Chösen’s lineage spread in the Tsang region. The lineage of the four daughters renowned as the Mother Tantra Terma Teachings spread in Kham; the lineage from the eight who equaled her spread in all directions including Nyel and Loro. The lineage coming through Je Kambu Yaley flourished in the Karma Kagyu. The dharmata naturally liberated visionary lineage of realized beings who had visions of Machig conjoined as one with the Drugpa Jamyang Gönpo lineage of profound Chöd to flourish in the Do Me area.

Machig’s younger son, Tönyön Samdrup, was a mahasiddha who meditated on Shampö Gang mountain and went to Keajra in the rainbow body. He had twenty-one male siddha disciples and eighteen female siddha disciples. In lineage from them comes the system of Machig’s uncommon tantric teachings complete in ten lineages. Otherwise, the profound teachings of Chöd, Severing Mara, will flourish as long Buddha’s teachings remain, pervading all tenet systems of Buddhism in the Land of Snows—Kagyu, Gelug, Sakya, Nyingma, Karma, Drugpa, Jonang, and Shangpa—impartially. Thus, the enlightening influence of these teachings is vaster and longer-lasting than that of others. Other than that, as the enlightening biographies of the lineage gurus cannot really be expressed in words, I’ll conclude my account here.
Countless eons ago, Dampa Sangye Rinpoche generated bodhichitta before a Buddha named Enlightenment’s Roar and, in the intervening period, completed all of the powerful conduct of the two accumulations. In the future, when Buddha Maitreya comes to this world, Dampa will act as his regent in Tushita, giving nectar of holy Dharma to the gods, ripening, and liberating them. And when the period of Maitreya’s teachings comes to an end, he will take birth in this world in the region of a town called Flower Deva, in the class of royalty, attain complete enlightenment as the Tathagata Foe Destroyer, Perfectly and Fully Enlightened One, Buddha Lion, and through spontaneous activities such as the twelve deeds, accomplish the welfare of infinite beings.

One who emanated before as seven pandit siddhas,
Greatly benefiting beings of India and Tibet,
In the interim, acting as the Conqueror Ajita’s successor,
Subduing the gods of Tushita,
Finally, renowned as Tathagata Lion,
Well enacting the enlightened deeds in this world,
Protector, please remain in my heart and
Inseparably nurture me with love until enlightenment!

As the three secrets, the transcendent wisdom and compassion,
Of that supreme Lion of Siddhas
Emanates and withdraws various complete illusory displays
Of whatever will subdue beings,
Fully pervading infinite realms of samsara and nirvana without exception:
How could anyone describe it all in precise detail?
Still, for beings in this pleasantly cool land,
Encircled by garlands of snow mountains,
Protector, your bodhichitta and kindness
Is supreme for unknowing beings!

Therefore, Peerless Guide of Beings,
May the amassed merit of this biography, which,
From the mine of jewels of your fathomless life,
Is but a drop yet not inferior, bring newfound delight!

Devoted homage in nature of nondual natural awareness!
Offerings in purity of the three spheres!
I confess downfalls in dreamlike unreality
And rejoice with control of dependent arising!

Bestow instructions on seeing one’s mind as dharmakaya!
Remain inseparable from us in indestructible great bliss!
I dedicate virtues to release in the sphere of the unborn!
May all manifest the naturally arisen three kayas!

If, in spring, the first cuckoo’s pleasant song
Eclipses the noises of human happiness,
Why would the faithful not be delighted
With Dampa’s life story, meaningful to hear!

Therefore, mindful of that Protector’s kindness,
To illumine the entryway for the faithful seeking liberation,
And as a cause to receive Dampa’s blessings myself,
I’ve written this with a pure sense of universal responsibility.

Though I’ve written well, checking authoritative ancient texts,
And not polluting with my own fabrications,
Any mistakes or omissions I’ve committed
Out of ignorance, I lay bare before the Guru Deva.

May amassed merit of effort well expended in this,
Rivaling glory of the autumn moon’s full whiteness,
Be dedicated to all beings, my mothers, equal to space,
Before long, attaining complete enlightenment!

When the appearances of this life are ceasing for me,
May the smiling face of glorious Guru Heruka Father-Mother
And Dampa, lord of yogis, manifest to me
In the great bliss realm of Keajra!

There, among the hosts of heroes and dakinis,
Enjoying a celebration of Dharma’s great secrets,
Swiftly traversing the path and attaining glorious Unification,
May I liberate infinite sentient beings!

May whoever writes, reads, teaches, listens to,
Or makes any connection with this wondrous biography
Be among his first circle of disciples
When Tathagata Lion comes to this world!

May the areas where this is seen or heard
Be free of all disease, famine, conflict, and decline,
Have increase of longevity, good harvests, and happiness,
And may all beings living there strive in pure virtue!

May the Guru’s lotus feet be firmly set in the nature of the swastika!50!
May the teachings’ bearers, with dharmic action, cover the earth!
May the Practice Lineage swell like lakes during monsoon!
May everywhere be pervaded by glorious auspiciousness!

Thus the composition of the biography of the great chakravartin of mahasiddhas Venerable Dampa Sangye, called Sun Ablaze with Thousandfold Rays of Attainment, was urged by the Do Me sovereign of the teachings, great omniscient Jamyang Shayba’s fourth incarnation, His Holiness the Omniscient Refuge Protector, whose name, for this special reason, I utter here, Venerable Kelsang Thubten Wangchug. He said that, in general, since there were only a few extensive biographies of the previous holy beings of the Practice Lineage in existence and, in particular, since there were no pre-existing clear extensive biographies of Dampa the Indian available in our
area, I should gather all the scattered accounts of Dampa’s life to make a clear, extensive biography, placing a flower of command upon my head. Furthermore, in this Do Me region, the spread of profound Chöd practice is extremely vast but authors investigating its originators’ greatness are few. Because it is the authentic source of Lord Dampa Rinpoche and Machig’s profound Chöd instructions, and because I felt that there could, nowadays, be new Chöd practitioners who wish to practice properly who would have a need for it, with overwhelming altruism hoping to help them, and because, I, as well, even from childhood, had a special devotion for this particular great mahasiddha, I made heartfelt prayers and was fortunate to receive experience of some signs of blessings; and in order to create the causes to be cared for in all lifetimes by all the Lord Protectors, checking with the biography written by the great pandit Punya Shri and another written by the master Dratangwa, stories from the Pacifier Tradition teachings, scattered accounts of the Chöd lineage masters, the Blue Annals by Gö Lotsawa Shōnu Pel and so forth, I wrote this clear extensive biography, striving towards its completion single-mindedly. And although I have passed my life in remote mountain retreat, the aspect of my inner abandonments and realizations is no more than a facsimile of a yogi who has abandoned the mundane activities that rival a winter lotus, a bhusukuwa,70 I, named Chökyi Senge or Kachö Gyepe Dorje, at the auspicious right-turning grove of that wondrous community sustained by the conquerors’ transmissions, at the very hub of the Tantric College’s temple-library, composed this beginning in the waxing moon of the twelfth month of the fifteenth sixty-year cycle’s year of the Fire Horse [1906].
Padampa Sangye’s
Mahamudra Teachings in Symbols

——— recorded by the heart disciple, ———
Bodhisattva Kunga
The Sign Indications

[Being a record of Padampa Sangye's teachings transmitted through signs and symbolic acts rather than words. Each sign or action is followed by Kunga's verbal description of Padampa Sangye's intention as he understood it.]

When asked about the meaning of ultimate reality, he bound up his mouth with a sling.
To indicate that dharmata is beyond speech or expression.

He blew a mantra on a rhinoceros horn and transformed it into gold.
To reveal that all appearances are the manifestation of the unceasing energy of awareness.

He then took it in his hand and it turned to ashes.
To show that it is empty of true existence.

He placed his sheepskin robe in space.
To show that dependent arisings are manifestations emerging from emptiness.

Stopping his mouth with his left hand, he raised his right hand with palm outward.
To indicate that, if one ceases inner conceptions, external things can no longer be objectified.

Sometimes he would say nothing.
To indicate that, if one reduces one’s speech, one will avoid many faults.
He didn’t give everything a name.
To show that self-established terms do not exist.

He stole Lama Char’s Dharma bag with his texts and burned it!
To show that the ultimate mode of existence is beyond definition.

He held gold and clay in equal regard.
To show that if one practices Dharma one must give up grasping things as real.

He never showed concern for having nice things.
To indicate that consciousness should not pursue objects.

He covered his head with his robe.
To indicate that entanglement in the objects of the six consciousnesses is purposeless.

Sometimes he kept turning his gaze from one place to another.
To indicate that one must recognize the present impermanent moment between past and future.

He stared fixedly, eyeballs unmoving.
To demonstrate that, if one holds the causal energies, gross and subtle conceptions cease.

He very gradually moved his gaze.
To indicate that, by cultivating awareness of the present moment, dual grasping will not occur.

While eating a taste of the most delicious food, he would throw the rest away.
To show that, if one does not give up craving, one will not destroy subject-object duality.

He accepted lack of food and clothing and would not go to receive them.
To indicate that, while undergoing austerities, receiving offerings and reverence is harmful.
He practiced the conduct of a child.  
To demonstrate that, because latencies lead into samsara, one must abandon the eight worldly dharmas.

He did anything whatsoever discordant with “conventional” conduct.  
To show that attachment to worldly views must be cut.

He acted like a lunatic.  
To demonstrate that divine excellence follows true meditative absorption.

He didn’t wear shoes.  
To indicate that if one has not trained in love and compassion, one cannot be trained in emptiness.

He stayed alone.  
To demonstrate that the fruit depends on practice.

He said, “I will give Lama Char the method to attain siddhi!” and tied up his legs.  
To teach that practice must first be done on the cushion.

Saying, “I’m going to bless Lama Kadampa!” he plugged up his ears with mud!  
To indicate that without receiving the Lama’s blessings, one’s mind is not ripened by merely hearing teachings.

He did not answer idle questions.  
To teach that if one remains entangled with the non-dharmic, one will not reach attainment in one’s practice.

He snatched Lama Rongpa’s zi bead71 garland and threw it in the river.  
To indicate that worrying about supporting oneself in old age comes from not letting go of grasping.

He did not discriminate with bias between those in his entourage.  
To indicate that saving face is the great mara to dharmic activity.
He said, “Dampa is not bothered by flies!” and was unhappy if there were no flies around.
To demonstrate that people who see adversity as an ornament view enemies as friends.
The Speech Indications

[Kunga’s interpretation of each of these utterances of Padampa Sangye preceded Padampa Sangye’s own words in the Tibetan text. In the English translation I have reversed the order. No doubt that was usually the case in practice, and students were not immediately given such interpretations.]

“Lama Gargom! Put what your texts say on the scale! The Lama’s instruction that all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are empty of true existence will be heavier!”
One word of the Lama’s experience is better than vast knowledge of scriptures.

“The people who live close to the dogs have no peace!”
Realization is blocked by living close to town.

“Since an unpolished mirror is unclear, don’t let it corrode!”
One falls back easily into habits of deluded conceptions.

“Make foxes and wolves your neighbors!”
In retreat, dakinis gather.

“There is no bridge permanently erected across the river Ganges, so make effort to go now!”
If one does not attain freedom from samsara in this life, there is no guarantee of another chance later on.

“The shadows of all the trees are of one nature! If you grind sugar cane it no longer has different sides!”
All phenomena are of one taste.
“If a pot is fired, there is no need to seal it!”
If there is devotion and aspiration, blessings will be received.

He said, “If the round mold has no design, the round *tsa-tsa* design will not emerge!”
If a Lama has no warmth of realizations, the disciples’ minds cannot possibly become pliable.

“Lotuses don’t grow from a clean place. Monkeys can’t live on a mountain where there are no trees!”
If the five poisons are abandoned, transcendent wisdom has no place to grow.

“Wrapped in an unsupportable burden one gets sick. At first, don’t make the thread too long, but, rather, short to middling!”
If one is hasty in taking commitment vows for long retreat, it becomes a cause for obstacles.

“Don’t open the bag of dependent arising before others!”
If one brags about one’s level of realization, it disappears.

Saying, “Cultivate insight without texts!” he threw Chugtön’s Dharma bag into the river.
To indicate that, if one does not realize their meaning, profound texts will not be beneficial.

He asked about a cooking tripod, “What is the name of this?” Someone answered, “This is a tripod.” He said, “If you meet the meaning of that term, it is empty before and after!” and he laughed for a long time.
To indicate that true existence of all phenomena is absent this instant.

Someone told Kunga he should write the *Twenty-Thousand-Verse Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. He answered, “Without a pen, there is no way to write even a letter!” Padampa laughed, saying, “Ha ha! Now you need a way to write! How are all phenomena of samsara and nirvana like that? This twenty-thousand-verse scripture will bring you problems! Accompanied by the enemy himself, you go seeking more!” Then he laughed a long time.
To indicate that, until one generates a mind that needs nothing, one is never separated from suffering.

“Even if the sky falls, don’t ask, ‘Is everything okay?’”
Cultivate unwavering one-pointed awareness in the moment.

When asked, “What is the cause of Padampa’s various thoughts?” he answered, “I’m not sure! Ask this bell! This bell has a wise answer for that!”
To indicate that phenomena dissolve where they arise.

“The person who doesn’t work receives no wages or tips. The Tibetans are without persistence. If you were able to go naked, how silk, wool, and tsampa would rain from the sky!”
Happiness arises by taking suffering onto the path.

He said, “That fortunate one, Tag Gom, has kept the vows! There are none like him in Central Tibet. He treasures whatever eyes [of wisdom] he has. The person who doesn’t take care of his eyes is without happiness!”
To indicate that correct discipline is the support for attaining high rebirth and liberation.

He said, “The appearance of objects of the six consciousnesses becomes volumes of instructions.”
To indicate that everything can become instruction for Dharma to the one with insight.

Taking a large turnip in his hand, he said, “Like this turnip which grew from just a small seed, inner growth of karmic seeds is much greater than this!”
To indicate that, preceded by stainless motivation, the later result will not fail.

He said, “The dzo always tied to its rope doesn’t get to lick the salt! People who have lost their lead ropes to others have no chance for happiness!”
To indicate that if one does not part from mundane concerns, one cannot attain supreme siddhi.
He said, “Who in Dingri can say, I am going to Keajra? You, with clinging attachment, look at your own mind! Hoping for buddhahood without renouncing samsara is too high an expectation!” To indicate that, if one is to traverse the path of liberation, one must give up clinging attachment.

When old Tönpa Chigom asked for meditation instruction, he said, “If you can’t meditate, letting go of grasping at things itself is blissful!” To indicate that, if grasping is released, delusions will not develop.

He said, “Consuming a lot of meat and beer bought through impure livelihood, the gold [of realization] diminishes. Now, under [this low ceiling], painfully bending down, there is hope for increase of the gold!” To indicate that comfort and veneration [given by others] prevents increase of virtuous practice.

He said, “All is like clouds, not truly existing!” To indicate that phenomena in samsara cannot withstand ultimate analysis.

He said, “Dampa’s instructions are given by that human corpse over there!” To indicate that in conduct of perfect practice one should exhaust likes and dislikes.

He said, “If you can’t meditate, let go of self-grasping importance. If you can’t give your eyes, meditation will not help!” To indicate that if [self-] cherishing is exhausted there is no need for meditation.

He said, “If the coal and fire don’t meet, the iron won’t break the stone!” To indicate that, if the power of the two accumulations is not perfected, the mind is not fit for buddhahood.

He said, “There is no place where space does not exist! Space has no inside or outside.” To indicate that awareness is without a base.
He said, “Where the king has gone, the ministers follow also.”
To indicate that all delusions follow after desire.

When asked the nature of the perfect ultimate mode of existence, he said, “I have no idea! Ask the head of the frogs!”
To indicate that transcendent wisdom of the mind is beyond expression.

He said, “Craving honey, the camel has no happiness.”
To indicate that clinging is the cause of suffering.

He said, “The fish caught on a hook does not swim in the ocean!”
To indicate that one is not freed from samsara without cutting the bindings of self-grasping.

He said, “When the window is free of dirt, light rays arise from within. It is already self-arisen!”
To indicate that there are no external pure lands of the three kayas and that, when training in rigpa energy, pure appearance arises from within.

He said, “Not looking directly at clear space, but looking at the color of the clouds, the young meditator is carried away by ghosts. That is the problem!”
To indicate that, if one tries to grasp consciousness, which is free of extremes, with the intellect, it is cause for deception.

He said, “All iron to which the alchemical elixir is applied turns to gold. Too little iron meets with the gold-transforming elixir!”
To indicate the power of the two accumulations in attaining buddhahood.

He said, “It was good that Dro Chungwa lost that turquoise. Now he has come upon a huge turquoise!”
To indicate that experiencing suffering causes Dharma to emerge.

He said, “If one does not cure the illness when one has found the victorious aruna medicine, one won’t find it again and will be sick for a long time!”
To indicate that, if a person does not attain liberation using the human
form which he has received in this time, the time for liberation will not come again.

He said, “For the bird to propel through space both wings are needed. If it does not open its wings, it can’t fly!”
Indicating that arya paths are the power of the two accumulations.

He said, “Recognize the present!”
To indicate that, if one dispels thoughts of before and after, one does not need meditation.

He said, “If the deer does not quit longing for water in the mirage, it won’t be happy!”
To indicate that, if one does not stop grasping appearances as true, one’s practice becomes merely an imitation of meditation.

He said, “There is no need for medicine that doesn’t alleviate the sickness!”
To indicate conduct which is merely an imitation [of Dharma].

He said, “There’s no need for food which does not satisfy. It becomes like oil poured in quicksand!”
To indicate that there is no need for experience if it does not become the antidote to delusion.

He said, “If it doesn’t serve at the time for courage, it’s a dog bragging of being a hero.”
To indicate that if one does not avert the deceived intellect there is no need for antidotes.

He said, “The captain who has not taken on precious cargo has no need for companions!”
To indicate that, if one doesn’t complete the actual body of practice, there is no need for protectors for one’s practice.

He said, “With the monkey mind not relaxed, the limbs have no capacity to remain still.”
To indicate that, if one does not turn the mind from samsara, there is no need for staying in retreat.

He said, “The captain who doesn’t know the desired path to the jeweled island needs to go with an experienced great captain who knows the ways of the ocean!”
To indicate that, without the guidance of a Lama, one will not find understanding through writings.

Reversing the visual description of hells, he said, “There is no measure of copper. There is no smith beating it. And there are no guards of the outer ocean at all!”
To indicate that all external objects are without conceptual basis and are therefore nonexistent.

He said, “The garuda who can’t enter the flight path of the birds falls to earth. The power of his wings’ agility becomes exhausted!”
To indicate that, having gained accomplishment, in order to not fall back into samsara, one must attain buddhahood, because common attainments will disintegrate due to the occurrences of dependent arising.

He said, “If one becomes the king’s direct servant, one need not answer to his subjects as masters!”
To indicate that the singular greatness of dependent arising comprises all paths in one, and one need not train sequentially.

He said, “The welfare of others has no need of a servant who has not accomplished his own purpose. Even Shakyamuni, teacher of humans and gods, was unable to teach Dharma until undergoing hardships!”
To indicate that, unless one is ripened oneself, one cannot accomplish the welfare of others.

He said, “Coming from a long distance [he’s] thought of as amazing! But when they come into his presence, [he is thought of as] a strange ape nomad!”
To indicate that if the Guru is kept secret, people have greater respect.
He said, “In the time of a finger snap, do you have time to generate a mind of dualistic grasping?”
To indicate that one must recognize momentary awareness.

He said, “What you call Buddha’s intention is like the sky of Dingri and Tsibri!”
To indicate that suchness is the intention.

He said, “The view? Ask the ship’s crow!”
To indicate that the actual mode of existence is beyond extremes.

He said, “For conduct? Look at the small child!”
To indicate that adopting and abandoning are not verbal.

Saying, “Skull, pour the sky water here!” And he cupped up some of his robes.
To indicate that all is empty and that there is no increasing or diminishing.

He said, “This space! No one has put it here!” And he waved his hands over his head.
To indicate that samsara is primordially pure in the sphere.

As a fire’s smoke disappeared in the sky, he said, “All phenomena of samsara and beyond are like that!” And he laughed a long time.
To indicate the pure nature of appearance-suchness in the sphere.

“You see none more skilled in creating things than this space!”
The various appearances are emptiness opening up.

“Listen to this with the ears of a turtle!”
The very teacher of instructions is like an echo. Also, the ears which cause the listener to hear do not exist.

“I see practice as something attained by a prisoner in a pit!”
If one does not generate recognition of samsara as a prison, the mind will not turn away from this world based in impermanence.
“If it doesn’t pacify suffering, there is no need for practice!”
If duality is not consumed, the view will harden on itself.

“Throw the balance scale’s stick to the dogs!”
If one does not practice, knowledge becomes the pride of renown.

Someone asked, “Some say that if you realize the view, practice is not necessary. How is that?” He said, “As long as one has an infection, it is unbearable to touch, and for that long one must take care of the bandage.”
As long as mental grasping is not exhausted, for that long there is a need for practice.

“There is no difference between the new and full moon!”
Appearance and emptiness are not separate.

“Stay naked!”
Awareness is free of obscuration.

When asked, “If you would put on some clothing, how nice it would be!” he said, “Bring me clothes that have not come into existence, that have not been woven!”
Elemental mind is not produced by causes and conditions.

“There’s no crack in the egg! From where does consciousness enter?”
Consciousness does not exist as form.

“There is no binding or releasing of space!”
Elemental mind has no birth nor death.

“Essence of sun, from the beginning, has never been accompanied by darkness!”
This consciousness is clear light from the beginning.

“The lion is never without snow!”
Consciousness is originally without source.
“The king does not act like the subjects!”
The yogi’s conduct is discordant with worldly opinion.

“The hungry person doesn’t make loans!”
Not ripened oneself, one does not ripen others.

“Having eaten delicious food, don’t throw it up!”
One should not defile the Lama’s instructions.

“Having found a precious jewel, don’t sit idly by! Having found it, don’t throw it away!”
To indicate the urgent need to transform one’s body, speech, and mind.

“To cross the Ganges, one must learn to swim!”
If one doesn’t train in rigpa energy, one will not be liberated from samsara.

“To free oneself from the ghost, the rope of longing mind must be burned up! Can you do that?”
In order to be free of grasping, one must cut the rope of longing.

“There is no need for an escort who can’t stand up to enemies!”
If one does not firmly turn away from samsara, one’s faith will harden.

“There is no need for an eye that doesn’t see!”
If one does not realize the hidden tragic nature of samsara, one’s wisdom will harden.

“There is no need for someone who does not practice to take vows!”
If after receiving practices one does not carry the armor of perseverance, one’s commitments become meaningless.

“There is no need for instructions given without knowing the connection!”
If Dharma doesn’t mix with one’s mind, practice will harden on itself.

“Even the deer can’t keep the horns on its head!”
All must die and nothing can help that.
When a vase holding water broke, he said, “Kunga! You’re not here long! Realize this is the nature of all phenomena in samsara!” All created things disintegrate.

“Look at the buck. It has sharp horns. If it would only butt the dog, it would have no need to flee!” Although there is a method, it is not a given that one will attain freedom from the sufferings of samsara.

“Padampa speaks honestly. I see a prisoner who has been given a saw, yet his prison shackles remain uncut. Having thrown the saw aside, he sits in prison!” And he laughed. Someone who has received the Lama’s instructions but does not practice them voluntarily enters into suffering and has no heart.

“The power of fire or water in space is not rejected!” The actual nature of existence is not helped or harmed by samsara or nirvana.

“The three realms are appearance from space!” All inner and outer phenomena are liberated on the basis of examining their mode of existence.

“Just knowing the word ‘space’ can’t cause help or harm, bliss or pain!” Mere verbal knowledge cannot help oneself or others.

Asked, “When does one generate nonconceptual transcendent wisdom?” he said, “It’s in capturing the molten essence of mind. But it is the Lama who restores who must do it!” All phenomena are released only by the means of the Guru.

“Part from predispositions and the things of samsara!” To indicate that there is just one line to the instructions for awakening.

“Hold rigpa in the aspect of a wrathful deity!” If rigpa turns outward, it destroys the doubtful mind.
“The wrathful deity’s glaring eyes pierce through to space!”
If rigpa seizes appearance, the movement of conceptual mind is cut.

“Whatever one meets is drawn into the path! A crazy person with a key wants to open all the locks!”
By impartial rigpa, doubt is consumed.

“Before dependent arising, the owner of dependent arising must precede it. Don’t fall asleep!”
If rigpa’s stains are cleared, dependent arising appears.

Asked for an instruction on cutting superimpositions, he said, “Blow this conch and that will give instruction on cutting superimpositions!”
All phenomena are like echoes.

“That appearance of form in the mirror is empty of the nature of form.”
The nature of deceptive appearances is clear light suchness.

“Until he gives up craving the honey, the fly has no leisure!”
Enjoying ordinary siddhis, while not having time to ripen the accomplishment of supreme siddhi, is a case of the common acting to obstruct the supreme.

“If the mad elephant is not caged, it remains wild!”
The mind is clear when it is not contrived.

“If one does not drink salt water one will be satiated.”
Satisfaction comes only without craving sensory objects.

“This turtle’s eye does not see when it opens. When it is closed, it sees!
If you check again it’s a great wonder!”
Attainment comes when one does not focus on the outward result.
The Rounds of Teachings through Questions and Answers

Asked for instructions for enlightenment, Dampa said:

There are three lines of instruction for enlightenment:
Don’t grasp your mind!
Destroy wearing ‘I’!
Abandon the mind of purposeful grasping!

Requested, “Would Dampa wear some clothing?” he replied:

I’ve worn the hat of a topknot of lang tang tse,”
A belt of Kasarpani snake.
I’ve placed a bear rug cushion on Tara Mountain,
Destroyed a throne of leaves in the Lion Fort,
Thrown a goat-hair cloak into the river Ganges.
That’s how I come to be naked in Dingri!

Asked, “Wouldn’t it be nice if Dampa wore some clothes?” he said:

Well then, bring me clothes that have not come into existence,
That have not yet been woven!

Asked, “Dampa, what is it that is called view?” he said, “It’s called the exhaustion of tenet assertions!”
Asked, “What is it that is called meditation?” he said, “It’s putting mind to watchfulness!”

Asked, “What is it that is called action?” he said, “It’s taking care of view and meditation!”

Asked, “What is it that is called fruit?” he said, “It is realization gone to culmination!”

 Asked, “What do you mean by culmination of realizations?” he said, “It’s the exhaustion of assertions. All of that arises from within the one teacher Guru!”

   

Someone asked, “Dampa, what is awareness like at the time of buddhahood?”

He said, “It is transcendent wisdom (jnana) cleared of conceptual thought.”

Asked, “Does that transcendent wisdom have mindfulness or not?” he said, “Mindfulness is an ordinary sentient being’s intellect! Transcendent wisdom is intellect-free!”

Asked, “Will this present awareness be gone?” he replied, “An old man is not separate from the body and mind of his childhood! But, the old man does not have the body and mind of his childhood!”

   

Someone asked, “What makes an excellent yogi?” He said:

Cut off the tongue of the news!
Tie the legs of the messenger!
Cut off the cook’s hands!
If they throw out the “dog’s heart” it’s excellent!

   

Asked, “If Dampa passes away, what shall poor me do?” he said:

Don’t cling to the illusory nature of appearing objects as real!
Don’t rely on disintegrating compounded things!
Don’t hold the path vehicle to be the true face of the Dharma!
Don’t follow after sounds, which are echoes!
Understand phenomena to be like forms in a mirror!
Tie the old monkey in the jungle tight!
If the pot’s not fired the shellac won’t stick!
Don’t make prayers like a parrot!
Don’t be a guide who knows not the way!
Don’t increasingly examine the view without a valid source!
Happiness is brought on by suffering!
If the egg is not covered the chick won’t mature!
If you go through a dangerous passage take up your spear!

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Asked, “Should opposite sexes associate closely together?” he said:

A yoke ending up on the ox’s shoulders
Is the fault of his having a companion.
Without a companion he couldn’t be used for plowing!

Asked, “Should one support oneself alone?” he said, “Living in need of another is suffering!”
Asked, “But, isn’t it okay without attachment?” he said:

If you are detached, you don’t need it.
Where there are fish, water birds come to feed.
But here, there is no food for all the little birds!78

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Someone asked, “Dampa, in Dzogchen it is said there is no black or white karma. Is it blissful or not?”
He said, “If you realize it, it’s blissful!”
“Isn’t such realization very high?”
He said, “Dzogchen is like space. Space is beyond high or low!”
“But, in Dzogchen there is much discussion about mental grasping!”
He said, “Space can also be seen through the eye of a needle!”

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Someone asked, “After Dampa has passed away, who should we appeal to when unpleasant obstructions occur?”
He said, “A Lama who teaches the true mode of existence will appear from within!”

Someone remarked, “Isn’t it blissful when difficult conditions don’t harm one’s practice!”

He responded, “Any wind whatsoever will fan a forest fire, but if the fire is small, the wind will blow it out!”

Asked, “Wouldn’t it be good to take a few notes?” he said, “No need!”

Since all these outer appearances are your scriptures,
Notes would cripple the Acharya’s entourage!
Put an end to this creating of things!
There’s no need to keep beating with a stick the husk from which the grain is already extracted!

Someone asked, “Does practice flourish better on the meditation seat or at the alms-giving place?”

He said, “If desire and grasping is exhausted there is no need for practice! buddhahood is in a place that is easily reached!”

Asked, “Dampa, for practice, what is the sole most important point?” he said, “Faith and effort are the basis of all!”

Asked, “What is the correct path to liberation?” he said, “The person who has not mentally renounced samsara will not find liberation!”

Asked, “What are those with mistaken ideas lacking? Some of them say they have already done practice,” he replied, “The mara lord of death is there as soon as one is born! The deer’s antlers don’t remain on their heads. Only a few yaks keep their horns!”

Someone asked, “What is it which is called the completion of realization?”

He said, “When intellect is finished, that is completion of realization!”

Asked, “By understanding the view, will intellect be exhausted?” he said:
Understanding the view will not help!
One must generate the view in one’s mind!
There are many people who understand the view
But don’t generate it in their minds!
If the view were generated in their minds, they wouldn’t act the way
they do!

Asked, “When does one generate the view in one’s mind?” he said, “It
is when belief in true existence in phenomena is exhausted! As soon as the
melted butter is finished, the wick won’t burn!”

Someone asked, “Dampa, what is the path of mahamudra?”
He said, “It’s the prints left by the feet and hands in space!”
Gungtön asked, “Are madhyamaka and mahamudra saying the same
thing or not?”
He said, “Someone who hasn’t seen a horse wouldn’t know what horse’s
teeth are!”
Someone asked, “What is more powerful, study or oral instruction?”
He said, “I’ve seen many pandits die ordinary deaths! Though Gyagom
Ma doesn’t even know the alphabet, she has transmuted her body into gold
and gone to the region of the Pleiades! It’s amazing!”

Someone asked, “What is it which is called ultimate?”
He said, “It is what ‘knowing that the conventional is without inherent
existence’ is called!”
“What is it which is called nirvana?”
He said, “It is what ‘knowing that samsara is without inherent existence’
is called!”
“What is it which is called the birthless?”
He said, “It is the complete unsuitability of calling something ‘knowing
the inherent nature of things’!”
“Isn’t one freed from samsara by realizing birthlessness?”
He said, “One is not freed from samsara by realizing birthlessness. One
must train in the unceasing energy of awareness!”
Someone asked, “Dampa, what is it which is called the Buddha’s intention?”
He said, “It is what being free of mental defilement is called!”
“What is it which is called essence?”
“It is what being free of obscuration is called!”
“When is that generated in the mind?”
“It’s generated just when mental grasping is exhausted!”
“What is it which is called instructions?”
“It’s what a spoon for opening the eyes is called!”
“What is it which is called generation stage?”
“It’s what you call drawing a design on the ground!”
“What is it which is called completion stage?”
“It’s what you call drawing a design in space!”

Someone asked, “Dampa, how is it that meditative experience disappears?”
He said, “All created things disintegrate!”
“How much do mara’s obstructions occur?”
“Just as much as overbearing pride is born!”
“To what degree is the connection to samsara and nirvana cut?”
“As much as the knot of self-grasping is untied. No enemies come to the naked one!”

Someone asked, “What is the cause of being born in samsara?”
He said, “It is not building the paths to liberation over the dangerous impasse of duality!”
“When is one liberated from samsara?”
“One is liberated from samsara whenever mind is exhausted! When the water stops, the water wheel doesn’t know to turn!”
“What is the method to exhaust the mind?”
“Destroy intentional grasping, and the Guru who reveals non-self will dawn from within!”
“When does that Guru appear?”
“That Guru enacts the path in the space left after casting out one’s left eye. It’s as if the left eye is covering it!”
Asked, “Dampa, what causes samadhi to arise in one’s being?” he said, “If one does not gather the two accumulations, the two obscurations are not purified! If the two obscurations are not purified, samadhi does not dawn!”

They asked, “But effort is a demon for accumulation, isn’t it?”

He said, “Although the sun does not increase or decrease, the clouds still obscure it!”

They asked, “But, there are many who don’t gather the accumulations.”

He said, “If you know how, gathering the accumulations is easy; it doesn’t require a lot of implements!”

“Dampa must know that method!”

“The method is well known, but nobody uses it!”

“Dampa must teach that method! Is there no one at all who would practice it?”

He said, “All know they will die but don’t think of the Dharma! There were many who did not even listen to Shakyamuni, the chief of teachers!”

Padampa said, “These Tibetan yogis just collect texts and pandits! What are they doing?”

Someone asked, “By collecting many, don’t they hope to understand their meaning?”

He said, “Many letters obscure the one letter! If the many are not erased, the one will not be clear!”

Someone asked, “Between view and meditation which is chief?”

He said, “View is blind! The eye of meditation is needed! Conduct is like a guide who knows the path!”

Kunga asked, “After Dampa has died, do we need a community of practitioners?”

He said, “A lion doesn’t need a herd! A chakravartin king doesn’t need his father’s family!”
Someone asked, “According to Gungtön, understanding the view is enough. Is that so?”

Dampa said, “If you don’t eat the sugarcane, you’ll never experience the sweetness! Understanding is not enough; you need to manifest the object! If you ask a captain who does not know the way to the jeweled island, it’s a bad omen.”

Precious Padampa said, “There is one main reason there will not be many mahasiddhas in Tibet!”

They asked, “What is that?”

He said, “Not making themselves independent, they like to be servants of others! The work of the eyes should be for seeing, but they eat whatever comes to their mouths without inspecting it. They are careful in business, but study sorcery! To stay on a cushion, one should be very bright, but they don’t have brains in their heads! Putting aside what is important till later, they practice what is of little importance!”

They said, “Tibet is indeed ill-omened!”

He replied, “Tibetans are not worse people than the Indians.”

Don’t leave your cushion until you have experienced the taste!
Don’t put the peg of authority through your nose!
Don’t tie on the rope of position!
Don’t put the rope in the hands of others!
Put land and subjects in the yidam!
Don’t experience many tastes in food; be filled with one taste!
Hoping for flour to come from an empty water mill is a bad sign!

Someone said, “It is wonderful to have the happiness of Dampa’s uninterrupted teachings!”

He replied, “It has become a meaningless thing. There is no need for many teachings.”
Someone asked, “Gyagom Mamo doesn’t even ask Padampa questions, does she? What realizations does she have?”

He said, “Having realized that ice is actually water, she doesn’t ask others! She closed her lips and stopped vomiting gold from her mouth. Now the body-vessel has become gold!”

Drigom was unable to stop conceptual thoughts and judgments. Dampa commanded her: “Sleep with your old brother! If you won’t, I’ll beat your head!” He stood up naked and raised a stone.

Then he said, “If you won’t prostrate naked to me, I’ll loose the wolves on you!”

She asked, “Where are the wolves?”

He said, “In the House of Dependent Arising!” and two wolves came out. Terrified, she threw off her clothes and prostrated. In that very moment, she was blessed.

He laughed, “Now you are freed from the suffering of cold!”

Someone asked, “Is there a difference between the appearances of this life and the intermediate state?”

He said, “Appearances of this life are the appearances of illusion! Dreams are the appearances of imprints! Because imprints are planted in illusory appearances, hallucinations in the bardo will arise!”

“Aren’t deceptive appearances in the bardo stopped through meditation?”

He said, “Cease this life’s appearances through meditation. By ceasing them, one ceases those of dreams! By ceasing those of dreams, the appearances of the six consciousnesses in the bardo are purified in their own place! Mind free of intentional grasping is what the protector Nagarjuna called buddhahood. Why? Because until self-grasping is exhausted, appearances are not averted!”

They asked, “Did you know that acharya that came yesterday?”

He said, “I didn’t! That was one pandit who knew many teachings, but for him they had become useless!”

“How is that?”

“There was no Dharma there! If he had Dharma, he would have let go
of desire! But, not having turned away from desire, he came here seeking gold!"

“Did Dampa give him gold?”

“The great quantities of gold that I do have, he didn’t even recognize when given to him!”

“Where does Dampa have gold?”

“The dust you find anywhere, that’s it, indeed!”

They asked, “Where does this desire take him? What does it do to him?”

He said, “He desires this life, so he is unhappy!”

“What do these Dharma practitioners lack in terms of view and meditation?”

“They don’t know that appearances are illusion. To have grasping desire, even though one knows that impermanence is the character of compounded phenomena, is a very bad sign.”

... ... ...

Someone asked, “Dampa, if someone who has realized emptiness commits a sin, is it harmful or not?”

He said, “For the person who has realized emptiness, there is no ‘committing of sin’! Generating emptiness in the mind and generating compassion are simultaneous!”

They asked, “Does emptiness without compassion serve any purpose?”

He said, “Fish come where there’s water, not where it’s dry!”

... ... ...

Padampa said, “Though Tibetan Dharma practitioners have refuge vows, they don’t go for refuge!”

Kunga said, “It is so incredible to have the three vows!”

Dampa replied, “Those with vows who do not give up desire are no different from ordinary people, poor things!”

“Are Dharma practitioners who have let go of desire rare?”

He said, “If one does not turn away from desire, though one has all three vows complete, one will not rise from samsara!”

“If one is free of desire, is that liberation from samsara?”

He said, “If not free of ideation, the tiger has no happiness! These ideas bring the tiger to grief!”
Dampa said, “There are few who entrust themselves to Dharma itself!”
They asked, “What is someone who entrusts himself to Dharma like?”
He said, “Someone who does not intentionally engage in worldly activities!”
Someone said, “Not intentionally engaging in worldly activities is wonderful!”
He said, “If one does not intentionally engage in worldly activities, one must give up craving. But I don’t see even one person who is without self-grasping around here!”
Someone said, “How can someone study without giving up self-grasping?”
He said, “The problem is not knowing the state of needing nothing! That bird is worrying over its young! Why does it do that?”

Someone asked, “Dampa, what is perfect truth?”
He said:

Having branded a hundred sheep,
If there is one among them without the brand,
Recognize the one without the brand.
The one without the brand, that is the brand!

They asked, “What is the method for perfect truth to appear to one’s mind?”
He said:

If one takes adversities onto the path, bliss arises in one’s mind!
Once that disintegrates, awareness is freed from extremes!
Without intentional grasping, subject-object duality is released in its place!
When one abandons worldly engagement, one perfects virtuous practice!
Seeking liberation without giving up self-grasping is a bad sign!
Someone said to him, “That Damo Yogi died yesterday. What impermanence!”

He replied, “All know they will die. But they don’t realize it deeply in their being. If they realized it, how could they have the leisure to remain ordinary?”

They said, “Through conduct remaining ordinary, the incapacitating five poisons are again generated.”

He said, “Developing the five poisons doesn’t matter. Subsequent to realization, they can be utilized!”

. . . .

Someone said to him, “People who say they wish to practice engage Dampa in a lot of conversation.”

He said, “Discussion itself is virtuous practice! People seek gems from the jewel island, yet don’t find them!”

They said, “All people who know a lot of teachings have some of the gems!”

He responded, “That is only an external appearance! Knowledge of unnecessary teachings masquerades as Dharma!”

. . . .

Someone asked, “What exactly is that which is called Dharma?”

He said, “It’s what the mind not grasping samsara is called!”

“But that itself is not what must be understood as Dharma!”

He said, “Dritön knows many teachings. Because he doesn’t have any idea what Dharma itself is, now it has become a big problem!”

“What problem is that?”

He said, “His Dharma does not become an antidote to delusions and therefore he doesn’t find the path to liberation! It becomes a cause for samsaric rebirth!”

They said, “There is talk that he is no different than the pandits!”

He said, “There is also no difference between a pandit and a parrot. As for Dharma itself, they’re clueless! There are many people who talk, but few who understand!”

. . . .
When someone said to him, “The faithful are Dampa’s servants!” he said:

Where is the faith of the men of Tibet?
The faith of the women is in their private parts!89
If the meritorious seek instructions, they don’t give them!
If the instructions are not wanted, they’re given!
If explained, they’re not believed!
They trust in fakirs!
They don’t listen to those who explain Dharma!
They ask those who don’t explain!
If you hide, they come looking!
If you accompany them, they reject you!
Unable to be happy, they’re greatly distressed by suffering!
If you come before them, they don’t look at you.
If you remain at the outskirts, they seek your face!
I don’t see any need whatsoever for giving instructions that are not kept in mind!
The huge dzo is led around by the tether through his nose!
Until that is broken he will never be happy!
They are waging war in empty space,
Calling the fish in the sea to be their allies!

He covered his eyes with his hand and went into the House of Dependent Arising.80

Someone asked, “Please give me instructions on Dampa’s view and meditation.”
He said:

View? Ask the crow’s nest in the ocean!
Meditation? Train in the eye of the archer!
Conduct? Ask the child!
Fruit? Ask the mill wheel to which the water has stopped running!
If one wishes it to serve for the inner lamp, the outer vase is permitted!
If one is to become a yogi, throw the hook into the water.
From within arises the oval gem!
In addition to being the eye of the raven, don’t enter a body!
Don’t let the archer’s awareness associate with arrogance!
Don’t send the small child onto the melting ice!
The child is ready to be freed from the terrifying abyss!

He was asked, “What should we poor ones do after Dampa dies?”
Dampa answered, “As long as you don’t settle in a household, the cause of samsara, whatever you do is fine! But don’t lose the tether through your nose to just anyone!”
“But if it is engaged with a pure view?”
He said, “If you are discordant with public opinion, that is pure view.”

Precious Padampa said, “If one is going to be a yogi, one must first get free of ghosts. Someone who does not get free of ghosts cannot be a yogi!”
They asked, “Where are the ghosts?”
He said, “If ‘saving face’ is not destroyed, one will not transcend worldly opinion. Therefore, once it is generally agreed that one has lost face, light will blaze!”

Precious Dampa said:

Don’t separate the lion from the snow!
The king doesn’t act like the subjects!
If you have eaten delicious food, don’t vomit it up!
Don’t lend money with interest to the hungry!
Having found a precious jewel, don’t throw it away!
Permanent bridges over the river Ganges are not put up!
Be assiduous at this time!
Draw the wooden saber!
Don’t keep company with the pigeon, snake, and pig!91
Don’t trust in a water bubble!92
If the round turquoise is pierced, keep it in your heart!
Unsupportable burdens make one sick!
Cut the rope of dual winding!
Make the thread short at first!
Look at the untarnished polished quicksilver mirror!

Someone said to him, “It is said that Padampa has seen the face of the Tathagata, the leader of the herd. How wonderful!”

Dampa said, “Seeing the face of the deity and seeing chaff is no different!”

They said, “But we poor ones see chaff and we don’t see the face of the deity!”

He responded, “You don’t see your own face from the back of a mirror! To me there is no difference between seeing the face in the mirror and seeing the face in water!”

Someone said, “There’s no difference for Dampa, having realized the view, but for poor me there is a difference! How blissful it would be to see the face of the deity!”

He said, “It is that bliss itself that does not see!”

Requested, “Please enlighten me on a method to see the deity’s face!” he said:

Drip water on a lump of salt!
Look to the distance inside a leather bag!
Pour the tempered sword blade into the sesame oil!
Don’t teach those who do not want it!
Monkeys don’t live on a mountain without trees!
Lotuses don’t grow from a clean place!
There’s not even water there!

Dampa said:

Kunga is ready to decide!
Nine months have gone by empty!
Now, he is near to meeting the sun!
Throw the bit of varnish into the water!
Having reached the gold fields, don’t put off the work!  
Do you have leisure just to gaze at the moon?  
The Acharya doesn’t even have time for meals!  
Having embarked on the shortcut path it is pleasant. See!  
Remaining ordinary in body, speech, and mind,  
And hoping to attain the fruit of buddhahood is a bad sign!

Dampa said, “They are able to bear discomfort of body, speech, and mind  
for the sake of food and clothing but are not able to bear a moment of suffering for the attainment of buddhahood! They are always able to use body, speech, and mind for desire but are not able to practice for six months! Planting a seed in straw and then hoping for results is a bad sign!”

Dampa said:

Kunga, exhort yourself to arise!  
It’s easy to get familiar with deception!  
If you go through a dangerous passage, go with your lances drawn!  
In the open steppes, the small birds trill their songs!  
Having found the ox, don’t seek it later!  
Don’t speak damaru-words!  
Don’t hope for a calf from a barren field!  
Get off the throne of seeking reputation!  
Sit on the throne-cushion of selflessness!  
Don’t imitate the lark!  
Look at the conduct of bees; the neighborhood foxes and wolves  
have it better!

Dampa said:

Kunga! Are you free to count on next year?  
The Acharya does not count on tomorrow, today!  
When you go to generate the deity, you don’t need bowls for paint  
and varnish!
You make spectacles out of these water bubbles, but when the cold wind blows, you’ll find no place to watch!
Again, this Dharma is true but no one comes for it!
Abbots are calculating on next year!
In this time of the ravenous butcher of samsara and nirvana, don’t fool yourself!
When the mara of death arises, the calculator must go!
The Acharya himself has already made arrangements!
Knowing one will die and not thinking of Dharma is misinforming oneself.
It’s a bad sign!

Dampa said:

This one, who is raising the tightly drawn arrow to the heart of beings, is not lazy!
In this time to attain buddhahood, there’s no time to fall asleep!
Four massive fires burn around the forest! The monkeys have to go!
Amidst a heavenly grove it is nice, but since it’s surrounded by fire it’s not happy!
Quickly escape! Now is the time to flee!
The Acharya is in a secure place!
Next to the burning forest the fish in the ocean are happy!

Dampa said, “Look at all these people without the liberating path. How funny, as well as pitiable!”
Someone asked, “Funny? Do you also think leprosy is funny?”
He said, “In this life they all eat excrement with each bite of food! Not practicing Dharma for the sake of future lives, how is that different from leprosy?”
They answered, “Temporarily it makes a difference in how happy they are. And ultimately the difference is in how long they live.”
He said, “The person who does not practice Dharma has no use for a long life, apart from creating imprints for bad rebirth. There is no one who is free from the resultant suffering! Even lepers are happy at home!”
Dampa said, “If these practitioners want buddhahood, they must reverse their present behavior!”
Asked, “What is wrong with their present behavior?” he said:

They practice thinking that what are in actuality obstacles are attainments!
They meet the liberating path, but doubting and striving, they part from it!
Doubting if they should refrain from their ill-omened actions, they suffer!
The speech of those without experience has become Dharma—supposedly the view.
Kunga is never parted from his prayers for the three village girls!
Now, draw your own conclusions!

Dampa said:

When I see people clinging to illusions as real, compassion arises with a force.
If one considers the sufferings of the six realms in terms of oneself, one has no time to remain ordinary.
When one sees that the characteristic of samsara is suffering, a mind wanting nothing whatsoever is born!
When one sees the various bases as rootless, self-grasping is not born!
When impermanence is born in the mind, faith and perseverance will come together!
Those who grasp at permanence will not destroy persistent grasping at things as real!
Kunga! Internalize truthlessness and throw the kitchen sauce into the water!
Precious Dampa said:

Listen, all who consider practicing Dharma!
Whatever is done for the sake of this life is not beyond suffering!
Therefore, abandon the basis and phenomena of meaningless activity!
There is no purpose in considering samsaric strategies!
Therefore, obliterate mistaken awarenesses!
Non-dharmic activity itself is the cause of samsara!
Therefore, bring forth all your energy for virtuous practice!
As the activity which does not become provisions for future lives is senseless,
Turn toward ultimate goals!
Human life without Dharma is wasted and empty!
Therefore, channel yourself in virtuous practice!
For not a short time we have been servants to this life, food, and clothing, but the moment of death arrives!
The stature of men and women, in summary, at death is clear!
Taking their enjoyments! All these siddhas of this life, ha!
At death there is danger they will have to go empty-handed!

Precious Dampa said:

Whatever activities you do, there is no need for hard work which creates the cause of samsara!
There is no need for over-high status that is not carried into future lives!
To the extent one has taken interest in non-Dharma, that becomes the demons of faulty mind; therefore, abandon it! In the future when one has gone to lower realms, there is no need for human wealth! View relations who do not give time for Dharma as enemy spies! Voluntarily take up meritorious application! When mara of obstacles occur it is an aid! If faith doesn’t spur effort onward, practice will not arise from the bed of laziness! If meritorious karma is not dedicated for the sake of sentient beings, compounded virtue will be wasted! If one is not accompanied by special accumulations, the guiding wings of prayer will fold up!

Again, Dampa said:

For one unripened by blessings, the lacquer of view and meditation will not adhere! If one does not have the root introduction first, one will later not understand the abode of the profound meaning! If the root of practice is mistaken to begin with, later mere virtue will not be taken on the path! If one is parted from one’s Guru, the mode of dependent arising is mistaken; Therefore, proceed with the support of the Gurus without exception! If one does not develop faith and devotion in the Guru, no matter what profound instructions are given they will not be of benefit! If one does not understand worldly activities to be purposeless, the mind of practice will remain wishful thinking! If one does not accomplish one’s own purpose, the hopes one puts in others will be dashed! If one does not practice holy Dharma at this time, one’s human body will be emptily wasted! Returning from the jewel island empty-handed is senseless! Death is certain to come; it can’t be helped! Don’t you see you are about to need provisions for that time?
Precious Dampa said:

The person who moves his practice cushion does not examine the path and persevere!
The person who doesn’t sink his teeth into the introduction will not understand the profound points!
The person who doesn’t stop wandering will not derive boons in realization!
For the person who has not generated ascertaining awareness, ultimate truth is not engaged!
The person who has not dispelled extraneous thought is not freed from chains of doubt!
For the person who has not received the Guru’s blessings, view and meditation are not born!
The person who does not cease the various concerns with this life will not weigh down the practice cushion!
The person who has not first completed his own purpose will not accomplish the purpose of others!
The person who does not destroy the apparent greatness of the perishable world will not maintain the precepts of yoga!
If one is not content with things, the continuum of desire’s slave is not cut!
If one does not accomplish the purpose of future lives, whatever one does, there is no use in doing it!

Precious Dampa said:

Realizations and blessings must be acquired from the Guru, but few will pay the price!
If one does not endure hardship, practice does not succeed!
Why? Those who do not rise from their cushion until experiencing the taste are few!
If meditative experience is loudly verbalized, it dissipates and goes!
Why? Those who apply glue to their lips are few!
Proliferation of thought does not cut superimposition!
Why? Those who mix Dharma with their minds are few!
Merit ripening into worldly status and loss of aspiration for enlightenment are simultaneous!
Why? Those who throw fame and reputation behind them are few!
Among a hundred heads one’s own head is dearest!94
Why? Because few have actual affection for themselves!
In the long run there is no diversion from the path to death!
Why don’t we only see people who are mindful of death!

• • • •

Precious Dampa said:

The lacquer of practice does not adhere to the person who cannot endure hardship!
The person who does not view wealth and property as unneeded does not give up the cause of suffering!
The person who is not disillusioned with samsara does not complete the work that is essential!
The person who craves the things of this life does not reach the path of accomplishment!
The person who practices Dharma, if he does not transcend his birthplace, will not cut the stream of attachment and aversion!
The person who cannot bear loss in food and clothing does not find the fortune for Dharma activity!
The person who has not turned from the eight worldly dharmas does not adhere to ultimate truth!
The person for whom practice is not clearly explained at first becomes unsuccessful in practice later!
The person who is too ornamented in this life because of merit is usually the worst!
The person who can remain humbly happy is the clever one!

• • • •
Precious Dampa said:

One greatly accomplished in this life’s aims will not accomplish the purpose of future lives!
One who views himself as highest will not attain qualities!
One who views himself as supreme will not be freed from dualistic mind!
One whose continuum is not warmed by faith and devotion will not absorb the sap of blessings!
If one does not recognize mistaken instructions, one will not realize the essence of all!
One whose continuum is not ripened by empowerment will not accomplish activity of the deity!
To one who does not grasp the root meaning, profound Dharma becomes mere words!
If one’s hands are not weighted with skillful means, wisdom will be something one has only heard about!
To one who utters beautiful words without experience, realizations will not dawn!
One whose tantra is unaccompanied by bodhichitta will not give rise to energy of enlightened activity!
Again, to one who is not disillusioned with samsara, Dharma will not come!

Precious Dampa said:

Until one puts on armor free of worldly concerns, transcendent Dharma will not be generated in one’s being!
Until one fully develops faith and perseverance of heart, mere occasional Dharma practice will not cross over the grounds and paths!
Until one has worked for the happiness of one’s enemies for an extended time, one will not sever ties to worldly opinion!
Until one stays alone like the humble deer, one will not purify the stains of attachment and hatred!
Until one develops the attitude of needing nothing worldly, one will not stop seeking the mundane things of this life!
Until one is contented with what one has, one’s empty mind will never be satiated!

. . . .

Precious Dampa said:

If you practice Dharma, cherish the attitude of seeing the Guru as Buddha.
Do not reverse your devotion!
It is important to generate a longing mind of aspiration and devotion.
The blessings will enter you without choice!
By cherishing seeing the instructions as nectar, decisive understanding arises.
Never stop cherishing them, and you will be powerless to avoid understanding the meaning!
By cherishing the motivation for practice in the practice lineage, you will not put off your virtuous practice!
Develop the perseverance that feels there is no time to waste, and you will be powerless to avoid generating realized experience!
At first, without mistaken intention, by cherishing meeting the Dharma, you will not come upon mistaken paths.
In the middle, by cherishing the practice of keeping the commitments, you will not rise from your cushion before experiencing the taste.
In the end, by emphasizing engaging in action and by cherishing not reverting for even an instant, your mind will not conform to that of worldly beings.
By cherishing not wasting your life in distraction, there is no way you will not practice Dharma.

. . . .

Precious Dampa said:

Though looking and staring like a jackal, the person who doesn’t see samsaric suffering is blind!
Though listening like a wild boar, stock upright, the person who has not heard the meaning of virtue and harm is deaf!
Wanting happiness and bliss, yet knowingly paying the price for suffering, a person, like a parrot, though knowing how to speak, is stupid!
Though, like a king, one is a mahasiddha of the things of this life, not accomplishing the purpose of future lives, one tortures oneself!
Making one's interest this perishable world and not caring even a hair for the future, similar to monkeys, one’s intelligence is wasted!
The master of five people and the herder of five goats exhausts himself looking after others!
Like the captain who arrives at the island and doesn’t take any jewels, going empty-handed at one’s own death is reckless and heartless!
If one practices Dharma, in future lives one will be self-sufficient!

Dampa lowered his radiant face and wept.

Asked, “What’s wrong?” he said, “Unhappy at heart, a tear comes. It’s because of seeing many people losing their true purpose.”

Asked, “What sort of things do you see?” he replied:

The lord of jewels is dying of starvation;
The purpose for the wish-fulfilling jewel is one I see lost!
The sage’s bag with thousands of medicines is used as a pillow and unbearable disease goes unchecked;
The purpose for lack of confusion in the healing arts is one I see lost!
The gold-making alchemist is impoverished, without implements;
The purpose for knowledge of special means is one I see lost!
An old woman is always beating a champion in his prime;
The purpose for the body having agility is one I see lost!
The sovereign of holy lords, sick and aging, is a servant sweeper;
The purpose for royalty being conferred empowerment is one I see lost!
The lineage of this old man who’s a seventh-generation Brahmin is cut;
The purpose of fulfilling many disciples is one I see lost!
It’s out of compassion the tear comes!
Precious Dampa said, “Call Dōmo Gendun Kyi. Tell her there is a sale!”
Josay Lama called, “Gendun Kyi! I have some things here! Sale! Sale!”
When she arrived, Padampa said, “Move some dirt over here!”
Asked, “What are you going to do with dirt?” Padampa said, “There is a very important purpose for it! Dré Tön says that without diminishing the force of delusions even in the slightest, there is no need for Dharma activity. He claims that enlightenment is not attained through a Dharma that is to be practiced. This handful of dirt is to throw into his mouth! There is no liberation without practice of Dharma! Tönpa Tribar says, ‘Act insatiable for illusion! There is no meditation!’ This handful of dirt is to throw into his mouth! Without meditation one will never be far from conceptual thought! Nyang Tribar, without taking even the slightest vow, disparages Gargom’s lay ordination! This handful of dirt is to throw into his mouth! A human being without vows is no different from an animal! There are a lot of people here in Dingri who don’t even get up when dirt is thrown at them!”
He was asked, “What do you mean?”
Dampa Rinpoche replied, “A teacher who seeks the causes of suffering without accomplishing happiness throws dirt at the heart of this Lion of Dharma. Even though it causes them to experience more suffering, they don’t become alarmed! Not being disillusioned with suffering and volunteering for more of it in the future throws dirt at the heart of Nyangmo Chötren! Shying from happiness and running towards more suffering throws dirt at the heart of Dro Salé. Not practicing and abandoning in accordance with karma even when one can distinguish between virtuous and harmful actions throws dirt at the heart of Kyü Josay. Not having the slightest impulse to practice Dharma even though one’s life is drawing to an end throws dirt at the heart of Utso Baré. Saying, ‘If you have learning as vast as the sky, don’t help others. It splits the sun!’ and not practicing the profound meaning throws dirt at the heart of Tönpa Trizang! Exhausting yourself seeking to help others, while not having accomplished your own purpose in the slightest, throws dirt at the heart of Je Tripa! When dirt won’t do, some even throw fire!”
Knowing that they were wondering what he meant by that, he continued, “Seeing people who would practice the Dharma that brings happiness in this and future lives not coming here throws burning embers in the eyes
of Rog Trizang. I don’t see any point in those coming who don’t practice! Not admiring the Guru’s great qualities while having high regard for some slight magical illusion throws burning embers in the eyes of Drochungwa! The Guru is indeed kind to pour the eighty-four-thousand collections of Dharma upon those whose mass of faults requires it. But to see people fixed in mistaken attitudes even when they are taught the profound meaning through many nonverbal symbolic methods throws burning embers in the eyes of Nyang Nyi Trikyab. I find that if people do not understand the meaning from symbols, texts will not sever their preconceptions. Without seeing the traditional commentaries composed by the previous Gurus, viewing mistaken paths as the ultimate throws burning embers in the eyes of Kugom Zikar. I would say that if practice is not completed in the presence of the Guru, it’s not going to happen!”

Precious Dampa said:

Know that human life without practice of Dharma is empty, wasted!
Know that any activity that does not become Dharma is meaningless!
Know that any activity that does not benefit future lives emanates from a faulty mind!
If you don’t try to escape, you won’t attain liberation.
Therefore understand that, of a hundred exit doors, your own door is the one to cherish!
In meaningless strife, precious human life ages and is lost.
Therefore, know there is nothing to do but practice Dharma!
Know that, in this life one task necessitates another, so that there will be no end of activities for this life!
Know that, if you do not have contentment with things, you will become a slave to desire!
Know that human life without thought of future lives is no different from an animal’s!
Know that relations who give you no time for Dharma are spies of the enemy!
Know that food and clothing which are not used for Dharma are wasted!
Precious Dampa said:

The door of non-Dharma opening powerfully brings ruin;
Many are mahasiddhas of sin!
Too many things which do not create meritorious accumulation bring ruin;
They become cause for accumulating negativity!
Becoming master of the gathering brings ruin;
Because of your pride, you will be used by others and not accomplish your own true purpose!
A practitioner, by increased concern for wealth, is ruined;
His enlightenment is lost in gaining the approval of others!
The faithful, by too much knowledge, are ruined;
Too many methods become the cause of their moral decline.95
The knowledgeable, by being great mahasiddhas of worldly things, are ruined;
Contradicting Dharma takes no effort.
The practitioner, by too many interests, is ruined;
He trains without bringing anything to completion!
A practitioner, by too much conformity, is ruined;
He does not cut the connection with worldly opinion!
A male Dharma practitioner, by not following the common course, fulfills his purpose;
If you practice for your own true purpose, people may defame you. It doesn’t matter!
A female Dharma practitioner, by not keeping a household, fulfills her purpose;
If you practice for your own true purpose, people may say whatever. It doesn’t matter!
Those who know what is ultimately important are few!

...
Precious Dampa said:

For someone who is a beginner, as you are not self-sufficient,
If you do not associate with a spiritual guide,
With no way to receive the teachings, the essentials of practice will not be forthcoming.
Therefore have a Guru who possesses the lineage!
As you are not without faults, don’t look for mistakes in your Guru!
As impartial knowledge is not gained on first meeting,
Extend the duration of your association with the Guru!
As it is difficult to understand upon first hearing,
Emphasize obtaining deep understanding!
As endless discussion doesn’t cut through scholarly doubts,
Decisively settle your questions!
As realizations are slow to dawn from the words of scriptural commentaries,
Generate ascertainment in the words of the Guru!
As you are not liberated by just knowing Dharma, practice it!
Without prolonged practice, signs of the path do not arise.
As on the liberating path enemies arise,
Don’t give up practice in the face of adversity!
As deception is not dispelled by just one glimpse of essential nature,
Attain stability through familiarity!

Precious Dampa said:

By just being introduced to the root, deception is not cut.
But, by cutting superimposition, mistakes on the path are dispelled.
As faith instilled by others is easily lost, rely upon a mind of conviction!
As mundane mind is an obstacle to the liberating path, cut bindings of craving!
If activities are not brought into the spiritual path, meditation will not cleanse defilement;
So generate the objects of realization’s understanding!
If vividness of experience does not emerge in your realization,
Transcendent wisdom does not arise;
So don’t leave it at mere conceptual understanding!
If you don’t take the discordant onto the path, you’ll not be freed
from dualistic appearances;
So change your perceptions!
Having realized the ultimate mode, if you don’t meditate on it,
The original experience is lost, so practice!
If you don’t realize intensity of bliss and clarity, stains of excitement
and sinking are not dispelled,
So emerge in rigpa!
Amassing merit does not harm the realized,
So do not cut the roots of compounding virtue!
As the light of realization is harmed by the stains of deception,
Distance yourself from discursive conception!
In town, peoples’ defilements rub off on you, so practice in retreat!

. . . .

Precious Dampa said:

As it’s easy to be stained by appearance of deception,
Don’t serve an entourage of women!
By striving for the very highest position you’ll be surrounded by
obstructive maras,
So take the low position!
Since wealth is a cause for entanglement, a practitioner does not
accumulate things.
Since wealth is a beckoner of obstacles, destroy worldly pride!
Coming into a position of people’s veneration, a practitioner loses
his meditation cushion.
View busyness as an enemy!
As it is just activities for the sake of this life alone which are the
obstacle of virtuous practice, do not willingly engage for the sake
of wealth!
As it is just non-dharmic action that is the work of mara, eyes, look
not to worldly beings!
If you practice view and meditation, you stop even wishing for food and clothing, so forbear with the worst! Considering this life and accomplishing the welfare of future lives are not a compatible pair, so give up non-dharmic activity! Sickness, aging, and death are the end of life, so make your provisions for the journey ahead!

...  

Asked, “Is taking a consort on the path a shortcut?” precious Dampa said:

The blade of the razor is for cutting, but the children of monkeys are unable to rely on the help of such spiritual friends; So the consorts of Tibet bring them to grief! A practitioner meeting a woman brings no satisfaction; So it brings no development on the path! The Tibetans have difficulty harnessing themselves to a deity; So they are not satisfied by conferral of the four initiations! Someone who has purified deception in dharmata has no need of the four initiations! The person who has pure appearance, who knows the Guru to be Buddha, has no need to meditate on a deity! With appearances arising as scriptural texts, the person who experiences objects of the six senses as impetus to practice has no need to rely upon a consort! Having purified appearances in rigpa, the person for whom dualistic appearances have been pacified in their own place has no need to apply body, speech, and mind in virtuous practice!

...  

Precious Dampa said:

If you do not destroy grasping by seeing appearances as the nature of consciousness, Consciousness will not be realized to lack inherent existence. If you do not prepare the conditions for your body, Experience will not be generated in the mind.
If the overgrowth of mental appearance doesn’t dissipate,
The innate will not be purely infused.
If you don’t take the discordant as the path,
Contrary conditions will not be supportive.
If you don’t alternate equipoise and subsequent realization,
You become bound by meditative experience.
If you are not aware of the faults of transitory awareness,
You will not realize clear light’s emptiness of coming and going.
If you don’t establish conviction and reject your habitual view,
You will follow after the objects of karmic imprints.
Without separating from the outer supporting environment,
The taste of the elements is not equalized.
Because of attachment to inner thoughts,
Hallucinations do not cease.
If you do not erect the pillar of space in focused meditation,
You will not be freed of conceptions of grossness and subtlety.
If you don’t purify appearances in the energy of rigpa,
You will not be freed of imprints and samsaric phenomena!

... ... ...

Asked, “Dampa, you said you’ve been to two thirds of the world. Have you seen great wonders?” precious Dampa said:

I’ve seen some amazing things!
I’ve seen a sage given meditation instructions by a peacock’s eye. He entrusted it to a tree spirit, and a sea captain’s son was released from doubts by it!
I’ve seen a Brahmin’s son who, by drinking milk, got drunk and his vomit dripped as nectar!
I’ve seen a son of poor ancestry from the pigsty vying for a king’s treasury, who went to the depths of the ocean to tan in the sun, and kept watch with his eyes closed!
I’ve seen a woman who, looking in the mirror and wishing to clean herself, washed the soles of her feet, and, taking off a jeweled necklace, put a spindle on her body as an ornament!
I’ve seen a prince who subdued the opposing army without leaving his seat, a queen bringing others’ water to boil, and the conclusion of ministers’ discussion being to “go ask a crow”!

... ...

Utso Trizang, taking Dampa’s feet to his crown, requested, “Please give instruction!”

Precious Dampa said:

Acting like death will never come to those born,
If we don’t see how little time we have to remain,
We will regret wasting our human life in wandering!
Whatever practice of holy Dharma you do, limit meaningless worldly talk
And, when practicing, engage with clear awareness!
As we have little time to remain the servant of food and fashion,
It’s time to make provisions for future lives!
As satisfaction doesn’t come from desirable sense objects, stop craving!
As no end comes to worldly activities, transform work!
There is no need to be a servant to others without having accomplished your own purpose,
So accomplish the purpose of future lives!
Whatever is done for the sake of this life remains in suffering,
So gather your energy for practice!
If you listen to the Acharya there is no way to not practice Dharma!

Asked, “What do you mean?” precious Dampa said:

For those reasons, rise up and look to the long term!
Don’t care what others think; cherish your meditational deity!
Keep from even the slightest harmful actions!
As seeking the highest position is, itself, the way of going to lower realms,
Keep to a low position!
If wealth is not used for virtue, human life is empty and going in the wrong direction!
Since there never comes a time when your responsibility to others around you is finished,
Decide, “There’s no way but to practice Dharma!”
Since, if you don’t practice Dharma this time, there’s no hope for the future,
Decide, “If I think I can do this in the future, I’m deceiving myself!”
Since there’s no detour on the path to death,
Decide, “While I’m here, I’ll not allow anything non-dharmic!”
In the case of all courage not directed towards Dharma, winning actually means losing!
Therefore meditate that those activities done for the sake of this life are the cause of misery!

Precious Dampa said:

If you wish your mind to be ripened by blessings,
Generate recognition that the Guru is Buddha!
If you wish to generate samadhi in your mind,
Don’t let awareness follow after appearances!
If you wish to generate realizations in your mind,
Release dualistic consciousness!
If you wish for deception to be released on the basis of its object,
Don’t grasp appearances of the six consciousnesses to truly exist!
If you wish to understand the profound meaning,
Generate discerning knowledge!
If you wish to cease the various ordinary minds,
Let go of objects of craving!
If you wish to generate leap over realizations,
Don’t keep lower worldly mental states!
If you wish to be free of sinking sluggishness,
Muster intense vivid awareness!
If you wish to purify dispersion,
Recognize present awareness!
If you wish to progress in spiritual experience,
After ceasing conceptions head straight to the unobjectified!
If you wish for resultant enlightenment,
Let go of the mind grasping things to exist in reality!
Precious Dampa said:

Blessings will not enter one who has no devotion to the Guru!
In one whom blessings have not entered, realization will not dawn!
For one who is not disillusioned with samsara,
Signs of the path will not arise!
In one not parted from the armor of worldliness,
View and meditation will not be born!
In the person who makes no time for practice,
Signs of the path will not appear!
Austerities not removed to the mountains are greatly obstructed!
The person who doesn’t consider living according to vowed discipline
Does not discern the paths and stages!
The person whose practice does not destroy great worldly striving
Does not progress on the path!
The lazy person who doesn’t complete any practice in the presence of the Guru
Will not become self-sufficient!
If engagement is not applied to your main objective,
Cultivating antidotes will not further you on the path!
If you don’t carry the armor with you after meditation,
You will not drink the nectar of practical application!
If you don’t generate ascertaining awareness,
You will not engage ultimate truth!
If you don’t reverse the mind of this life,
The mind of practice will be no more than a wish!
These Tibetan Dharma practitioners are many,
But they won’t get to the first accomplishment of siddhi!

Looking at Kutön’s mala of white zi beads hanging unused, Precious Dampa said:

There’s no difference between your mala and a lady’s necklace!
There’s no need for a mala that’s not connected to essence!
There’s no use for a mala that’s not connected with a deity!
There’s no need for a deity that’s not connected with compassion!
There’s no need for compassion that’s not connected with voidness!
The chariot without its wheels attached can’t go!

Asked, “Why is that?” he said:

As practice is done for the sake of this life, the motivation is impure!
As application is not connected with bodhichitta, there is no meaningful accomplishment!
If practice is done, it is for total engagement, but without experiencing the true taste, they rise from their cushions!
The body of practice, unrelated with signs of the path, goes for naught!
Wishing to be seen as a mahasiddha, they proclaim siddhis far and wide!
Virtue unsupported by realization of selflessness attains nothing meaningful!
Though practicing occasionally, not knowing how to guard it, they fall back!
With no moral bounds, how could there be attainments?

Padampa, seeing what the other was thinking, said:

In this snow-mountain encircled land of the north,
These children descended from monkeys have no perseverance!
In essence, what is important?
If one doesn’t practice Dharma now, at this time, the wealth is dispersed,
But I don’t see anyone even staying close to the Protector of Beings!
They don’t know how to have a Guru!
They don’t know how to attend to teachings!
They don’t recognize the instructions!
They put off the important and practice the less important first!
Do you see how these monkey children act like animals?
Again, as the questioner had another thought, it appeared to Dampa’s mind and he replied:

Don’t seek such small aims!
Seek attainment of stable familiarity with realization!
If one doesn’t transform inwardly,
Delusions are easily developed in the minds of entangled beings!
Seek the elixir of familiarity with spiritual experience!
Sentient beings are without strength!
It’s easy for mind that has not abandoned delusions to be familiar with deceptive appearances!
Never separating from their loose conceptual thought, beings on mistaken paths and their friends quickly raise the corpse of imprints!
With what is called ascertaining awareness, cut through superimpositions!
For someone who has not equalized the tastes of dualistic appearances, it’s easy to be familiar with deception!
It doesn’t happen through just being introduced; meditate continually!
Because ignorance is so strong, it’s difficult to be familiar with the root of one’s own being!
Unconcerned, they seek Dharma, but can’t actually reach it!
Do it yourself from the depths of your heart!
Hoping to practice some sort of Dharma, you would like to be able to die without your breath ceasing. But, can you?

... 

Tönpa Tribar asked for meditation instructions. Precious Dampa said:

Don’t take outer appearances inside!
Don’t project inner conceptions outside!
Don’t examine the tracks of previous awareness!
Don’t greet future events with thought!
Meditation is good if knots of truth-grasping are released!
Thoughts of past and future will not interrupt you!
Again, a thought occurred to the other and Dampa knew and replied:

Within inconceivable meaning,
Don’t seek meditative equipoise!
Within liberation of appearances in their own place,
Don’t seek subsequent attainment!\(^{197}\)
Without thinking of past, present, and future,
Don’t seek meditation breaks!
Experience the liberation of thoughts!
Practice letting go of conceptual grasping!
Act without craving in natural liberation!
Be introduced to the natural liberation of concepts!
Experience rigpa awareness in its own natural state!
Experience seeing the rootless!
Bring cessation to inappropriate intellect!

\[\ldots\]

A group asked the Lord for an essence mantra.

Dampa said, “All you people have the same mantra!”

Asked, “What is it?” he said, “Your mantra is this: ‘Back and forth wandering on a path of distraction, I age,’ and then finally you say, ‘\textit{SVAHA!}’ to an empty wasted life! You already know that mantra! Now, do you still want a mantra?”

Uncomfortable with that, they asked for a mantra to prevent rebirth in hell. Dampa said:

\begin{quote}
\textbf{OM} What’s wrong with going to hell?
\textbf{AH} As its nature is empty, what’s the difference?
\textbf{HUM} With the king of mantras, self-risen wisdom,
\textbf{PHAT} Conception, the king of obstructers, is destroyed!
\textbf{HRI} Within samsara being without inherent existence. \textit{SVAHA!}
\end{quote}

Remember and say that!”

\[\ldots\]

The other had a thought and, reading it, Dampa said, “The king of deities is the Guru! So keep him always at the crown of your head! The king of offer-
ings is to be without craving desire, so cut bindings! The king of samayas is to look not to this perishable world, so give up this life! If you don’t separate from these instructions, you’ll do fine!”

Precious Dampa said to the Lord Tripa, “Come here and I’ll give you instruction!”

Know that if one’s domain becomes larger, the water of suffering overflows!
Know that your own impure appearances cause negativity to adhere to you!
Know that those who, though they sicken and age, don’t think about that and are not mindful of death, are childish!
Know that human life not making provisions for future lives is empty and mistaken!
Know that human life without practice of Dharma, aging yourself in being a custodian of others, is without purpose!
Know that, if you don’t attain the path of liberation now, this time, you will wander endlessly in samsara!
Know that human life will be but a one-time pleasure if you don’t give up caring about worldly opinion!
Lord, if you would listen to this Acharya, understand that working on yourself is more important than trying to look after your many people!

Precious Dampa said:

If at first you don’t get the root, you won’t be able to overcome meeting with objects!
Until you’re without bad conceptions, you won’t develop certain awareness!
If you don’t recognize objects as illusory projections, you won’t develop mind which is not needy!
If you don’t stop craving things, nirvana is far away!
Until you cease the mind of desire, you don’t let go of the cause of suffering!
Dharma without renunciation of samsara does not progress on the paths and stages!
If you aren’t content without things of this life, your body and mind become the slave of desire!
Practice done amidst the opposite sex does not cut the grounds!
If you practice Dharma itself you must be willing to be cast out like a leper, not fitting in with the common crowd!

Someone heard Dampa fiercely scolding and wondered who he was scolding. Dampa knew, and said:

I’m scolding because there are so many sick and declining people whose heat is drying up!
I’m scolding the person who hopes to practice Dharma yet doesn’t refrain from discursive thought for even an instant!
I’m scolding the person who hopes to generate realizations yet doesn’t give up this life in the slightest!
I’m scolding the person who hopes to have realizations yet has not experienced the single taste of all dualistic appearances!
I’m scolding the ones who have committed themselves to yogic practice yet do not transform ordinary awareness in the slightest!
Though I scold them they don’t see the danger!

Asked, “Why are they not afraid?” Dampa said:

If you’re afraid, the liberating path depends on the Guru, so I must scold those who don’t see the holy teacher as the source of refuge!
If you don’t turn away from samsara, nirvana is far away because you strive for just this life’s pleasures!
If you wish for some result such as buddhahood, your actions must be opposite those of the worldly; yet, whatever they do they create cause for samsara!
You must have perseverance as the friend of the yogi, yet they don’t destroy the cushion of laziness!
You must take faith as the basis of practice, yet they don’t have respect and devotion!
From excessive pride, mara descends; yet they applaud and praise themselves!
Virtuous action is done with inner contentment, yet they must proclaim it to everyone!
Difficult to digest are oval stones of turquoise, yet they bring no essential realization!
It’s as if these people are guarding a prison that gives no release from samsara!
They keep divine pride of the deity, yet don’t destroy the pride of being supreme among others!
It’s these people I scold!

Precious Dampa said, “As a substitute for a head ornament, using your mala! It must be nice to have such leisure!”
The reply came, “I hardly have time to say just the essence mantra!”
Dampa laughed a long time then said, “There’s no need for a mala that’s not counting mantras! There’s no need for knowledge of Dharma that does not become the antidote to delusion! There’s no need for staying in retreat in which you don’t do virtuous practice! There’s no need for precepts which aren’t put into practice!”
A thought occurred to the other and Dampa, knowing, replied, “You don’t think, ‘I won’t practice today,’ but thinking, ‘Tomorrow, tomorrow,’ you get old! I don’t see any practice getting done with an aged body! And old age is death’s neighbor! When that time comes, without your horse having arrived you have to go! You pass the time thinking, ‘I must practice some Dharma,’ but I don’t see any free time in your life!”
Again, a thought occurred to the other and Dampa, knowing, replied, “You don’t know shame! If you have any shame, rather than aging yourself worrying what others think, it’s better to take pity on yourself! Among a hundred heads, your own is dearest! Spending your human life toiling as a slave to a woman is meaningless! Don’t go in company of women! When it’s time to actually help yourself, it’s right to do so!”
Geshe Yonggey said, “Please give a method for attaining enlightenment!”

Dampa clapped his hands three times and, after laughing for a long time, said, “Geshe wanting enlightenment! Can it be true? Are you overjoyed or depressed? What I say is, as you consider yourselves so high, the teachers in Tibet all, from their depths, do not want enlightenment! The Acharya decided this years ago! If you really want it, there are easy methods!”

The other had another thought and Padampa, knowing, said, “The teachers definitely don’t want enlightenment! If you wish for enlightenment, can your conduct be principally that of worldly activity? As any results of actions are intended for this life, where will perfect enlightenment come from? If enlightenment could be attained by amassing samsaric karma, that would be nice! But to someone who doesn’t renounce samsaric delights, enlightenment says, ‘Oh, no!’ and turns its back!”

. . .

Trizang said, “I’ll prepare a good throne but, as I have to go now, please keep in mind some instruction to give me when I return!”

Dampa laughed for a long time and said, “Trizang, no matter how much you prepare a throne, there’s no essence there! If there is essence, you assume that sickness, aging, and death are close by! If there is essence, at death you assume you’re not empty of all Dharma! If you consider number of years, your life span is already gone like a bee whose energy is spent! Assume you have no time to remain alive! The youth, like a rusty piece of iron, is already gone! This old man, like a servant, has been left behind! So, assume there is nothing to do but practice Dharma! Finally, there is dharmic action!”

Dampa, knowing his next thought, said, “What good is it to attain a special human body? You don’t make any provisions for later lives! What good is it to meet a Guru who possesses the lineage? You don’t carry him on the crown of your head! What good is it to listen to profound Dharma? You’re not fit to apply it to your mind! What good does it do to intend to practice Dharma? Your human life is wasted in distraction! What good is it to have some slight faith? You can’t stop concerning yourself with worldly opinion! What good is it if another has deep awareness, if you don’t know your own face? Trizang, if you consider your bee-like buzzing recitations of society’s opinions as Dharma, it’s all over!”

. . .
Jang Gomso asked, “Please give me meditation instruction.”

Dampa asked, “Why do you want to meditate?”

He answered, “Indeed, to attain enlightenment!”

Dampa answered, “If you listen to the Acharya, you don’t need to meditate to attain enlightenment!”

The other asked, “Without relying on hearing, contemplation, and meditation, is it possible to attain any arya path?”

Dampa said, “Don’t take any path that doesn’t attain arya states! You can put excrement in the mouth of anyone who speaks of hearing, contemplation, and meditation!”

He asked, “Well, then, what should one practice to attain liberation?”

Dampa said, “In the Acharya’s system, someone with highest faculties practices dharmadhatu without appearance! The middling trainee practices liberating the six consciousnesses right where they are! The least trainee practices various paths! Hearing, contemplating, and meditating without giving up samsara, you’re like a dog! One might as well eat excrement!” And he laughed for a long time.

The other didn’t like that, so Dampa said, “There’s no need for you to be unhappy! Hearing which is not fully liberated is a dog! To him, the shit is nice! Contemplation which doesn’t understand the essential point is a dog! He likes the shit of conceptions! Meditation which doesn’t generate transcendent wisdom is a dog! He likes the shit of concepts! That’s what a dog gets to eat!”

“Well, then, are perception, concept, and intellectual application all to be abandoned at once?”

He said, “Those three? In India, the pandits abandon concepts! The yogis abandon blessings! The kusulupas abandon training in awareness energy! In Tibet, I have no idea what they abandon!”

The other said, “In Tibet, we practice meditation.”

Dampa said, “The upper realm gods also abide in excellent samadhi for ages but, by that, they don’t break the chains of samsara! What do you accomplish with meditation?”

The other thought to reply, and Dampa, knowing, said, “Jang Gom’s emptiness, fabricated by intellect, is not the view! In dharmata, free of projection, primordially pure, there is no creation or cessation! Holding rigpa awareness with effort is not meditation! If appearances are not liberated on the spot, misfortune of deceptive objects will not be exhausted! The rising
steam of concepts of a householder is not experiential realization! If you don’t accept awareness as truthless you will not be able to shave off the fur of conceptual appearances! Being content with joy caused by mara is not a sign of the path! The practitioner’s developing excessive pride and becoming windswept99 are simultaneous!”

The other asked, “So Dampa, himself, does not meditate from the very depths?”

He said, “Jang Gom! If you don’t take up applied conduct, meditation will not erase defilement! If you meditate with ‘realization,’ you fall to a lesser path! The Acharya has no meditation! Being without meditation, practice with ‘intentionality’ is dispersed! Not based in intellect, being without object, ‘equipoise’ and ‘subsequent attainment’ are destroyed! Signs being liberated on the spot, conceptions subside to dust! Not grasping objects, looking with eyes free of projection, there is no meditation! In that sphere, not attending to the three times, traces left by intellect are cut! Grasping is not developed! Deception is destroyed! An experience of one’s own awareness, free of being based in intellect, is born!”

To Zham Tönpa Lion King, Dampa said, “Most of your Tibetan translators waste my teachings! Do they just say anything whatsoever?”

Zham Tönpa asked, “What is it with which you’re displeased?”

Dampa answered, “All those learned scholars still do not turn from ordinary intellect! In minds that know much Dharma, delusions still do not diminish! The teachers do not understand Sanskrit! The practitioners have no experience! The yogis have no realization!”

The king replied, “It’s not that they don’t understand the language! We just hope they can attain the two siddhis!”

Dampa said, “Sure, they hope for it, but it’s not something material! If you have experience, delusions are taken onto the path! If you have realization, dualistic awareness is liberated on the spot; but I don’t see it happening! What difference is there between Tibetan Dharma practitioners and ordinary beings?”

Zham Tönpa retorted, “But, still, tenet systems make a big difference in transforming the mind!”

Dampa countered, “That may be true, but Tibetan practitioners’ minds are not transformed by tenets! If they are transformed, appearances of objects are said to be deceptions of mind; but Tibetan practitioners are not
first of all freed from grasping perceptions! They explain conventionalities
to be without intrinsic identity as illusions, yet Tibetan practitioners, view-
ing their own mental continuum, are not released from the knots of craving
attachment! They explain that desire is a poisonous plant that brings disas-
ter if touched, yet they don’t cut through desirous longing! They explain
this life’s deceptions to be transitory yet don’t destroy ignorance’s insistent
grasping! They explain that now is the time to attain our ultimate purpose
for all time yet spend day and night meaninglessly! I don’t see them trans-
forming their human lives, at all!” He went on at length.

The king said, “It is true, just so! In this remote Tibet, a place where
meritorious accumulations have not been gathered, let alone blessings, even
realized qualities don’t bring benefit! I’ll go with you to China as your hum-
ble servant! Even if we don’t return to Tibet, please grant your blessings for
the benefit of beings!”

Dampa said, “Were we to return, what could be done? In your land, the
path to liberation does not exist! To care for others, first ripen yourself! If
there is no design in the mold, the round tsa-tsa will not emerge! Hook the
mind of desire inside, and throw the noose of compassion outward! Don’t
accept the wealth derived of merit, and take on to your shoulder the pack
of altruism! Neglecting your own welfare, seize the welfare of others as your
principal practice! It’s very important to enter the pit of fire for the sake of
even one sentient being! Let us, father and son, meet in Tushita!”

One Ngari Jang To Chen came to request gold of Dampa. But, unable to
bear Dampa’s radiance, he asked for instructions instead, saying, “Dampa-
la! Having felt sincere faith in you I’ve come from a long distance; without
Dharma provisions I’ve been unable to practice. Dampa, please take care
of me!”

Dampa was amused by this and laughed for a long time. He said, “Jang
To Chen! You must have had a father with great desire and a slander-
ous mother, for them to have such a son as you! Your mind should be
revolted by your mouth! Wasn’t it for business that you’ve come such a
long way? Not practicing Dharma, what need is there for Dharma pro-
visions? I have compassion, but you are not sincere! The hubbub is all at the
bazaar! Get out!”
Yonggey Wangchug said, “Dampa-la! Thinking I must, by all means, practice some Dharma, I’ve listened to a little Dharma from all the Lamas but have not developed any faith! Wondering if I have no remaining karma, sometimes I’ve wept! What’s wrong?”

Dampa said, “It’s nothing but faith! Since you have no certain knowledge, you’re not liberated from doubt! There are many people like that! For that sort to awaken, since their karma is not ripened, it’s very important for them to accumulate merit!”

He asked, “How do you begin to gather the accumulation of merit?”

Dampa said, “You’re still an animal! The accumulation of merit is without any attachment, giving everything for Dharma, of course!”

At this point the other cut off his zī bead necklace and offered it to Dampa. Taking off his clothes, he prostrated to Dampa. Taking off his loin cloth he went to give it to a leper, and his daughter tried to stop him. Dampa was delighted at this and blessed him, and his deceptive mind was destroyed.

. . . .

The benefactress Zingma’s son died. She, suffering with grief, came to Dampa to receive Dharma. Dampa said, “The faith brought on by misfortune dissipates quickly, like wealth you’ve borrowed from others which they take back when you need it! Tibetan faith and the clouds of Dingri are gone when you need them! Having that instruction is enough!”

She said, “Dampa-la! I was mistaken before! Now I have no need for anything whatsoever and I’ll practice Dharma! I’ve given up all my land to practice!”

Dampa said, “Zingma! In that, you already have the instructions! Even I do none other than just that! Thank you!”

She said, “But please give an instruction to benefit my mind.”

Dampa said, “Since I have no mind, I have no idea what would help! For all those with minds, what help could be found in the mountain passes? What help could be found in the valleys? Show me whatever you have that is like a mind, and I’ll do something to fix it!”

She said, “There’s something like a mind and I don’t understand it! I’m just unhappy!”

At this Dampa laughed, “True, true, I was just kidding! Since compounded things are impermanent, don’t grasp them as true! The end of
gathering is separation, so don’t have great attachment! Grief is a mental disease, so move on to something else! All attachments are a cause for samsara, so give them up! Become my consort and, even if you seek suffering, you won’t find it!”

. . . .

One named Majo Dronma had a pretense of knowing Dharma, and was always singing crazy songs. She sang, “I’ve given up activities so I’m happy! Thank goodness I’m the crazy one! Through faith and devotion I’ve been blessed! Thank goodness for Lord Dampa the Indian! Developing ascertainty, I’ve met the ultimate! Thank goodness one’s own mind is dharmakaya!”

Dampa said, “I’ll sing a song to yours! Charchung, you sing along.” He sang:

Always refrain from actions of harmful intent!
Yogic conduct without embarrassment is ever blissful!
Proclaimed devotion burns my ears!
You have no recognition of kindness!
I don’t take offerings just so others can save face!
One’s own mind is indeed dharmakaya, but you don’t recognize it!

All the people laughed and she was embarrassed.

. . . .

Lama Gomnag said, “Though I’ve practiced a little, it doesn’t develop further! Please give me instruction!”

Dampa said, “Your faith has had a flare-up! Your perseverance is like uneven patches of grass. Your practice is no more solid than melting ice. Your faith and devotion is flattery! If you wish enlightenment from your heart, you’ll have to improve your behavior a great deal.”

The other asked, “How should I act?”

Dampa said, “Divine Dharma brings benefit swiftly, but don’t be superficial in seeking signs of realization! Since you won’t achieve anything with vacillating mind, plant it in one place! Since transformative blessings depend on conviction and devotion, bring forth a mind of pure faith! Since nothing is accomplished through procrastination, don’t mix practice
with worldly work! As qualities arise, mara tries to gain an entrance! View wealth as an enemy! As Tibetans’ perseverance is too weak, the tree is cut down and left! Wishing resultant buddhahood with a short attention span! How could that be possible?”

A Lord of Lamas asked Dampa, “Please give instruction on the unmistaken meaning of view and meditation.”

Dampa said, “Lama, view is released from tenets! Like a garuda soaring through space, awareness cuts through extremes. Meditation is released from mental holding, so, like a human corpse in the cemetery, separate awareness from any support! Action not bound by antidotes is like an uncomprehending infant; erase the eight mundane concerns! The result arises from within oneself! Like the heart of a lotus, settle fear and expectations. Labeling what is actually one’s own mind with various terms creates problems. Ultimately, there is no accomplishment of any view, meditation, or action!”

The other developed conviction at that and performed many prostrations.

Dampa said, “Charchung! The Acharya’s brewer’s yeast has met with the mash! Now many will be joyfully intoxicated!”

Drotön came to meet Dampa, and Majo Menchungma said, “Dampa, this master of mine is someone who knows Dharma from many virtuous spiritual guides, so please speak to him!”

Dampa said, “How do you know he’s a virtuous spiritual guide or an evil spiritual guide? I’d swear that these Tibetan teachers have no heartfelt Dharma!”

Drotön was not pleased by that and asked, “Why do we teachers have no Dharma?”

Dampa said, “Collecting just the words, they come to no conclusion in study. Going around in circles in contemplation and meditation, they develop no certainty as to the meaning. Occupying themselves with concepts, they don’t cut the root of mind. Collecting texts as wealth does not avert the bardo’s hallucinations. Whatever they do is carried away in this life’s affairs, so that they pass away from this life empty-handed!”
there’s a division between the teacher and the Dharma, it can’t mix with their minds!”

[Drotön] contended, “What do you mean, there’s a division?”

Dampa said, “In Dharma it is explained that appearances are deceptions of mind, yet they persistently grasp at them. In Dharma it is explained that the root of deception is clinging, yet they don’t diminish the intensity of their self-grasping. In Dharma it is explained that wealth is the work of mara, yet they practice various means of self-aggrandizement. In Dharma it is explained that without giving up the aims of this life, the welfare of future lives is not accomplished, yet they age themselves worrying over this life’s affairs. Thus, the two remain always separate!”

Drotön, having developed certainty of that, said, “Dampa-la is right! Please bless me to practice Dharma from the heart!”

Dampa said, “If you don’t know the root fault, the pitakas will be ideation! If you don’t receive the transformative blessing of the Guru, the instructions will be idle poetry! If you don’t give up this life, practice is just a wish! Turn away from both worldly opinion and Dharma recognition! Let the wind take both this and future lives! Give up embarrassment on account of both yourself and others! Without talk of view, meditation, and action, don’t request accomplishment of activities!”

A nun of Dönmo Riwa asked, “Dampa, our taking pure discipline as the foundation—is it mistaken?”

Dampa said, “Don’t be clever! What mistake is there in pure ethical discipline? Harmful actions are like wetting earth into mud and smearing it on your head! I know these Tibetans in the aspect of ordination!”

Asked, “How is that?” Dampa said, “They don’t protect commitments witnessed by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas! Out of sight of the abbots and masters they deliberately take license to secretly build up negativity! They make their salary salting away the virtuous peoples’ offerings made in faith! Not shunning even a speck of nonvirtue, they rinse themselves vigorously, but that won’t purify obscurations! Without shame before the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, telling themselves rationalizing lies, proceeding thus, there is a danger that they will experience not the slightest benefit! The purpose of Dharma has been cast away!”
The benefactress Zang Gyen asked, “Since last year I’ve been thinking of Dharma practice but I had to take care of my son. Now he has died! Chains of mind are cut! Again I meet the Dharma! Now, what joy I feel!”

Dampa was extremely pleased and he hit Majo Darchungma on the back saying, “What are you doing with a husband? Listen to this great Dingri lady! Though the feast is being cooked the bowls of food are lost elsewhere! No matter how much the Acharya teaches you, there are no listeners! Zang Gyen’s suffering makes her happier! Now her spiritual aspirations have peaked! If you purify your own mind’s projected appearances, even the abodes of the six realms arise as great bliss! Faulty thinking turns Dharma advice into self-torture!”

Zang Gyen said, “Now, Dampa, what practice should I do?”

Dampa said, “If aspiration and devotion in your mind are lost, view and action become mere words, so beseech with all your heart! If awareness is controlled by your mode of view, deception is cut to pieces, so intensively gather your faculties! If equipoise and subsequent activity realization are integrated, the enemies, sinking and excitement, do not arise, so tie the streams of those two together! If periods of meditation are too brief, benefit of realization will not arise, so cast the meditation break without support over the cliff! As for Buddha’s intentions, there’s no way it can be expressed saying, ‘This is it!’”

Practicing accordingly, many signs of spiritual realization appeared to her. She later passed away at the same time as Padampa.

Crazy Lama Drochung said, “If Dampa is going to reveal something about view and meditation as it appears to his mind, then may he reveal it! If he doesn’t, I’ll give up my life here and now!”

Dampa said, “I and space have no view! I and the river have no practice! I and the rainbow have no experience! I and the sun and moon have no beliefs! I and a jewel seek no result! I and insanity have no antidote! Where three valleys come together and water strikes the rocks, there is the cemetery of your ancestors! If you’re going to kill yourself, go do it there!”
Lady Dargomma said, “PHAT! PHAT! Things are appearing indistinctly! Mind itself is all blurry! Everything is garbled!” Saying this, she danced.

At this Dampa laughed for a long time and then said, “This changing of the hue of deceptive mind through having received blessings is like lightning striking in total darkness; although it’s illumined, it isn’t yet stabilized! Once you cut the root of discrimination this kind of thing will occur!”

Vajrakrodha said, “It’s said that you can’t rely on the mouth of a crazy yogini, nor can you rely on the ass of a fat yogi! What can you rely on?”

At this Dampa was not pleased and said, “Don’t say that! By using these stainless words in ordinary speech, you’re spilling realization out of its inner abode! Realizing Buddha’s intention in the manner of the crazy yogis is not something to laugh at! Even if she doesn’t know how to cultivate this in future lives, she has destroyed her previously committed karma!”

Another time Dampa covered his head and laughed in a perturbed way. Gyagom Ma approached him and asked, “Why is Dampa displeased?”

Dampa said, “Get away! Get away!” but she stayed beside him.

Dampa poked a hole in the bottom of his bag, pouring out the tsampa within and said, “Provisions for the time of need! This ‘Dharma’ of Jo Gom! If practiced, it doesn’t help you! Taught, it doesn’t help others! Under this sky there is none but he who goes hungry! Now, tomorrow night, he will die beating his chest!”

She asked, “Dampa, who is that? Where is he?”

He replied, “No one you know. He is from Ngari. A black stone horse bears no foal! If it did, all would know it, but he couldn’t muster the courage!”

Tönma Dargyen asked, “Dampa, please bless me to benefit sentient beings!”

Dampa said, “Isn’t your altruism self-seeking? Aren’t you proud of your merit! Isn’t your work for others the eight worldly dharmas? Aren’t you selling your instructions like a commodity? It would be great if you would apply the teachings you give to others to yourself! Your words and heart are separate. You shame yourself!”
She protested, “What could one woman seek for herself? I have, indeed, done what I could to help others!”

Dampa said, “Be it as it may, I was joking! Please! Even wishing to benefit others is rare! From now on, in regard to benefiting others, because of the times, tantric commentaries won’t help! You need to be able to transform others’ awareness through blessings. Therefore, principally, do your own practice! Just having good intentions without being able to affect others’ perceptions, your work is deluded. Therefore, don’t talk to others! If Dharma is true, you also must act accordingly! Once you’ve been able to sincerely practice yourself, then don’t diminish your compassionate action on behalf of others! Even so, in these bad times, sentient beings are difficult to subdue!”

Lama Ram Geway Senge said, “In appearance of thoughts and moods arising in varieties, I don’t find anywhere at all to place attention!”

Dampa said, “If there is no placement in conceptual mind, that is mahamudra! If there is no recognition of thought, that is mahamudra! If there is no distress in the mind, that is mahamudra! There is no need for placement!”

Je Tripa said, “It is said that the system of secret mantra is a method by which one can attain enlightenment without abandoning one’s kingdom or pleasurable objects. How is that?”

Dampa said, “If one knows how to take desire objects on the path with skillful means there is no lack of praise for tantra! Arya Dharmodgata had sixty thousand queens! Sadaprarudita had five hundred! In order to practice in that way one must really be free of craving attachment!”

“But, it’s said that one needs a consort for secret mantra. Why is that?”

Dampa said, “Through greatness of means, delusions are transformed into the path. Therefore, without the consort there can be no path!”

“It is said that the consort is indispensable for the third initiation.”

Dampa said, “Having received the initiation of rigpa energy, one need not rely on the four initiations! The karmamudra consort is like a razor’s edge! The practice brings a swift path to transformation, but it is difficult to do! It is sufficient to go with the ultimate karmamudra of your own innate being!”
Asked, “Does Dampa have a consort or not?” he replied, “In reliance on another’s body as wisdom mudra, and my own as skillful means, I have trained just a bit. Appearances blazed up in uncontaminated bliss! The drops remained in the vajra! Now I don’t have to rely on a karmamudra! There is no joining with or separation from the ultimate wisdom mudra!”

Puba Supoche asked, “Dampa, tell me what it’s like when you really practice sincerely! I understand neither heads nor tails of it!”

Dampa said, “View is the destruction of extreme ideas regarding things! Cutting pride of self with confidence is realization! Being without support in luminosity is meditation! In insight, absence of recognition is the innate! Finding nowhere to place the mind among shifting phenomena is subsequent attainment! In their absence, there is no antidote but natural intensity! Naked awareness without grasping is dharmakaya! Disappearance without being anything is experience! Don’t you wonder whether all this truly exists?”

Gyagom said, “Dampa, don’t give all your instructions to people! There is no one qualified to understand like Dampa himself!”

Dampa said, “Gyagom! The quality of the harvest is not the fault of the seed! It’s the quality of the field and the effort put into agriculture! I act for nothing other than the sake of sentient beings, to liberate beings of the six realms at once without partiality! Yet, someone with bad karma doesn’t like the emergence of a Buddha! Without gathering spiritual accumulations they imagine faults in the Guru! Bad natured people don’t employ body and speech in virtue! Polluted, they don’t stop deceptive intellect! The deluded don’t understand essential instructions! Without discernment, profound instructions won’t help anyone! Use your body in Dharma and leave mind in its innate state!”

Again she asked, “In Jambudvipa there is no realization like Dampa’s now!”

Dampa said, “Until qualities arise in your mind, you don’t know the qualities of others! The extent of what you don’t see is like the stars during the daytime!”

She told him, “We’ve been meditating, as well as we can, on some of the qualities that we assume exist in others!”
Dampa replied, “Through meditation, unless deception collapses into the natural state, defilement is not wiped away! Things grow in summer’s energy; they don’t grow in stone!”

Again she asked, “Well then, how do qualities emerge?”

He said, “Common qualities arise through conventional meditations, but by that one is not freed from samsara! Meeting with one’s own innate actuality is quite enough! Now, be quiet!”

The patron Peldrag said, “Padampa is so very pure. I feel that Dampa’s retinue and all these people of Langkor are enlightened!”

Dampa said, “That’s thanks to natural pure appearance! If you see only Buddhas, the blessings you receive will be none other than those of Buddhas!”

Then Dampa called all the people of Langkor, “O Buddhas who are still learning the alphabet! Though you’ve become aged bulls your minds are still those of small calves! If people see you just as practitioners, they remain ordinary! The Acharya will die next year, but you will remain behind. If you act in accordance with Dharma, food and clothing are received through the blessings of the Three Jewels! Seeking after food, we have no idea whether next year or our next life will arrive first! Gathering provisions for our old age, it is certain we must finally leave this life alone; yet we count up our acquaintances! You’re headed for nowhere but the abyss, yet you build up your houses! You understand Dharma, yet don’t practice! You recognize nonvirtue, yet don’t shun it! Now that you’ve attained a life of freedom and endowments, you remain sleeping like corpses! Though the Acharya will soon be burning, you aren’t trying to escape! At the moment you are burning, you’ll have nothing but regret!”

Dampa had gone for austerities for some days and then came back. Many came for audience at Shri Mountain and all the people of Langkor gathered. Dampa said, “Today imitate bhigyapa! Nobody think!”

Kunga asked, “Imitating bhigyapa, what does that mean?”

Dampa replied, “It’s trampling down mundane concepts through yogic conduct! Take your clothes off, we’ll set you loose and see whether you cut it or not!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa, what do you mean?”
Dampa took off Kunga’s clothes and said, “You first came here naked! Finally you leave naked! Take off the clothes of conception and hurry to the meadow of great bliss!” Saying this, he slapped him on the rear.

Kunga ran away to a hole in the rocks and all the villagers laughed.

Dampa said, “Inauspicious! This Kunga can’t run the race! Who will uphold my lineage?” To Gyagom he said, “You take the lead, and all the Charchung ladies prostrate naked!” She prostrated naked.

This delighted Dampa and he said, “Charchung Gyagom Ma has destroyed the eight worldly dharmas, laying them out cold!”

... ...

Lama Dromchung said, “Can you definitively determine the ultimate nature of things through study or not?”

Dampa said, “Although you understand the view, not experiencing it in your own mind, you can’t cut the influence of deception! It’s like seeing with watery eyes!”

He asked, “Then how should you have this experience?”

Dampa replied, “Cut off your tongue that speaks! Take out the heart of mind! Bind the legs that walk! Destroy the eyes that see! Dharma that has become conceptual cannot help as an antidote! From now on destroy holding samsara and nirvana to be truly existent and put your mind to rest!”

... ...

Tönpa Chökyi Senge said, “When you recall the experience, if you’ve practiced in the meantime, it is clear but beyond intellect. If it’s not remembered, it’s beyond thought! Without a factor of clarity and no feeling for it, one will fall into the abyss! It’s extremely difficult!”

Dampa said, “Thank you! That is the way one who has practiced asks a question! Some people do not practice and, without developing realization, ask questions with others leading them by the nose! Many without experience have come to the Acharya! From now on, let go of the chains of intentionality and let the elephant of mind go wherever is comfortable! Hold the hook of mindfulness and stop the roving eyes of the elephant tamer that holds the hook! Once you’re intoxicated, accustom yourself to the taste of the wine and let go of the hook! Once the appearance of objects is stopped, take the sword in your lips and run to freedom! Even in India it’s only a few who have the awareness of a child!”
Majo Chösel said, “If it is said that all phenomena are empty, how is it that in emptiness, cause for deception and cause for liberation both arise?”

Dampa said, “Happy nun! Hold up your flint! Fire emerges from it, is kindled slightly, and then dies back down. The fire of ill omen arises from conditions and is calmed by conditions. It is a great wonder that beings don’t think about why! This cold flint can produce a fire even at night, yet you can put it in your pocket! Even in our India it is rare to find someone asking a question like the one you’ve asked!”

By means of this example she destroyed deceptive appearances.

Tönma Jangchup Ge said, “Dampa says if you realize the faults of samsara, don’t try to intentionally abandon it! Is that right?”

Dampa said, “If you realize the faults of samsara, it is nirvana! Having once turned away from it, there is no place to go!”

She asked again, “Yet, although all hope to realize that, they develop strong conceptions and delusions. Doesn’t that bring harm?”

Dampa picked a bunch of purmo grass along with its root and placed it on a rock. He said, “Tönma! Though we’ve done nothing to chop up this plant, because the root is separated from the ground, it can’t grow! There are very few who separate from that ground! If the root is not separated from the earth, even if you cut the plant, it will still grow!”

The old man Kyi Kyab asked, “Dampa-la! Youth has fled! Mind has aged. So, as for Dharma, I can’t understand it! Since you’ve been everywhere, tell me some amazing story!”

Dampa said, “Old man, isn’t that pus coming out of your mouth?”

He said, “No, I don’t have any pus or blood in my mouth!”

Dampa replied, “Spit out that pus! Your heart is rotting! Even though you’ve become like a bee whose life span is over, you still don’t think in a dharmic way! Indeed, because you’re sick and aging, you need Dharma! Being unafraid to die without confidence of realization, you’re like an animal! No matter how old you are, you can still take refuge! I don’t need to tell you amazing stories! They’ll come to you! At that time see if you can be without regret!”
Tsongay Josay said, “This deception must have a good foundation! You destroy it, but it won’t disintegrate!”

Dampa laughed and said, “You couldn’t be more right! Self-grasping is a very strong hard foundation! The four mistaken attitudes are the firm footing of deception! The supported pinnacle of suffering is sky-high! It would be good to contemplate that! You could build a fortress of instructions around it! Not even hailstorms can destroy deceptions! They disintegrate only if the foundation itself collapses!”

Again, Dampa said, “People of Langkor, gather! There is a big obstacle, so we must perform a divination!”

Once everyone had gathered, he placed one girl on a white seat of matted wool. The Venerable One held a bamboo staff in his right hand and a feather in his left and said, “O Lord of the Sky and Lord of the Earth! Will these people struck by disease improve or die? Let it be known! Let it be known!”

The girl, as a medium, danced and said, “This sickness is not caused by a ghost. There’s a tumor within! If you cure it, you won’t have to die even once! If you don’t cure it, you are certain to die over and over again! Beware! Beware!” All of the people of Dingri became frightened by this.

Dampa said, “A ritual must be done!” From his bag of dependent arising he took out a sachet of various blended medicines and anointed all of the Langkor people’s eyes with it. He exclaimed, “Now! Close your eyes and look! An attentive divine youth is inviting you on!”

“Dampa,” Kunga asked, “without having learned anything themselves, how could they experience the fruit of karma they have not created?”

Dampa gave him a dried apricot and said, “Swallow this without chewing it!”

Kunga could taste it even without chewing it!

Dampa said, “Just remembering this you will not experience death!”

Someone asked, “Dampa-la, although one has created virtue, won’t dedicating it in emptiness cause it to give no results?”

Dampa said, “What are you saying? Non-objectified prayers and dedi-
cations of virtue ripen! Even confessing harms in emptiness purifies them. But who would make a dedication of harmful actions?"

A vase in which Gyagom had brought water shattered. Dampa said, “Kunga, you’re nothing! Gyagom Ma has settled the ultimate nature of all phenomena of samsara and beyond, but the people of Dingri don’t comprehend it! Death is certain and we know not when! Yet you now make provisions for old age! You gather things that must undoubtedly be left behind! In case you aren’t gathering things that are certain to be left behind, you cultivate friends and relations whom you have no idea when you must leave! Unable to practice Dharma that brings definite happiness, you make prayers for things that may never be realized! There is no one who doesn’t want that fierce man or that noble woman. But they can’t bear to hear about their previous karma! When the mara wind arises, even the beautiful flower instantly dries up! You spend your lives in distraction! How will it be, clawing your chest at death?”

Yöndag Mogyen said, “Dampa-la! Give an instruction!”

Dampa asked, “Gyenay, what would you do with instructions?”

She said, “If I could have some understanding in my mind, then there would indeed be hope in the desolation of death!”

Dampa said, “What? Are you dying or something? Thinking of death, knowing the suffering you’ve had to endure, how can you willingly create causes for suffering in future lives? Without the adhesiveness of faith, the paint of instruction will not adhere! For you, laughter would be better than instructions! A husband would be better than a yidam! Dressing up would be better than Dharma robes! Listen to your instructions at the guest-house in town!”

Gom Ma Drön Kyi said, “I can’t take on any kind of daily meditation! Please instruct me!”

“Drön Kyi, because she bundles wool during the day and falls asleep at night, doesn’t meditate! Everyone is always asking for instructions, but where will you find a Buddha who has not practiced Dharma? Even I have not! There are a lot of funny people like that around Langkor!”
Someone asked, “How is that?”
Dampa replied, “Without a heartfelt wish to practice Dharma, from their mouths they ask for instruction! Without aspiration and devotion, they ask for blessings! Without faith, they commit themselves to Dharma practice in the presence of others! Sentient beings have to experience their own karma, so don’t show off to me the Dharma practice you’ve done! Without having gone through any of the difficult practices, without having meditated, some concern themselves with what others are doing and pretend to answer questions like the Acharya! What can you do? It’s really unbelievable!”

Nyang Tsün Sherab said, “This yogi’s mind is wild! If deep heartfelt Dharma does not arise, this temporary sort of excitement is of no benefit!”

Dampa said, “Virtuous Venerable One! The gathering of accumulation is not meaningless! The faithful going to Dharma is not aimless! The industrious persevering in austerities is not pointless! The aspirant giving up activities is not showing bad attitude! The practitioner’s keeping a humble position is not low status! Staying among the rocks and caves is not homelessness! Undergoing hardship and eating uncooked food is not going hungry! Giving up clinging to friends and relations is not bad personality! You pretend to all that you have a stable mind, but with Dharma you seek wealth. With wealth, you keep the ladies. And the ladies you guide into negativity!”

Dampa, calling Majo Shangchungma, said, “Shangchungma! If you check your name, it is true!”
She asked, “How is that?”
He said, “Your age is young (shang) and your faith is small (chung)!”
She said, “Faith is a burdensome servant!”

Dampa said, “Yes indeed! Dharma is not practiced, so faith has become useless! Practice is not done, so instructions become pointless! Unable to gather accumulations, the implements have become useless! Not understanding the essential points, wisdom has become unnecessary! Your Dharma is like a rooster; show of beauty with no heart!”
Majo Ösel said, “Dampa, please give instruction for renouncing samsara from the heart!”

Dampa said, “Although you cherish this body, a time will come when it is discarded, so don’t keep a taste for it! Although you drape silks over this body, it is a vessel of impurities, so don’t act so elegant about it! No matter how much wealth you have, at death it is left behind, so don’t act with poisons such as avarice! Though you are surrounded by thousands of relations, you will at one time have to go on alone, so don’t torment yourself with longing attachment for friends! Whatever non-dharmic activity you do, in the long run, it comes to nothing, so don’t waste your human body!”

The benefactress Peldren said, “Dampa, I’ve had so much sickness! I’ve entered the door of Dharma, but no matter what I do it doesn’t get better! Please give me a blessing!”

Dampa said, “Focus on the sickness! Offer the ghosts your body and your body’s impurities will be cleansed! You tie the tourniquet until the infection dries out! This sickness is taking you to Sukhavati, so be blissful at heart!”

Gom Ma Jangchub Kyi said, “Dampa, give an instruction!”

Dampa said, “What instruction should I give? As for Dharma, you don’t practice it! You can’t stand the food of instructions! It’s better for you to go cheating people in town!”

She wept, “Still, please give me an instruction!”

Dampa said, “You see all men as a husband and all women as something to guard against! You covet all kinds of food and wealth! You have a bed in every village and a different story for everyone! Head of a lark, mouth of a parrot, your Dharma practice could bring omens of drought to a river valley!”

Calling Majo Nangsel, he said, “Hey! Majo Nangsel! Come home! Come home!!”

She asked what she should do when she got home.

Dampa said, “I’ve invoked self-risen wisdom! You be my consort!”
She said, “I shall!”

Dampa fastened a wish-fulfilling cow horn to her head. He said, “My Nangsel is the wish-fulfilling cow, isn’t she?”

She said, “Oh yes, Dampa, so how should I understand Dharma?”

Dampa said, “The sky is your clothes. The earth is your cushion! Sweet potato leaves are your food! You drink melted butter and lick manure of other cows! Your eyes don’t see forms! Your tongue doesn’t taste flavors!”

She said, “Dampa-la! But, I am ugly!”

Dampa said, “True. But we don’t have to cut slices of gold with an axe as a middleman in business! Not dividing up the world’s common wealth, we don’t have to argue over our children! We need no clothes to wear, nor house to sleep in! The earth is covered with people, yet, you find no husband. I find no wife! How shameful are human beings who will sell their own precious heads!”

. . . .

When men and women patrons from Padrug came to see Padampa, he said, “Now, I’m staying in austerity confinement! Wall up this door!”

Someone asked, “But these poor people who’ve come to see you have been here since yesterday!”

Dampa said, “There’s no one funnier than these Tibetans! When you visit them they hide! When you stay in they come looking! If you beg, they won’t give. When you don’t want it, they give! If you explain, they don’t understand! If you don’t explain, they understand! Their faith is pretentious! Their service is slanderous! They claim to want Dharma! There is no need for lessons for those without heartfelt aspiration and devotion! The Acharya has been to two thirds of the world giving his heart instructions but no one listens! Tibetans don’t consider practicing Dharma themselves, only how to get wealthy!”

. . . .

Lama Shang Ser Ö said, “Give an instruction for liberation in one sentence!”

Dampa said, “These Tibetan Dharma practitioners sure know how to talk! Unfortunately, they’re not skilled in carrying it through into practice!”

He asked, “Why is that?”
Dampa said, “In Tibet, there are many who enter into practice but few who complete it. Their faith develops fast and easily evaporates. Without guarding commitments, they take initiations. Without practicing, they want instructions. Without endurance, they begin austerities. Without understanding, they begin practice. Without ripening themselves, they teach others. There’s certainly little benefit!”

“Dampa, you’re right! Still, please give an instruction which summarizes the meaning in just a few words.”

Dampa said, “If you practice Dharma from the heart, destroy phenomena in truthlessness! Set mind in non-apprehension! Cultivate bliss experience!”

Dampa said, “Kunga, will you also take a wife?”

Kunga said, “Someone to serve me might be nice!”

Dampa said, “There’s no one funnier than these people!”

He asked, “Why is that?”

Dampa said, “It’s not difficult to get married, but once you’re disillusioned, it’s hard to get out of it! They point out others’ problems, yet start their own household. Even as they see the problems, they deliberately enter into it! For the important work, without a consort, you won’t succeed! Yet, when the dzo is tethered, it’s all over! Once you let another have your leash, there’s no happiness!”

Kunga persisted, “But, it’s said that all of the Indian mahasiddhas had queens. Is taking a consort harmful to attaining enlightenment?”

Dampa said, “A cow can’t carry the load that a wild yak can prance about with! The yogi whose subtle energy-mind becomes functional on the basis of a mudra-consort trains in the creative energy-force of the path! If the deluded could be liberated from samsara by just following his own instincts, enlightenment would be easy!”

Dampa said to Yöndag Geten, “ Yöndag, how much land, property, and relatives do you have? Shouldn’t you just give up activities and practice Dharma?”

 Yöndag said, “I don’t have much property left, but I have children who have still not set off on their own. They still need supervision for some years. Then, I’m thinking, I’ll practice Dharma!”
Dampa said, “Desirous mind will never be content! Though you try to pay your karmic debt to your children, you treat them with love that will never fully satisfy them! There’s no end to jobs created out of jobs! If you are not subdued in your own mind, there will be no end to enemies! If you don’t create merit in your mind, you’ll have no provisions for the future life! I’ve seen the passing of a few generations! Settle all your affairs in town, and come stay here no matter what!”

He said, “But Dampa, I have a few small children! They have no one but me in whom to place their hopes, the poor things!”

Dampa said, “You are more to be pitied than them! Those dear children of yours were all your enemies in a life previous to this! For many lifetimes they have obstructed your practice of Dharma! You have so much work still to do, what Dharma could you practice? In three years, your third child will die, and if he becomes a hindering spirit, there’s a danger that you will die earlier!”

At that, his karmic connection was awakened, he stayed in Dingri and became blessed by Padampa. The third child did fall sick and die three years later. His wife, Men Zakyi, was inspired, as well, and came to Langkor. Both husband and wife practiced Dharma and developed many realizations. It is said they went to China with Kampa Darma Sönam.

Josay Magyen said, “Dampa, I want to benefit sentient beings, but it is difficult to transform others’ appearances! Please give me a blessing to benefit beings!”

Dampa said, “One who doesn’t give up boastfulness will not conquer the demon of pride. If the demon of pride is not conquered, one will not keep a humble position. If one doesn’t maintain a low position, the water of realizations will not collect. If the water of realizations doesn’t collect, you won’t be able to moisten the dusty field of disciples. If you don’t moisten the dusty field of disciples, the results of your prayers will not sprout. Josay Ma! You’re seeking too high a status for yourself!”

She said, “I have no pride at all!”

Dampa said, “The unaccomplished trying to teach others is pride of knowledge! Pretending to understand what you don’t, you’re lying to yourself! If you don’t give up elegant fashion, it’s because you have not cut attachment to men! If you don’t cut connections with your homeland, the foundation stone of self-grasping will not collapse! If you cling to thoughts
of your relations, your awareness will not be freed of bondage! If you don’t give up hypocrisy in your activities, you will not succeed in Dharma! So, my good lady, have you attained self-sufficiency? Can you dump ashes on your head or not? Rather than trying to help others, try to help yourself! If you’re going to benefit others, give up your physical hypocrisy! Take off all your jewelry! Sell your high title! Don’t look at men! If you can keep a humble position, others will develop faith in you!”

Jomo Pema Gyen said, “Dampa-la! Is it better to meditate on a deity or on emptiness?”

Dampa said, “Emptiness realization is difficult to generate in your mind. Cultivating the deity, which is suitable for you, would be better.”

She asked further, “And meditate a bit on emptiness?”

Dampa said, “Although you were to meditate on emptiness, if you don’t understand it, it won’t go beyond conceptualization. If you realize it, then you don’t have to meditate on it. It is just emptiness as it’s always been!”

She persisted, “But there are many who say they’re meditating on emptiness!”

Dampa said, “‘Meditation on emptiness’ is a fault! A supposedly ‘real’ mind clinging to emptiness is very difficult to destroy! They all meditate focusing on an objective empty space! We don’t assert an emptiness that is created through the destruction of things!”

“Doesn’t one seek to meditate on emptiness to destroy grasping at true existence?”

Dampa said, “Grasping true existence is not destroyed by meditation on emptiness! It is just the destruction of grasping at the reality of things that we call ‘realization of emptiness’!”

Lama Tromchungpa said, “Such refuse as I has received the Acharya’s blessings! Now, I need bow my head to no one else! My aspirations have culminated!”

Dampa said to him, “Do not say such unconsidered things! That ‘Dharma’ of yours! Everyone has at least that! Do you hope to reach the state in which no more external practice is necessary without having given up grasping? You may not want to bow your head to anyone else, but there
will be those to whom you must! You talk about hearing all sounds as echoes without being able to bear even light teasing! These Tibetan Dharma practitioners’ hearts have dried up!”

He asked, “How is that?”

Dampa said, “While not being able to handle praise or blame, they talk about meditation that is free of self-grasping! Without cutting through arrogance in their minds, they say they have no need for study! Without controlling discursive agitation, they say they have no need for practice! Without diminishing the intensity of the delusions, they say they are unaffected by stains of karma! Without experiencing inner peace at present, they claim that they shall not wander in samsara in future lives! Without stopping imprints for dream appearances, they claim they recognize the hallucinated nature of the intermediate state! Without ceasing their mental craving, they claim to have reached the state of needing nothing! Without putting their body and speech to use for Dharma, they say they’ve purified all obscurations! Without having completed the accumulations, they claim to have attained enlightenment! Without listening to Dharma, they give long explanations! Without achieving their own welfare, they begin trying to help others! You all need a method for attaining enlightenment without practice of Dharma, but, unfortunately, the Acharya doesn’t know of one!”

The Lama asked, “Are you saying that there is no point when external activity can be given up?”

Dampa said, “Indeed there is, but that stage is difficult to realize!”

Inquiring further, he asked, “What is it like when you realize that?”

Dampa said, “When you attain freedom from internal craving, you are no longer bound by sense pleasures; but you still haven’t brought an end to attachment! If you internalize the state of needing nothing, you are not bound by the eight worldly dharmas; but you still haven’t given up reputation! If you destroy grasping at the reality of appearances, you do not accumulate karma; but you still have the five poisons! If you dispel internal discourse, mara-obstacles will not arise; but you’ve still not cut through self-grasping! If you bring out the brilliance of rigpa awareness, the enemies—sinking and agitation—will not arise; but you still chase after deceptive external appearances! If you cease internal projections, dialectics are realized to be empty sounds; but you’re still not free from the chains of doubt! If embarrassment before others is driven from the mind, evil finds no oppor-
tunity; but your morality is still a show for others! If non-Dharma does not
course through your mind, delusions need not be abandoned through their
antidotes; but you’re still unable to handle bad conditions! If you know phe-
nomena to be truthless, practice is something that need not be applied; but
your mind still pursues your projections! You may hope to become Buddha,
but your methods will come up short when you really need them!”

Kam Tönyo said, “Dampa-la, I’ve come from a distant region. Please give
me an instruction!”

Dampa said, “If you put your homeland far behind you, the force of self-
grasping is loosened. If you don’t accord with worldly opinion, you flourish
in virtuous practice. If you do isolated retreat, you become naturally calm
and collected. If you have reverence and devotion for the Lama, realizations
strongly arise. If you leave household affairs, you’re released from the knots
of craving. If you maintain a humble position, you’re moistened with the
water of realized qualities. If your vows and commitments are pure, the de-
ties and dakinis come near! If the practitioner stays on his cushion, the lin-
eage later flourishes. If the scholar shrinks from pride, he will be of greater
benefit to beings. If you are of great service to the Lama, physical merit is gen-
erated. If you keep altruistic mind, you will work for the benefit of beings.
Having trained skillfully, enter into practice. Then it’s like giving lion’s milk
to a baby elephant;106 all your own and others’ goals will be accomplished!
Now, don’t go to Kham! Stay in Central Tibet! Having finished your stud-
ies, do sitting practice! During your own greatest efforts, don’t be teaching
others! Not listening to gossip proliferated by others, don’t be haphazard in
achieving your own aims! You will be of benefit to beings!”

Lama Chönyi said, “Dampa-la, if you see that, having practiced Dharma,
various sufferings still afflict you, why is that?”

Dampa said, “It’s like something pulled out by a rope made of gold! Pow-
erful bad karma is present in the mind, but virtuous karma is destroying it.
So, the ripening of the bad karma’s effect cannot be put off until future lives,
but instead is exhausted in this life! It is actually to your benefit!”
Again he asked, “Some who act only harmfully are still happy!”
Dampa said, “That’s bad because they’re using up their better karma!
They have a bit of meritorious karma, but they are exhausting it in this life, and they head off in a solely negative direction! The sage Agni is disturbed by a sickness in which hot and cold ailments are mixed! What an inconceivable marvel, how previous karma has been accumulated!"

. . . .

Lama Char said, “The yogi’s rigpa awareness does not enter samsara! The people of Langkor are gaining some experience! Don’t you see Dampa’s beautiful activities?”

Sochungwa said, “Lama Char, your people of Langkor are seeing some truth! It’s great that they are no longer harmed by ghosts! As for me, my mind will not stay put and my body will not sit still. Am I going crazy?”

Dampa said, “Leaving aside the empty base, the beings of the six realms wander. Attain clarity in rigpa! When the six consciousnesses wander toward objects, karma is accumulated. Strive to train your faculties! When consciousness does not connect with that base, it continues to cycle in darkness. Cast the spear of rigpa practice! Sitting too long, you become vulnerable to sinking and agitation. Sustain repeated short periods of practice! By judging good and bad, your practice remains ordinary. Sustain rigpa through whatever appears! It’s a shame if someone involves himself in the eight worldly concerns. If you don’t break free of that, nothing will help!”

At that, Sochungwa was so moved he ran through town shouting! He tore off all his clothes, at which Dampa laughed, saying, “Now Utog has entered yogic conduct’s war on the fortress of the eight worldly concerns! The water of realization is bursting out onto the dry plain of self-grasping! The garuda of awareness soars in the space of reality!”

Someone said, “Master, there’s someone who fell down naked amidst all the ladies in the village! They left him there. Then, after a while, he got up. It was embarrassing!”

Dampa said, “There’s no cause for embarrassment! Embarrassment is the imagination of worldly beings! A small child has no embarrassment because of not being conditioned by imaginary things! Becoming firmly established in imaginary phenomena, you become embarrassed and this creates all attachment and aversion! The Acharya has no clothes! Vajra Varahi has no dress! We’re all in the naked lineage!”
Menyag Dragsay said, “It’s said that Dampa stayed a long time in Central Tibet. How many disciples were there?”

Dampa said, “The Acharya planted four gardens. The root was planted in the center. Kamgom Yeshe Gyeltsen gained ascertainment of suffering and now exchanges conversation with Maitreya! Magom Chökyi Sherab received initiation in rigpa and went to Kechari! Because his aspiration for virtue increased, he won the battle of yogic conduct and could not stay! The two, Gyigom and Drochungwa, have just put themselves under instruction. Majo Chöney utters nothing but one word. She lives as a wild woman! Nyag Gom I’ve put in the company of a suitable consort. Gugom, mounted on the horse of the innate-born, has left for Kechari! The Acharya doesn’t have anything like a lineage holder! Those who have come to the door of liberation are many!”

Dampa said further, “I’ve come here to Tibet several times but there has not been much benefit for beings! Now, the Acharya will be leaving!”

Kunga asked, “How many has Dampa liberated?”

Dampa threw a double handful of sand into the air, “About that many!”

Kunga remarked, “Then it was indeed many!”

Dampa retorted, “Like the water in a hoof-print compared to that in the ocean!”

Upa Drotön said, “Actual rigpa awareness derived from oral instructions, and realization derived from study of the three pitakas: are they the same or not?”

Dampa said, “If you realize them, they’re the same! But to hold an elephant, you need a hook! Though you catch him with a string, it won’t hold!”

Drotön asked, “So practice is important?”

Dampa said, “Practice is extremely important! Be inseparable from devotion adorned with morality! Refine the mind in the lamp of austerities! Afterwards, put on the armor! Abandon mara’s activity! Maitreya and Buddha Shakyamuni are speaking here, but you be their messenger!”
One time there was a pandit who came to Dampa to request gold, and they spoke at length on tenets of Dharma. In the course of that, Dampa said, “Here’s a pandit who knows how to fabricate forms from empty space! Amazing!”

Kunga, from the side, asked, “Dampa-la, what do you mean by ‘knowing how to fabricate forms from empty space’?”

Dampa said, “In the impartiality of Buddha’s wisdom he creates many partial views! In all of Buddha’s precious teachings, there is none other than one ultimate meaning! For those who don’t understand the one, much was said, but many obscure the one! To know many teachings, yet not be benefited by that! It’s funny when I think about it!”

Kunga asked, “Isn’t the mind liberated through knowing much Dharma?”

Dampa said, “If the mind is liberated by hearing many teachings, pandits would not wander in samsara!”

Kunga asked, “What is the essential reason that hearing many teachings does not help to liberate the mind?”

Dampa said, “Wearing the armor of worldliness, one doesn’t generate transcendent Dharma in the mind. On the ball of pride, the water of spiritual qualities doesn’t collect. Without the moisture of conviction, one will not drink the nectar of experience. Without confidence of realization, one will not cut through the chains of deception. By not understanding phenomena to be labels, one is choked by pride in a truly existent self. Not integrating all vehicles into one, one holds partial tenets. Not having experienced generation of view and meditation in one’s mind, one judges the measure of others’ minds. Situated within the eight worldly dharmas, one supposedly liberates others. Without experience, one initiates others.
One’s Dharma is verbal. One’s view is desire. One’s experience is wishful thinking. One’s conduct is degenerate morality. Resultant merit does not ripen beyond the things of this life. One becomes a facsimile of a Dharma practitioner!

Kunga asked, “What about clearing misconceptions through listening to teachings?”

Dampa said, “If you don’t drink the water, thirst will not be quenched! Just hearing of a jewel’s qualities will not bring you prosperity! Just knowing Dharma does not generate its realization in your being! You have to drink the water! You must seize the jewel! If it’s Dharma, it must function in the nature of Dharma!”

Kunga asked further, “Isn’t it assumed that, ultimately, Dharma knowledge is for practice?”

He said, “Kunga! Living Dharma is not difficult! It’s difficult for one seeking to accomplish it! If you practice from the heart, there’s nothing unknown! How could anyone not at least know the six-syllable mantra? If you develop certainty, a single word is enough for practice! There is no certainty that you will develop realization of view and meditation through much study!”

Kunga continued, “But it seems that all the scholars are saying, ‘Come here! I’ve got view and meditation!’”

Dampa said, “That’s the outer aspect! They are without accomplishment through inner experience! A hungry man knows how to count the riches of the wealthy but he doesn’t get to use them! If someone has spiritual experience they don’t act in such ways!”

Asked, “How does one act if one has experience?” Dampa said, “If you develop view and meditation in the mind, you become released from deception at the base! They still chase after deception! If deception is destroyed at base, the root of self-grasping is destroyed! They have still not let go of their own biases! If you are freed of self-grasping, it’s as if the eight worldly dharmas also collapse! They still try various means of self-aggrandizement! If you are freed from the eight worldly dharmas, praise and blame become like echoes! They still store up the tsampa from tormas! If you know sound to be like echoes, fabrication will not occur! They never stop trying to fabricate greatness!”

Kunga asked, “So was that pandit one of the worst?”

Dampa replied, “One of the worst, though there are many!”
Kunga said, “Ordinary people don’t know Dharma! But the pandits who know how to introduce Dharma yet do not practice the Dharma they teach are indeed worse!”

Dampa said, “Kunga! There’s no end to that type! Their Dharma does nothing for future lives. They can’t even introduce happiness for this life! Death doesn’t spur them to meditation! Death is there for everyone yet they show no awareness of it! Those with no fear of the suffering of lower realms are inferior! They’re not afraid, even if they see it directly! Everyone knows the end of household life is suffering, yet they’re unable to stay alone! Though they continue to stare at their amassed wealth, they are still not released from knots of greed! Satisfaction will not come from relationships or ointments, yet they don’t give up craving! How could lack of time prohibit them from practicing Dharma? They spend their lives in leisure! Everyone’s bias runs in that direction!”

Kunga said, “Dampa is right! Their eyes stare blindly!”

Dampa said, “Everyone is blind! To not be blind, we must first look! Having looked, we must see! Having seen, we must understand! Having understood, we must practice! Having practiced, we must bring it to completion!”

Kunga said, “Dampa-la! Yesterday one monk said, ‘Without letting go of the foundation, they’re quick to praise the heights! Without rooms below, they hasten to the upper rooms! They do not study lesser vehicle tenets for even a moment! Without guarding even one vow, how can they be introduced to the definitive meaning of secret mantra? It’s highly unlikely!’ Dampa, I felt uneasy to hear it!”

Dampa said, “If someone says it’s so, people might even believe there are no jewels in the ocean! If a relation says so, they’ll believe that even the family fields can’t be planted! I had assumed you were beyond giving such talk credence and being swayed by it! The frog in the well cannot comprehend the ocean! For that, you need someone who’s seen the ocean! That monk is an example of the type who makes the gradual climb. So, if he were shown the profound meaning, it would cause him anxiety! That’s why Buddha taught multiple vehicles in accordance with the level of trainees’ faculties! If there were no gradations of faculties, Buddha could have given just one single teaching!”
Kunga asked, “Well, shouldn’t one, first of all, seek a teacher of graded stages of development?”

Dampa said, “Why do you say that? When you get to the upper rooms, the job of the staircase must be over! As long as there’s a peak, it’s impossible that there be no base! This is not the only lifetime you’ve set out on the path! You’ve already completed much purification and accumulation! There are others of highest faculties who are liberated spontaneously, not in stages! If you see ice, why is it not made from water? Ice won’t arise from dry earth! If you realize the definitive meaning, it’s definite that training preceded it! The untrained will not become a champion of great power!”

Kunga further asked, “Then, should one take any part of shravaka vowed morality or not?”

He said, “If you have it, that’s good; it’s a step to liberation! Yet the many are included in fewer and fewer! If you keep the tantric commitments purely, even if you do not formally take on the lower trainings, they are included in that! The three vows are not of separate substance! They may be kept separately, but they are of an upward broadening nature!”

Dampa said, “There’s something that I and the Tibetan Dharma practitioners disagree on!”

Asked, “What’s that?” he said, “Wanting the fruit of transcendence, one must part from the armor of worldly concern, but they like the eight worldly dharmas! Taking discordant factors onto the spiritual path is a special method of secret mantra, but they abandon delusions with antidotes! Contrary conditions arising as aids are the yogi’s path, yet they shun ‘bad’ objects! Craving is the root of suffering, but they don’t practice Dharma. They accumulate wealth! Experiential instructions come from oral responses, but they fill vessels with little black writings! The purpose of hearing teachings is to become peaceful and subdued, but for them, it adds to their Dharma arrogance! Not wanting the fruit of enlightenment, they want fame and reputation for this life. They destroy the purpose of Dharma!”

Asked, “Dampa, what should you do if you’re really going to practice Dharma?” Dampa said, “Give up this life! Abandon desires for future lives! Chase out shame and disgust from your mind! Divine view and meditation will emerge!”
Another time Dampa said, “Kunga, get up, I had a bad dream! We must do a ritual!”

Kunga asked, “What sort of bad dream did you have?”

Dampa replied, “The sun went down in the middle of the sky, and the karma of ill-willed beings was still not exhausted! At the end there was a dangerous black Mönpa native approaching!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, how will a ritual help? Can it be averted?”

Dampa commanded, “We’ll do the ritual, so you come here!” He touched the five-family mudra to the five places on Kunga’s body and gave him the Vajra King empowerment. Having entrusted the lineage to him, he said, “Kunga, now, even if the sun sets, the moon will rise!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, Majo Gendun Kyi says, ‘I can’t meditate no matter what I do! Do I have no karma left for it?’ Could she really have no karma left for meditation?”

Dampa said, “How could there be anyone with no karma left for meditation, when we have primordially never experienced separation from inborn, innate awareness? When I say ‘inborn,’ ‘innate born,’ don’t you understand?”

Kunga asked, “Well, then, should we assume that meditation just naturally flows forth for all sentient beings?”

Dampa said, “Though sentient beings have never experienced separation from meditation, they don’t recognize it!”

He asked, “What is necessary in order to recognize it?”

Dampa replied, “A Lama’s introduction!”

He asked further, “Well, has she not been introduced?”

Dampa said, “She has been introduced, but ghosts have carried away her meditation!”

Kunga asked, “What sort of ghost?”

Dampa replied, “When equipoise is stolen by the ghost of conceptual mind, the root is not held! When subsequent attainment is stolen by the ghost of antidotes, it is no longer integrated with the mind! Those are the same two ghosts that harm most meditators!”

Kunga continued, “How should equipoise be cultivated?”
Dampa said, “There is no other equipoise than two: that with signs and that without signs! As for that with signs, by binding awareness to a pillar-like object, the movement of conceptual thought is cut. As for that without signs, bound to an unsupported pillar, conception is put to bed! Once conceptual thought has been cut, and you’ve become wholly nonconceptual, hold the root!”

Kunga then asked, “What is that which is called subsequent attainment?”

Dampa said, “As a by-product of the destruction of antidotes, an experience, free of conceptual mind, naturally arises.”

Kunga asked, “Are there no antidotes to be applied in that?”

Dampa replied, “It is held with mindfulness, but when mindfulness is being sought, there can be no meditation!”

Kunga asked, “Isn’t holding with mindfulness an antidote?”

Dampa said, “Antidotes emphatically subdue awareness, but mindfulness is something that just watches without distraction.”

Kunga then asked, “Well, then why is it said that memory is the mind of sentient beings?”

Dampa said, “Memory is called ‘the mind of sentient beings’, but meditation that is not free of conceptual thought is what is referred to as ‘mind filled with activity’. Discernment turned inward is what is widely referred to as ‘mindfulness’. Without the experience of subsequent attainment free of conceptual mind, it is not mindfulness in this context. It is said that, by destroying or abandoning recognition, you transcend. One who is free of recognition is in subsequent attainment. That is the conduct of the supreme perfection of wisdom!” Thus he quoted from the Condensed Perfection of Wisdom.

Dampa continued, “Familiarizing yourself and holding mind free of concept is what is called ‘meditation’!”

Kunga asked further, “Well, is ‘no-mind’ not conscious awareness, at all?”

Dampa said, “Since all mindfulness is empty of self nature, mindfulness is ‘no-mind’! When we say ‘no-mind’ we’re not talking about inanimate matter!”

Kunga asked then, “When do you no longer need to hold with mindfulness?”

Dampa said, “There are some of highest faculties who, by just receiving instructions, mix their minds with the object. Deception automatically
self-destructs, and they are liberated. There are some of middling faculties whose meditation becomes expansive. They purify their perceptions in equipoise and subsequent attainment, and they are liberated from discriminating thought. Furthermore, as long as one holds with mindfulness, it is ‘path yoga’. Having become free of discriminating thought, abiding without joining or separating from innate born primordial reality is ‘resultant yoga’. Although you abide in that primordial state, you don’t recognize it! That which makes you recognize it is ‘causal yoga’.

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, once the function of mindfulness has culminated, how far has one progressed on the paths and stages?”

Dampa said, “If you consider it in the context of tantra it is ‘great union’! Out of the two types of union, meditating with mindfulness while mixing equipoise and subsequent attainment is called ‘trainees’ union’. When freed from the function of mindfulness due to the expansion of one’s meditation, that is ‘non-trainees’ union’. In the context of the perfection vehicle, when one is liberated in the ‘no-mind’ awareness of subsequent attainment, one realizes the first ground, seeing the ultimate nature of mind. From there, in meditation, mixing awareness and the ultimate sphere in a nondual manner, released from discriminating thought, one realizes the tenth ground. Here, we don’t talk about paths and stages! Those who teach the long path make the paths and stages into talk!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, Majo Zhachung Ma couldn’t meditate at first. Now that she does, she has many problems with meditation. Why is that?”

Dampa said, “She was not able to meditate at first because she had too little faith and devotion in the Lama! Now, her faults in meditation are because she is too industrious and has too little instruction.”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, can faults arise from too much perseverance?”

Dampa said, “Meditating with intense seriousness and too little instruction brings faults in meditation.”

Kunga asked, “What are the various problems from faults in meditation?”

He said, “Although there are many types of faults in meditation, they may all be included in three. First is the fault of not holding mind. Then, there is the fault of holding yet not sustaining. The third is the fault of sustaining yet not knowing how to take it onto the path.”
Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, how important are those three? Please explain!”

Dampa said, “They are very important! If a traveler doesn’t know the path, the ghosts get him! If a yogi doesn’t know the faults of meditation, he can’t train in the paths! As for the first, the fault of not holding mind, that is due to sinking and excitement. In dependence on sinking, fogginess and denseness arise. In dependence on excitement, scattering and excessive heightening occur. Those two prevent the beginner from sustaining attention. They also occur after stabilization but are then easier to dispel. With the second fault, holding yet not sustaining, although the subtle energy-mind has entered the central channel and nonconceptuality has dawned, the subtle energy mind also enters the wrong places. Due to this, hallucinations and sickness occur. The third fault, sustaining yet not knowing how to take it onto the path, is due to proliferation and attachment. In dependence on proliferation, distraction and samsara arise. In dependence on attachment, craving and grasping arise.”

Kunga asked, “What is sinking and excitement?”

Dampa explained, “Sinking is a lack of clarity. Excitement is the inability to abide calmly. Those two are known as the first difficult passage of yoga. They cause beginners to become discouraged. If you remember the essential instructions, you won’t have problems.”

Kunga asked, “What do you mean by ‘energy-mind entering the wrong places’?”

Dampa said, “Those who are not sustained by the essential points of instruction, by meditating too forcefully, cause the energy-mind to enter the wrong channels. In general, it causes rebirth in the various realms of existence. Through a drop, in the aspect of a syllable, abiding in some channels, the deceptive appearances of each type of sentient being arise. Through mind-energy collecting in various channels which cause disease, those diseases arise.”

Kunga asked further, “Why do faults occur once the mind is sustained?”

Dampa said, “It’s the fault of those lacking the instructions, not knowing how to take longing attachment on the path of rigpa-awareness! It’s like attachment for yogurt when you’ve gone to buy butter!”

Kunga asked, “What do you mean?”

Dampa said, “It’s attachment for the bliss and clarity of samadhi! You
can’t bear its disintegration! It’s an obscuration of knowledge and doesn’t allow you to have enlightened mind! Without developing experience in this, you go in circles. If you lose the adherence of mindfulness of the no-mind experience of subsequent attainment, body and mind are lost in ordinariness and proliferation occurs. Though you imagine that such rigpa-awareness is not shifting in its entity, because it is not naturally clarified, the deception of objects is not cut! Through it, the path is not purified; it is supposedly called ‘cultivation.’”

Kunga asked, “But you said that if watchfulness of mindfulness is destroyed, that’s good. Why?”

Dampa said, “That ‘destruction of watchfulness of mindfulness’ refers to meditation which has become expansive. Here, because one must separate from conceptual mind, if one loses the glue of mindfulness before having reached expansiveness, one remains ordinary. That is not what we are referring to here!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, how can one dispel those faults of samadhi?”

Dampa said, “Dispelling faults of sinking and excitement is accomplished just as all the Masters have explained: If sinking occurs, clarify! If excitement occurs, collect in abiding! If one has not received the points of this instruction, that is a problem. By applying our mode of view, deception based on the object is severed. Binding attention to the focal object, sinking and excitement can no longer cause harm. In regard to distorted stabilization, Zhama Lotsawa says, it should be cleared with a countering antidote: We divide periods of meditation up into small segments, and we practice the flying bird method, projecting the energy-mind out of its nest and drawing forth naked awareness. This does not harm the energy winds. Then, we will not lose the mindfulness of the experience of ‘no-mind’. At that time, the concept of ‘cultivation of experience’ becomes meaningless! Having identified the experience of bliss and clarity, not attached to the taste of samadhi, free from antidotes, ‘cultivating experience’ becomes meaningless! Recognizing the experience of bliss and clarity without attachment to the taste of samadhi, you will not go around in circles!”

Kunga said, “Dampa, many well-intentioned practitioners gather together to discuss different levels of view. It makes me uncomfortable!”

Dampa said, “The views of those tenet holders are imitations of the view!
By the destruction of tenets, we throw out views! We have no calculation of high and low!"

“Dampa-la, what is the measure of having realized the view?”

Dampa said, “If actual realization arises, one does not wander in samsara, but they don’t know Dharma! There is neither goal nor anything to do! Tibetans call a bit of understanding ‘realization’, but they have not cut through the movement of deception!”

“What is the difference between understanding and realization?”

Dampa said, “There are four types: understanding, realization, experiencing, and manifesting. Understanding refers to realizing the defining characteristics through a generic image. Experience refers to generating that understanding in your mind. Manifesting refers to bringing it to completion. Realization means that all phenomena are destroyed in non-true existence whether one is meditating or not!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, which comes first, realization or experience?”

Dampa said, “That depends on the type of person. For the person of highest faculties, on the basis of realization, experience arises. For people of middling faculties, realization dawns on the basis of experience. It’s like water and its waves!”

Kunga asked, “Is there a connection between them or not?”

Dampa said, “There are many lesser beings who cultivate experience without realization. Most meditators fall into that category. For the realized, it is impossible that the energy of experience not arise!”

Kunga asked, “How important are those two?”

Dampa said, “Experience is what we call ‘mental stabilization’. It is samadhi through which one takes birth in other higher realms. Realization is the perfection of wisdom that releases samsara in baselessness!”

Kunga asked, “Then, how do you practice those two?”

Dampa said, “Gradually, through experience, having stopped proliferation of consciousness, you see innate-born ‘no-mind’, the ultimate nature. That is in the class of realization. Having realized that, it is furthered through experience. That experience, sustained by the energy of realization, is brought onto the path, effortlessly accomplishing the difficult task. You are then released from duality. That is the arising of unmistaken realization! For a person to whom realizations come all at once, it is similar to actual simultaneous realization. Having seen the ultimate nature, it does not yet appear as the creative play of consciousness, but at some point
you are released in the ‘foundation consciousness’ and it becomes immutable realization!”

Dampa said: “In Tibet there are special instructions, but they don’t know how to practice! It seems there are too few mahasiddhas! The Tibetans sell philosophical tenet views proclaiming increase of realizations! Ingesting bastardized teachings, they cast path signs behind them! Lying about their experience, they lose the inner energy! Taking breaks in practice, they have never trained in the paths! Because secrets escape their lips, the dakinis can’t come around! Because they don’t carry through on their promises, the yidam deities turn away!”

“Dampa-la, don’t they intend it for the benefit of sentient beings?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, they just don’t know how to practice! In general, to practice Dharma, you must not stray from these three paths: at the time of the shravaka, listening to the master; at the time of the pratyekabuddha, engaging in practice for accomplishment; and at the time of the bodhisattva, acting for the sake of other trainees. Tibetans, at the time of the shravaka, don’t practice yet act for the sake of others! At the time of the pratyekabuddha, they engage in false practices! At the time of the bodhisattva, they keep the eight worldly dharmas!”

“Dampa-la! Some people who have just entered the door of Dharma try to benefit others!”

Dampa said, “That’s the first entrance for mara! It’s impossible for people with such an approach to complete their practice! It is impossible for them to generate a complete path in their minds! It may appear that they are benefiting others, but it’s only temporary! They can’t liberate beings from samsara! If you’re caught in the water, how can you rescue anyone to dry land?”

“Dampa-la, there doesn’t seem to be any tradition like this in Tibet!”

Dampa said, “That is true. In Tibet the translators train in the words and have no time to practice! Their possession of the complete instructions becomes meaningless! In our India, no one knows who the mahasiddhas are! In Tibet, though they’re not a siddha, they pretend to be and fly it from the top of the victory banner! It is completely meaningless!”
“Dampa-la, how do you practice at the time of the shravaka?”

Dampa said, “At that time it is very important to be with the Lama for a long time, have great faith and devotion, and to clear doubts through hearing and contemplation. Our lineage of yidam deity practice speaks of nothing externally but the pitakas, and nothing internally but the tantras. The profound passage of mind-training is accomplishing the Lama! Accomplishing purpose with one mantra! Enlightened with one word! Pleasing the deities with one offering! Certain knowledge, experience, and blessings! Such qualities arise! Mother Dagmema realized these through just receiving the Mother initiation! If your effort is great, signs of progress upon the path will arise here and now!”

“What hardships are undertaken at the time of the pratyekabuddha?”

Dampa said, “By means of an intense vow, it’s very important that the practitioner not let the delusions run loose. Through application of the mode of view, holding rigpa awareness forcefully, one enters the passage to innate born primordial reality! Through retreat practice on view and meditation, experience will come like grain fermenting for beer! The three signs—causal signs, path signs, and result signs—will be completed! The lamp of the teachings rises like sun and moon in the sky! Kunga, you cry about accomplishment and experience! Lazy one! Those who know Dharma don’t have faulty instructions, so they don’t speak of experiences!”

“How does one perform the difficult practices of the bodhisattva?”

Dampa said, “In general, there are two types of bodhisattvas, great and small. Great bodhisattvas do not manifest the perfect ultimate. That is, having completed their own purposes, they dedicate their body, speech, and mind for the sake of sentient beings until the end of samsara! Small bodhisattvas manifest the perfect ultimate. That is, having attained their own purpose in dharma kaya, through the power of their prayers, they act for the sake of sentient beings in the two form bodies!”

“When can one benefit sentient beings?”

Dampa said, “Having completed the difficult practices, you take subsequent attainment on the path. The conduct of equal taste mixes with objects that cause attachment and aversion. If it’s not able to harm your virtuous application, it is called cultivating the path. At the level of the greatest meditators, it is permissible to put aside all practices! Then, act for the sake of sentient beings in any transformation! If equal taste is not brought
to full measure, even at the level of a great meditator, it’s meaningless. The hardships and views of the pratyekabuddha are a solitary path! Acting to benefit others, having completed his own purpose, that person is like a vessel of food-offerings, a treasury filled with precious jewels! From that time one should benefit sentient beings! Kunga, you will benefit sentient beings, but don’t act like this! This has ruined the auspiciousness slightly. There will be less benefit through the three lineages!”

“Dampa-la, how many are there in Dingri who have completed the path?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, those who have completed the path are extremely few! They have developed just a little ascertainment, received just a little blessings!”

“Dampa-la, they say there are many instructors in Central Tibet. How many lineage holders are there? One would assume there should be many lineage holders arising?”

Dampa said, “There are many who have passed through the door of liberation! Lineage holders are extremely few! The precious jewel is not a jewel if it lacks the accumulations!”

“Have the practice lineage instructions not been heard before in Tibet?”

Dampa said, “Before I came to Tibet there were four lineages that had never been heard in Tibet! The supreme lineage, the instruction of the meditational deity, which is like the command of the king; the common lineage, instructions of the fifty-four yogis and yoginis, which is like having further refined the nutritious butter; the lineage of wonders, instructions of the thirty-six great beings, which is like a skilled physician strengthening the body, base of ills; and the special lineage, the dakinis’ hearts’ blood, like going to the golden isle of jewels! No methods have been transmitted in these four lineages that are not for liberation from samsara. These, like the father’s wealth given to his child, Kunga, I entrust to you!”
Questions and Answers about Activities

“How do you purify the obscuration of bad karma?”

Dampa said, “We purify through effort of body and speech and request the blessings of our Lama!”

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“When one gathers merit is one not actually seeking wealth?”

Dampa said, “If someone has no wealth, for people of worldly opinion, he is a leper! For Dharma practitioners, if someone is too wealthy, he is a leper! In my India, detachment is considered the king of generosity!”

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“Are there other Dharma systems that take delusions onto the path?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, that does not depend upon the teaching but upon the person! There are many heads of congregations who act with ordinary lust and rage!”

“Dampa-la, should one generate attachment or aversion?”

Dampa said, “Is your male rebirth somehow inferior? Or did you barely make it through birth? Or were you not born whole?”

“Then, it’s impermissible to generate them?”

Dampa replied, “If they have been generated, you must transmute them! Yet eunuchs can never have children! If passing conceptions are not allowed to disintegrate where they arise, thoughts continue to emerge from one’s depths. So, shut up and sit!”

……

“Dampa, I am confused! What should I do?”

Dampa advised, “Without making intense aspirational appeals as if your
life depended upon it, even if understanding dawns, it’s confusing! Meditate with me at your crown and subdue the observing awareness!”

Meditating in that way, Kunga’s mind became pliable. Having meditated quite a bit with repeated placement, he informed Dampa, “Now again, I’ve been meditating.”

Dampa said, “If ‘meditation’ occurs, destroy it! Now, will you develop pride in that! Old meditation becomes conceptual! The old tadpole becomes a frog!”

“Well, then what should I do?”

Dampa said, “When no opponent rises, there is no need for competition! Once realization arises, then you have meditated!”

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“Dampa, what is Buddha’s intent?”

Dampa said, “Now he wants the horns of a rabbit! He wants a wife who is the daughter of a barren woman! As a Buddha who has never seen a Buddha, your hope is not good! If you’re going to look for the root of samsara, look! If a viewer still arises, it’s been a poor look!”

“What are the marks, signs, and qualities of a Buddha?”

Dampa answered, “They are the harvest of a Dharma practitioner! Having practiced through various means, the capacity of the mind is a mere relative appearance! If you want to clean barley, the wind must carry the husks away! If you want to look down, you have to climb up! If self is subdued, self-appearing bliss blazes up! Signs of not subduing the self are the emergence of various unpleasant things! If one does not subdue a god, a ghost arises! Furthermore, those who have not gathered the accumulations have many enemies and little joy! They wander around aimlessly, sick at heart! Though others have done well, they see faults! They want to blame the Lama who reveals reality! They have to get between companions, Lamas, and everyone! They want to steal, not to give! They don’t want to keep commitments purely! They want to engage in immorality! They don’t want to meditate; they want to go many places! They want to criticize everything without, within, and elsewhere! They don’t want to praise others! Even if others praise someone, they want to criticize him! Such untamed intelligence has not gathered accumulations! It’s really too bad! If they had gathered accumulations, it would help. But, because mara sleeps within, they don’t want to!”
“What are the signs of having accumulated bad karma?”

Dampa said, “Deeply felt criticism of Dharma practitioners! Stubbornness in a difficult wife! Back talk from many children! Not liking to repay loans, but liking to take them! Asking others to undergo hardship for the sake of one’s own food and clothing! Having bad intentions in all thoughts! Wanting to practice Dharma, but having doubts whether one will get food to survive. Those are signs of bad karma!”

“What are degenerated commitments bad karma?”

Dampa said, “That is the first return of bad karma! It is an obstacle that can be cleared through confession and purification!”

“When will my awareness be equal to Dampa’s?”

Dampa said, “When the wind has carried you off, you are equal! You’re still not stubborn enough! You suffer such things as birth and death, but if the wind has carried you off, leaving nothing else, who will suffer?”

“Meditators and yogis say, ‘Like a rainbow, appearing yet empty, enjoy!’”

Dampa said, “In that case, one’s mind is empty because the wind has, indeed, carried off the self! In that way, there is no pleasure at obtaining or displeasure at not obtaining things. What could be a problem?”

“What is benefiting others?”

Dampa said, “It appears due to the force of compassion or prayer, but master and student do not exist by self-nature!”

“What should I do for practice now?”

Dampa said, “Now, sit for practice!” and gave a glare.

“Sit,” he repeated, and cast a glance into space.

“Sit!” he again commanded, and held the mudra of meditative equipoise.

“Sit!” he shouted again and did a crazy dance!

At that instant, I–Kunga, the faulty one–was blessed!
Kunga asked, “What should I do to help others?”

Dampa said, “Meditating inseparable from compassion, dedicate it for others! Can you explain who arises and who ceases? Practice what you understand! There has always been something better, but you don’t know what is actually good! Recognizing the primordial as primordial, you’ve arrived at the sphere! Don’t accept and reject white and black clouds! Extend the garuda’s wings! Ride the fish! Don’t lounge! Don’t play with a poisonous snake!”

Kunga asked, “What is the measure of great merit?”

Dampa said, “If you don’t develop strong attachment, it shows great merit!”

Kunga asked, “How much is collection of entourage and wealth a measure of merit?”

Dampa said, “That is also a factor of merit! Everyone likes it, but it is merit that comes with maras!”

Dampa empowered Kunga in rigpa awareness and his mind became pliable.

Kunga asked, “Can I rely on these appearances?”

Dampa said, “Who can trust in the firmness of ocean ice? With the mind resting on nothing, who will deceive you? If your mind rests on nothing, you are not seduced!”

Kunga asked, “Then, should the mind rest in practice alone?”

Dampa replied, “Mind resting on nothing is itself practice!”

Kunga said, “Then, purity is quite easy!”

Dampa said, “If that is easy, nothing else is hard! It seems as if it should be easy, but it’s hard! Not wanting, yet you definitely want! Not associating, yet definitely desiring! It seems pure, yet there’s a scent of craving!”

Kunga said, “It’s good that I’m cared for directly by Dampa’s compassion! How does Dampa see these appearances?”

Dampa said, “Sometimes, to me, these appearances also luminously appear, like a rainbow! Sometimes, going to bliss, they vanish! Still, the side of appearance itself is stronger!”

Kunga said, “Dampa has attained freedom! I can hardly imagine that a time will come when I am like Dampa!”
Dampa said, “If the inner blood is not disturbed, the root of the eye is not disturbed. If the root of the eye is not disturbed, a red inner appearance does not occur. You must realize it from within!”

“Dampa, show a miraculous vision!”

Holding a golden damaru in his hand he swirled up into space!

Terrified, we shouted, “Oh no! Dampa! Dampa!”

Dampa said, “What would you think if I remained ordinary? Things do not appear clearly like this, just by being under the spell of preconceptions! That’s why emptiness can’t appear and appearances can’t be empty, to you! It would not be like this in a Tathagata’s pure land! Without destroying inner conceptions, outer appearances cannot be averted!”

“What should we do to purify our awareness?”

Dampa said, “In a series of three hundred, meditate with placement, and each time, cast it away! If you do three hundred sessions each day, purification occurs. If placement is influenced by excitement, draw awareness down, like going into a hole. If placement is influenced by sinking, shout PHAT, and cast awareness into space! If you get sleepy, stroll about and practice dancing conduct! If you fall asleep, remember the dream instructions! If you have the merit, meditate thinking it’s a dream! If people don’t know about it, secret activity’s completion will come!”

“Is Dampa going away for retreat?” Dampa replied, “Putting out markers, you get proud! If you don’t associate with people, it’s just like going into the mountains!”

Asked, “Well then, were you in retreat?” Dampa said, “I was cut off by a wall of concepts! People and appearances were not in accord! It was difficult to associate with people! First, I thought, ‘Dampa, why don’t you consider teaching Dharma?’ Finally I was going to teach. Teaching is indeed Dharma and blessed. But if you just talk about food and don’t eat it yourself, powerful Dharma won’t happen through patron-Lama relationship!”

“What are all the four views and meditations?”

Dampa instructed, “Do you have any stages to classify? I have no stages! It’s as if, by separating from referent objects, all is complete! Casting off
self and completion of Dharma are simultaneous! Exhaustion of desire and collection of wealth are simultaneous! Destruction of pride of mind and clearance of spirit harm are simultaneous! Enlightenment and liberation of samsara are simultaneous!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa-la, how much spiritual merit has that woman accumulated?”

Dampa replied, “Among women, she’s middling. Lesser birth, low intelligence, and finally uneducated! The mind cooks up more varieties of dishes than a chef!”

Kunga said, “I know an amazing woman will come, brave and educated!”

Dampa said, “There do exist some women whose minds are like jewels! But, hermit Kunga, don’t think so much about samsaric things! Abide in a state without thought! By understanding ultimate truth you will not degenerate!”

Dampa said, “Body relaxed, leave it natural, and mind free of yearning. Wish not for what is ultimately immutable!”

“What is the purpose of saying PHAT?”

Dampa said, “Sometimes it naturally arises through the force of blessings or power. With recitation of a single PHAT the discriminated aggregates are destroyed! Discrimination is likewise destroyed!”

“Isn’t saying PHAT discrimination?”

Dampa said, “Although it is a cleansing of scent with scent, it is different from discrimination. When there is actual spirit harm toward the master, student, or oneself, if that arises from conceptions in one’s own mind, saying PHAT destroys it. HUM collects. OM holds. It’s rather like taming a horse. Don’t just bark like the dogs!”

“Dampa, I feel faith in the Wisdom Gone to the Other Side [Prajnaparamita] and the Great Seal [Mahamudra]! Please give an instruction on those!”
Dampa said, “The other side, this side, hand seal, foot seal, such nauseating talk in the name of Dharma! Chasing after Dharma! Infatuated with sense objects! Studying meaning for the sake of the examples! Would you send a child to the enemy? Would you cover the one with everything? Would you sell out the meaning for words? Would you send the lord to the subjects? Would you buy the indescribable with candy? Outwardly, relax clinging to objects! Inwardly, give up clinging to the body! Secretly, loosen clinging to mind! Tighten with intensity, and then gently relax! The tightening is the method, and the loosening is the wisdom! Introduction to the nature of mind by the Lama is like that, as well!”

“Dampa, in yesterday’s meditation, did you do partial meditation or meditation by stages?”

Dampa replied, “Partial meditation is also good, but I first meditated on the Guru at my crown and made requests. Then, I meditated on compassion for sentient beings. Then, renouncing the body, I did meditation on ugliness. Renouncing friends, I meditated on impermanence. Meditating in small parts is great medicine. Poise in the nature of the primordial! Sit as a mountain! Take the mountain-pass-like wisdom! Don’t rely on the poison of discrimination. VAJRA MU! It’s unsuitable to go around talking. KALA KUTRA! Keep it under seal!”

“Dampa, it’s said that Central Tibet is an excellent region.”

Dampa said, “Good place for you to get fat! Bad people bring sorrow! In poor places, eat poor food and purify your mind! Don’t let your thoughts go wild! It’s a cause of obstacles! Without awareness going to reality, restless people have no happiness. Having a lot of desires and no qualities is a bad sign. Do you imagine I’ve never found a better place than this? In a poor place life is simple. When life is simple samadhi is clear! When food is good you eat until you’re fat! You gulp down the beer! Talk about anything whatsoever! Sleep like a corpse! For the skinny-assed yogi who smells like rotten tsampa, there’s no misfortune at all!”

“Is it really that bad?”

Dampa said, “Much worse! Minds are deceived! Mouths blow hot air! Ghostly stews are boiled! When poor they get desperate! The people are
embarrassed by a yogi like me! The profound view is left behind in the basis! Some have understanding, but they don’t attain freedom! They say, ‘If memory is lost in your own mind, how can you meditate with mindfulness of the empty view?’ They say, ‘If there’s meditation, there’s no view!’

Having trained in a few verbal conventions they set up shop! Don’t think of Central Tibet, stay in Dingri! It’s a place of virtue for accomplishing enlightenment! Tibetan yogis aren’t goats or sheep, aren’t flesh or bone! I don’t know what they are! They seem to be yogis in name only!”

“What is a perfect yogi like?”

Dampa said, “In the rising of impartial basic energy, mind is impartially liberated! Thoughts are not seen, or if seen, they are not grasped! Awareness abiding in its own mode of view, what is born? That is what is called ‘being liberated in suchness’! That’s what you call a yogi who is self-endowed in the ocean-like dharmadhatu, for whom thoughts are like waves!”

“Please give a liberating instruction!”

Dampa said, “Ask a fly in dog shit what the characteristics of samsara are! If you’re revolted by samsara, it’s easy! Not realizing it is due to bad habits, you can’t separate from the home fires! Men are not able to do anything but fight! Women can’t part from their bodies! They can’t bear much happiness! They can bear more suffering! It’s true they’re unable to part from happiness, but they can’t part from suffering! This nature of sentient beings is funny! It makes you want to cry, get angry, or scream! People’s natures are getting worse! To practice yoga, you need intensity and relaxed calm. Dharma must not go to the wants of this life: it must not become an accumulation of karma!”

“With fifty-four Gurus, I sought Dharma and practiced in places such as India, Kashmir, and Oddiyana! Mind fully determined, recognizing the root to be my own mind, I saw nothing but training in awareness-energy! If you have not received initiation yourself and your rigpa-awareness can’t function, it is very important to make requests to the Guru and be earnest! Although you use high terms like ‘enlightenment’, without training your own continuum, desire will just increase! If mind absorbs in reality, that is blissful, but one who talks unbearably of concepts disturbs it! Many things occurred in meditation, but then I focused on the state beyond training. Though I’ve given advice, who has need for a master?”
“You’ve said all phenomena are mind. Please give a mind instruction with pith essentials!”

Dampa said, “There are no more than three mind instructions: the awareness or consciousness that is the apprehended object, the means of apprehending it, and the degree to which it has been recognized and experienced.”

“What is the apprehended object?”

Dampa explained, “Ultimate reality of full luminosity! At present you don’t experience it. It is none other than your own mind’s natural luminosity, from where desire, etc. arise and which experiences them. That is the apprehended object!”

“Is practicing experiencing natural luminosity the same as practicing elemental mind?”

Dampa replied, “Natural luminosity is like ice. Full luminosity is like water. Elemental mind is innate, primordial! Because of grasping at natural luminosity, the object to be apprehended—primordial mind—is obscured in your present experience. Since natural luminosity is experienced with an obscured mind, fleeting false awareness is not recognized for what it is. Elemental or primordial mind is fundamentally released beyond concept!”

“What is the means of apprehending that?”

Dampa said, “Focus your mind upon just that which arises and is experienced in natural luminosity. It is none other than natural luminosity. Getting someone to understand this and focus on it without distraction is also the profound introduction of the Guru to the nature of mind.”

“What is the measure of experience?”

Dampa said, “When the natural luminosity of desire and so forth is observed, it ceases ‘being’ anything whatsoever. And that unborn natural luminosity becomes an instance of primordial full illumination.”

“If one does not want the experience of the natural luminosity to cease, what should one do?”

Dampa said, “Without engaging in anything other than natural luminosity, place your mind on none other than that which you are experiencing, without distraction. If you don’t want it to cease for a long time, and you continue to sit, by remaining in that innate mind, you find that desire’s nature is elemental, primordial mind. If you continue to entrust your mind
to that, you will not develop any other discursive fabrication such as hatred and so forth. In case they are generated, since they no longer can influence your mind, you do not grasp them as true. With confidence, not sustaining all such discursive thoughts, one sees naked elemental mind; then one understands what faulty awareness is. Then, no matter what thoughts develop, you don’t need to apply an intentional antidote! Why? By just viewing the thought nakedly, it is without reality or characteristic, without production, cessation or abiding, without fixed name, and without shape or color. Seeing beyond the senses, like thieves finding nothing in an empty house or not seeing spots in front of your eyes once an eye infection is cured, you develop certain knowledge. When that happens, you will realize the ultimate nature of mind because you’re freed from all objective fixations! If you think, ‘This is it!’ it’s not. Kunga, it’s incorrect to think that nothingness is the ultimate! In short, although gross thoughts block natural luminosity, full luminosity does not block thoughts. Here mind’s brightness and residue are distinguished. Having distinguished between brightness and residue, again enter the innate. It’s like ice melting into water. As is said in the *Guhyasamajatantra*:

> With natural luminosity engaged in transcendent wisdom,  
> Understanding discrimination to be like residue,  
> The yogi must always, once again,  
> Immerse himself in natural luminosity.

...  

“What is ‘determining the realization of view’?”

Dampa said, “That which is called apprehending with elemental mind, experience empty of intrinsic identity, simultaneously born transcendent wisdom, and undeceived innate or primordial awareness—all refer to awareness that does not mistakenly chase after natural luminosity. Just as water flows differently over smooth or rough ground, due to the white and red appearances, different thoughts arise. Whether white or red clouds arise in the sky, within the sky they fade away. Likewise, by not chasing luminosity, it is released in its own true nature. It is said in the *Guhyasamajatantra*:

> Even the wealthy, naturally enjoying the very objects of the senses, enter into the clear light.”

...
For example, just as waves are not beyond the nature of the ocean, concepts are not beyond the elemental mind. Therefore, think, ‘My meditation cannot be sought from others, and it is something that arises within myself!’ Think, ‘In natural luminosity, it does not matter whether thoughts cease or not, because, realizing that elemental mind never strays beyond bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality, I am always accompanied by meditation!’ In fact, as long as consciousness itself is not destroyed nor ceases, meditation is never destroyed nor ceases! That is the timelessly abiding view!”

Kunga asked for instruction on meditation.

Dampa said, “Though the meditator has never been separate from elemental mind, since obscuring thoughts come to those lacking highest faculties, they must gain familiarity with it.”

“Do those of highest faculties not need meditation?”

Dampa said, “Those of the highest faculties, in just receiving the Guru’s introduction to elemental mind and proceeding to merge their mind with its object, need not train in any other application of meditation because they abide in that primordial essence.”

“What should those lacking highest faculties do?”

Dampa said, “Meditating on that introduction to elemental mind, there are three parts: preparatory, actual, and subsequent practice. As for the first, in a place conducive for your mind, on a comfortable cushion, with the five branches of concentration complete, sit in whatever posture is comfortable for your body and make requests to your root and lineage Gurus. Then think, ‘The minds of sentient beings are by nature free of suffering, beyond samsara, and elemental mind is also beyond suffering, so sentient beings do not have to enter into suffering. It is so sad that they are influenced by misperceived fleeting faults in the natural luminosity of awareness! Therefore, for their sake, having attained the state of Vajrasattva, I shall purify the faulty concepts of sentient beings!’

“Then for the actual practice, there are three parts: engaging, abiding, and knowing when to arise from the cushion. First, with body and mind internally relaxed, identifying mind’s nature as before, settle yourself in what you have recognized. Then, without fabricating, proliferating, or collecting the mind, leave it in its own mode; leave it natural. By leaving it just as it is, you come to see elemental mind. Secondly, by settling thus, there
comes an excellent experience of bliss, emptiness, clarity, and nonconceptuality. Settle your mind so that experience comes to pervade all things, without sinking, fogginess, agitation, or scattering. In case sinking or agitation occurs, don’t view it as a fault. Without getting rid of it, focus directly upon that thought itself. Otherwise, wanting to get rid of sinking and agitation is like fleeing from a rope you’ve mistaken for a snake; concepts are hard to abandon! Third, the beginner should keep periods of equipoise short. It’s more conducive for remaining free of the enemies of sinking and agitation. Dedicate the meditation for the sake of sentient beings. That way, not resenting meditation, but with a good feeling for it, you’ll wish to meditate again later without discouragement. Finally, the qualities of the Guru and the bliss of the elements subsequent to realization are experienced. Then sinking and agitation are equalized in elemental mind and one has realized natural luminosity.

“At that time, by focusing on the nature of that luminous awareness, the full illumination that is one’s own actual nature dawns. Now, endowed with that final realization, when in equipoise, one is able to merge desire into dharmic conduct. If one can abide day and night with immutable realization of natural luminosity, one’s meditation will become stable and supreme. If the bliss, void, clarity, and nonconceptuality of the equipoise experience continue to arise, even when you get up from meditation, that is a sign of stability.”

“When that happens, what should one do?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, engage objects with equal taste. There are three ways: natural engagement, clear engagement, and wrathful engagement. In the first, whether going alone to an isolated place, sitting, eating, moving, speaking, singing, dancing, or whatever, be inseparable from bliss, emptiness, and clarity, and train in the elemental nature of your own mind. As for clear engagement, if, when one is in an isolated place, one can remain in bliss void clarity whether one is in meditation or not, but when associating with others the experience loses clarity, then one must associate with friends who do not cause delusions to arise. In wrathful engagement, when meeting with violent circumstances, in town or with people who cause you to develop attachment or anger, train in stability of awareness. Then, if you can abide in bliss void with no external appearances disturbing you, everything stabilizes your realization. Unifying view and meditation with all that exists, your realization becomes stable.”

“What is it like when warmth arises in one’s practice?”
Dampa said, “Kunga, first is the experience of holding awareness. Second is the experience of stabilizing that holding. Third is the experience of perfecting that stability. In each, there is something engaged and something abandoned. The experience when engaging in holding awareness is the bliss-void-clarity experience of equipoise. The realization that there is no possessor arises in total clarity. Afterwards, there is the sense that, ‘Wow, I’ve never experienced such an awareness before!’ At that time there arises a feeling that, ‘Relative to this, all other awarenesses are like a thorn!’ It feels like you have finished your work.”

“What is realization like?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, the experience of realization is such that, when engaged in external activities, the previous meditative experience continues to arise. This happens because of your familiarity with the experience. Having recognized elemental mind arising, one’s body and mind are still in bliss. If one does not recognize the abiding nature of the mind, the problem is that one did not actually recognize natural luminosity or that doubts have arisen subsequent to seeing it. By not understanding this single point, one loses conviction in all Dharma.”

“How does the engaging and abandoning in regard to stabilizing the holding occur?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, the engaging is as follows: You don’t feel like engaging in any activity. You have little discursive thought and the delusions are weak. Even if you sing and dance around and so forth, the meditative experience is not lost. You feel, ‘No matter what happens, I’m never separate from meditation!’ Kunga! With even just that realization, there arises an arrogant thought, ‘Since I am nearing fruition, I will soon have magical powers and clairvoyance!’ This is to be abandoned. Hope is the cause of fear!”

“What is engaging and abandoning in regard to perfecting stability?”

Dampa said, “Kunga, contemplate as follows: ‘All sentient beings abide by way of elemental nature, pervaded by bliss void clarity. They’ve never been separate from it, yet they are obscured due to the influence of mere fleeting thoughts. It is so sad that unrealized sentient beings experience nothing but continual suffering!’ Contemplate this until tears come to your eyes. A subtle type of clairvoyance also arises. As for what needs to be abandoned, it is the pride and arrogance in that realization which thinks, ‘Now the fruit will be attained without effort! Now, maybe I’ll be able to engage in crazy wisdom conduct!’ Kunga, realize the faults of such hopeful expectations!”
The Mirror of Mind Instructions

“Dampa, what does realization of the view mean?”
“It’s mind free of bias!”
“What does the ultimate mean?”
“It’s freedom from the examined objects of intellect!”
“What does determining the nature of mind mean?”
“It’s freedom from ignorant pride of self!”
“What does vipasyana mean?”
“It means becoming manifest!”
“What does shamata mean?”
“It means the winds entering the central channel, in the same way as when you fall asleep!”
“What does Buddha mean?”
“It’s called one’s own pure mind!”
“Dampa, what does Prajnaparamita mean?”
“It’s what is beyond speech or expression!”
“Dampa, what does mahamudra mean?”
“It’s what being free of mental activity is called!”
“Dampa, what does ‘Buddha’s intention’ mean?”
“It’s what being free of ‘realization’ is called!”
“What does ‘meditation’ mean?”
“It’s what the spontaneous innate awareness is called!”
“What does ‘destruction of deception’ mean?”
“It’s what all inner and outer phenomena being released on the basis of one word is called!”

...
Dampa said, “Not believing my instructions, one will not clear doubts by reading texts of other teachings! Someone who sets aside my instructions, even if he spends his whole life in study, will not cut through his superimpositions!”

Asked, “Why is that?” Dampa said, “The root of samsara and nirvana being your own mind, all inner and outer phenomena are consciousness, as well. My few words connect you with that meaning and definitively settle it! From within the teachings and commentaries there is nothing to practice other than these three: view, meditation, and action. My instructions include these three completely. They are like the molten essence of uninterrupted mind transmission lineage of fifty-four yogis and yoginis!”

“...”

“If one’s view is mistaken, does one fall into permanence or nihilism?”

Dampa said, “For attainment of enlightenment it is very important to realize the view. Since there is no reification in rigpa, it is free from the extreme of permanence. Because its creative energy appears as any phenomena, it’s free from the extreme of nihilism. Because its natural brilliance is luminous, it is free from the extreme of obscuration. Because the three bodies are spontaneously accomplished, it is free from the extreme of pitfalls. As it is free from the four extremes, the middle way is accomplished. There is no permanence nor annihilation.”

“...”

“Does certainty come through study?”

Dampa said, “There’s no certainty that you will realize the view through a lot of study. If you don’t receive the blessings of the Guru, it won’t help; you won’t be able to really understand Dharma. If you don’t turn away from samsara, it won’t help either; it will be impossible to be free of materialism. Materialism is the cause of samsara. A person who doesn’t understand even when instructed is truly pitiable!”

“...”

“Does meditation depend upon instructions?”

Dampa said, “There’s no certainty that you will generate meditation in your mind by listening to many instructions! A person who has gathered accumulations generates meditation without support! If you take the teachings of the Guru as your instructions, you will generate ascertainment.”
You will understand all various external appearances as dharmata’s own sign language. If you haven’t gathered the two accumulations, there’s no way to purify the two obscurations. You won’t see Kunga even reading the three lines of refuge!”

Dampa said, “Looking at this Dingri person, his speech is getting worse!”
Someone asked, “How is that?”
Dampa answered, “He’s intelligent but doesn’t understand the signs! He has no idea where he’s going but thinks about the ways of others! He’s industrious but can’t put up with austerities! He’s faithless, speaks meaninglessly, and undermines his own welfare. He sees himself as blameless and is a master of faulting others. There are many who have the instructions but few who become mahasiddhas!”

Dampa said, “When I see these Dharma practitioners it frustrates me!”
He was asked, “What do you mean?”
Dampa answered, “Having taken shravaka vows, they don’t guard their vinaya discipline! Having taken bodhisattva vows, they don’t act for the sake of others! Having taken tantric initiation, they don’t keep their samaya! The meditators have no experience! The yogis have no realizations! The teachers don’t know language! They parade knowledge before those without understanding! The unrealized pretend to have realizations! Telling themselves various lies, when death comes they’ll be defeated!”

Dampa said, “It seems as if women’s potential opportunity for enlightenment is hindered!”
Someone asked, “Isn’t there no gender in bodhicitta?”
Dampa answered, “Yes. But, since their bodies have adversity, they don’t complete Dharma practice. Since they don’t have persistence, they can’t practice. When they’re young, they think nothing of Dharma and try every means to have a household. When they’re old, even though they would like to practice Dharma, they physically cannot. If they take ordination, they’re obscured by fashion. If they’re beautiful, it’s even worse! The women who attain their own elevation are few!”
Precious Dampa said, “In Central Tibet the people and their Dharma are a funny mistake!”

He was asked, “What?”

Dampa answered, “They call themselves Kadampas but their activity is primarily that of householders! Without having served, they quickly become authorities! Without reason, they whistle the talk of Dingri! Their bodies stay on the cushion, while their minds are off to the bazaar! Unable to do anything at this time, they make prayers for future lives! If I offer to introduce them to elemental awareness, they say it’s still not time! After attaining a precious human life, if this isn’t the time, there’s no worse sign to indicate that they won’t find a better chance in the future!”

Dampa said, “Some meditate on nonconceptuality as the antidote to conceptual thought but, by that, you can’t be liberated from samsara!”

Someone asked, “Why is that?”

Dampa answered, “Seeking nonconceptuality doesn’t compare with realizing suchness! You understand the root meaning neither conceptually nor nonconceptually! Since, in that case, Dharma doesn’t become the antidote to delusion, even if you know the three *pitakas* [the entire canon of Buddha’s teachings], it won’t benefit your mind!”

“Dampa-la, please give an instruction to quickly turn away from samsara!”

Dampa instructed, “Is the character of samsara suffering or not? Check your mind! Are the appearances of this world illusory or not? Watch your mind! Have I wasted my life in distraction or not? Watch your mind! Is now the time I must practice meditation on the ultimate or not? Watch your mind! Do I need the aspirations of this life or not? Watch your mind!

“When a beginner, to practice Dharma, you must put your homeland behind you! By staying away, half the Dharma is already accomplished! Virtue naturally increases! It’s easy to generate samadhi in your mind! In general, abandoning familiar places is a precept of the yogi!”
Dampa said, “Some stay in retreat many years in order to accomplish power. Their intention is extremely mistaken.”

Asked, “How is that?” Dampa explained, “They are practicing just as the enemy does, but they don’t know it! They are never free of hope and expectation!”

“Isn’t it to protect the Dharma?”

Dampa said, “If you abide in the natural state, keeping to the Dharma, the teachings are protected. Once the teachings have been perfected, I haven’t seen black magic harm the community. There is no need for such powers!”

Someone asked, “Dampa, Dregom Mamo continually receives various hindrances. Why do these things happen to her when no one is around?”

Dampa said, “She likes to make promises without practicing! She puts off her earlier intentions until later. Without having ascertainment, she strives in practice. Telling Gyagom essential secrets, they spread through all of Dingri! She has called down eighteen obstructers and, adding on four bushels, has bought twenty-four more sets of them!”

Someone asked, “Dampa, whatever you ask Pelgom, he says, ‘There’s no need for that!’ ‘I’ve no time!’ and various other things.”

Dampa said, “He’s making preparation for future lives—he has no time to remain ordinary! Applying himself to much recitation, he has no leisure time for worldly talk! Virtuous practice occurring in his mind, he has no leisure to fall into the sleep of ignorance! Since future lives are more important than this one, understanding impermanence, he has no leisure to scheme for things of this life! Since he is escaping from all samsara rather than just this life, he has no time to be the servant of others! Since now is the time for ultimate cultivation, he has no time for laziness! Why is he like that? The person who regards his own suffering as something desirable will not find happiness!”
Dampa said, “Some act like those born will never die, but when mara, the lord of death, comes, there will be no time to remain alive! Having exhausted any remedies, when consciousness is about to leave the body, hoping to remain a little longer, they fill their mouths with food! Though knowing they are dying, before it falls upon them, they square off for conversation! Thinking to imitate others, they try to take refuge! At that time, thinking of the abyss of samsara, they moan loudly, ‘With whom can I go?’ Then, feeling regret, those heartless ones consider higher aspirations, but it’s too late!”

Someone asked, “Is refuge no help at that time?”

Dampa answered, “Under those circumstances, its benefit can’t strongly emerge. But if you think now of future suffering, it will galvanize you into virtuous practice!”

Someone asked, “Dampa, why do you act differently than anyone else?”

Dampa said, “Having given up desires as a whole, I need nothing else in order to give up the eight worldly concerns! Having given up worldly activities, I don’t need to specifically abandon the suffering of samsara! Since mind does not course with lesser teachings, there is no need to hold onto antidotes for suffering! Because I principally act for the welfare of others, I don’t need to put forth effort to accomplish my own! Since I’ve accomplished the job this time, the Acharya cannot take rebirth over and over again!”

Kunga asked, “Why are there so few siddhas?”

Dampa said, “Practice done in a very leisurely fashion will not accomplish realization! Those with no fortune and false views can’t discipline their awareness. The bewitched person who has not gathered accumulations does not develop ascertainment! Those hardened with Dharma knowledge see no fault in their supposed ‘instructions’! Someone who has not turned from samsara has no success in Dharma! The person with no perseverance in his heart can’t put up with austerities! Conceptual logicians don’t understand the instructions! The person who hasn’t put on the armor of perse-
Dampa said, “In Dingri here, there are many funny types of people!”

Asked, “How is that?” Dampa replied, “They don’t think of future lives for a moment! Without turning their minds even slightly toward Dharma, they claim to be humble practitioners who have come a great distance to request instructions! I have no thoughts for those who have come a long way seeking material gain! Without devotion in their minds, their mouths ask for blessings! If they ask for blessings, throw shit in their mouths!”

Dampa said, “If you check, people have no foundation!”

Asked, “What do you mean?” Dampa replied, “You would assume that those who shun the slightest suffering would shun creating heavy negativity! You would assume that those who lavish affection upon their cherished children when they have no idea what will become of them would serve their kind parents even more! You would assume that those who are so happy to see someone arriving from afar would not fight with their own families! You would assume that someone who makes sure to have a tip for a morning escort would want to offer everything he had to the Lama who frees him from samsara and escorts him to nirvana!”

Someone asked, “Why are some people not at all transformed upon meeting Dampa?”

Dampa said, “Some persons, when you put them in a Dharma discourse, say it’s true and extraordinary. But without perseverance in their hearts, their time has not come. Though you speak Dharma into someone’s ear, without faith it doesn’t stick in his mind. Though someone has entered the door of Dharma, if he has not given up worldly opinion, he does not keep his commitments. Without revulsion for samsara, he doesn’t believe in the law of karma and so cannot give up harmful activities. Will enlightenment come without giving up grasping things as real? No way! So, it is a case of teaching someone who can’t receive it.”
Dampa said, “Having come a few times here to Tibet, the Beggar Acharya has poured out his heart, but all these unfortunate ones wandering in samsara don’t understand that they are actually instructions for practice!”

Someone said, “But there are many rootless beggar acharyas! They have no idea it is coming from someone like Padampa Sangye!”

Dampa replied, “There are many arura fruits, but the all-victorious variety is rare!”

Someone asked, “How many in Tibet understand Dampa’s instructions?”

Dampa said, “Can the stars over Dingri be counted?”

“Then it’s many?”

Dampa laughed, “It’s like water in a pot next to the water of the ocean!”

Dampa said, “Someone who has never practiced can’t recognize the essential points of instructions. If someone has no remaining purified karma, he won’t meet with a Guru who holds the lineage. If one does not use this present human life for practicing Dharma, one will be led around by one’s conceptions. The practice which is not done at an early age becomes an enemy in old age. If one does not understand the impermanence of compounded things, one won’t turn away from samsara. The dharma of an evil lord cannot be understood! If you, yourself, remain ordinary, you can’t ripen others. If you don’t liberate yourself from samsara this time, you never will! The Beggar Acharya will not remain in Dingri forever! Kunga! Seize attainments!”

Dampa said, “Earlier this evening Gyagom Ma’s husband slaughtered a goat and stole his brother’s wife!”

Someone asked, “That must have been unpleasant for her?”

Dampa replied, “For you, gatherer of thoughts, there will never be a pleasant time. For other birds, having the wings grow while they’re still in the egg is unpleasant, but for the garuda it is pleasant! Conceptual thought is the cause of suffering, but for a yogi who has gained realization through generation stage meditation, they are pleasant. Moving without arms or
legs for others is unpleasant, but for the snake it’s nice! Emptiness manifesting as things is uncomfortable for others, but for one who holds the root, it is fine! A yogi holding shravaka vows is not suitable for others, but for Gyagom it’s fine! The Acharya with no need for gold is unsuitable for others, but for her he’s fine!"

. . . .

Dampa said, “Ah! That happiness of this life could be a means to the happiness of future lives!”

Kunga asked, “Please, instruct my humble self in this!”

Dampa replied, “Since materialism is a cause of samsara, give up activities based in that which is perishable. Since wealth is a call to obstructions, throw out busyness and distractions. Since companions are a cause for attraction and aversion, stay alone like the humble stag. Since samsara and nirvana are a prison of suffering, tear down the walls of conformity. If your own mind is not subdued, there is no end to external harm. Therefore, put on the armor of patience. If you have a lot of thoughts, the storms of delusions rise. So, give your mind a rest!

People who really care about themselves do not conform. The person who likes wine and women doesn’t accomplish virtuous practice. Forgetting the good fortune of taking this precious human life, the person who is in the company of the Lama only a short time does not absorb realized qualities. The person who longs for the things of this world is not embarrassed by [inner] sickness. The person who has not given up positions of authority will find no time when his work is finished. It’s difficult for someone who craves pleasure to separate from conceptual mind. The person who does not realize that he is using up two or three human lives is oppressed. Know that the person without any wish to practice Dharma is empty of a heart within! Someone whose own continuum has not become blessed cannot overwhelm mistaken appearances for others. Intending to practice only after all the arrangements are made is conducive for laziness. Practice Dharma properly, and you won’t have to worry about gathering provisions. If you listen to the way people talk, you won’t know how to listen to anything. Act principally with the aspiration to not regret your actions! Don’t turn back, and don’t accept lack of accomplishment! Your treasure must finally be revealed! If the time is right, any action you take becomes an aid to virtuous practice. From time to time, raise the divine pride of rigpa. Yoga
without intensity will not bring progress! Kunga! Don’t let your practice stagnate! Use the strength of your mindful awareness!”

Kunga asked, “Dampa, faithless, sad at heart, Dharma does not come to my mind!”

Dampa said, “Sadness serves no purpose. If you aren’t developing realizations, continuously extend your prayers to the Guru. If you want to develop samadhi in your mind, release your concepts. If your mind persists in craving, establish that these appearances are illusory. If you want happiness in future lives, you must eventually purify present appearances. If your clinging to the reality of appearances is too strong, realize the nonduality of samsara and nirvana. If the mind of self-grasping is too strong, use forceful methods to cut through entanglements. If rigpa becomes dense and sluggish, fly your awareness into space. Son, this impromptu commentary on craving is the precept of the Guru!”

Dampa said, “Who is the lady who offered this zi bead necklace today?”

Kunga responded, “She is Gargom’s sister. Are there ones like her in India?”

Dampa said, “Son, your aspiration is being undermined by accidental conditions. Think about the faults of samsara! Traits of bad friends will rub off on you. Control your faculties! Ignorance is the root of loss. Maintain mindfulness and introspection! There are many conditions for losing enthusiasm. Wear your armor well! Predispositions are far from expelled. Cut traces of the past! The five poisons grow in lack of faith. Keep powerful antidotes! Son, that to which your mind is attracted is the cause of bondage. Crave nothing whatsoever!”

Dampa said, “Your mind is wandering, isn’t it? Are you thinking of that magician today?”

[Kunga] answered, “Yes, I’m remembering that. It was funny!”

Dampa said, “All the phenomena of samsara and nirvana are like that!”

“Is passing beyond sorrow really like that?”

Dampa said, “There is something extraordinary about passing beyond sorrow, yet it is still like an illusion!”
“But that makes practice unnecessary!”

Dampa answered, “There is a need for it. Through practice, which is ultimately mere illusion, comes resultant buddhahood, which is also mere illusion!”

“Then, is there nothing you can rely upon?”

Dampa said, “Though all is without support, not understanding that lack of support and grasping it as real, beings wander in samsara!”

“Dampa, some cry at the lack of security. Why is that?”

Dampa said, “They’re crying for the body of regret!”

“What does ‘the body of regret’ mean?”

Dampa answered, “Having taken ordination at a young age and kept pure morality, yet pining for the life of a household in old age, that is the body of regret! By putting forth effort in Dharma practice, there is no way realization will not dawn. Not practicing, although one knows how, and remaining ordinary, that is the pitiable body of regret. Some, spending their whole lives practicing Dharma, bring no benefit to themselves or others. Seeing that makes you want to cry!”

Dampa said, “Seeing these people of Dingri depresses me!”

Someone asked, “Why is that?”

Dampa said, “Without having attained even the path of accumulation, they think of themselves as yogis! Not having realized the view, neither do they generate samadhi in their minds! Not doing even recitation of mantra, they turn away from liberation! Calling themselves Dharma practitioners, they die ordinary deaths! They judge imprints’ deceptive dreams as good or bad! The Acharya does not dream!”

“What do you mean?”

Dampa said, “Seeing the sufferings of the six realms, there’s no leisure to fall asleep!”

Dampa said, “It is not substance. The three—energy, awareness, and imprints—are complete in the mind’s nature of effulgent cognition; yet it is empty of self-identity. That is what the protector of beings, Nagarjuna, calls consciousness!”
“From where does consciousness first arise?”
Dampa said, “You can’t say from where it arises, because enlightenment is without an original cause. It is said that there are no words to describe its end, because enlightenment is beginningless and endless. It is said it is a powerful door for beings, because those endowed with wisdom fly through the sky like a bird. Though released, they reveal the liberating path!”

“Do sentient beings increase and decrease in number?”
Dampa said, “These empty machinations of ignorance lack increase and decrease!”
“But there are fewer beings in winter and more in summer!”
Dampa said, “If the conditions come together, the machinery of karma fully emerges!”

“When it has not yet entered a body, where does consciousness abide?”
Dampa said, “It is abiding without abiding that Buddha called ‘abiding’! For example, clouds in the sky abide without abiding!”
“Well then, what arises as sentient beings?”
Dampa answered, “Whatever sentient beings exist—least, middling, and superior—all these, the Tathagata said, arise from ignorance! You, by yourself, go train the creative energy! Now your talk is burning my ears!”

In the manner of manifest brilliance, Dampa rode a monkey to Takung, yet did not give instructions for practice when someone asked for blessings.
Dampa said, “Your problem is that you have not generated limitless compassion in your mind! This evening clasp your hands and meditate on love and compassion! If you want to receive blessings, arouse fervent regard and yearning! If you want to dispel obstacles, engage in yogic conduct! If thoughts drift through your mind, subdue your mode of awareness! When the lord of beings, Shakyamuni, subdued mara, all outer appearances were resolved to be consciousness! Without taking them to be real, let them be exhausted as drops in consciousness!”
He was asked, “Dampa, I have no wish to harm devas or ghosts! Yet, when I meditate to accomplish enlightenment, some of them can’t bear it and create obstacles. Why is that?”

Dampa said, “Having come out of austerities, when the yogi’s mind is ready for action, without needing to do retreat for every activity, the yogi is ready to apply himself in action! At that point, fearing being placed into servitude, the devas and ghosts suffer even more. They obstruct in various ways, but it doesn’t affect the yogi’s development of realization. In the first moment even dream awareness seems true! They have none of the Dharma that is in your mind!”

Dampa said, “Samsara is suffering, so don’t volunteer for it! Don’t let the instructions given by the Guru escape your mouth! The person with much to say has no knowledge. Conventions and Dharma language do not accord. In addition to having ordinary sufferings, such a person has pride of knowledge. As soon as you meet him, he thinks of some fault or contradiction. Even if you explained the Buddha’s intention exactly to him, he would find some fault with it. It’s enough to have meditative experience in your own mind. Even if he claims you don’t know Dharma, what does it matter? Kunga! Practice in isolated retreat! Luminosity is naturally arising!”

[Kunga] asked, “Not understanding Dampa’s instructions, isn’t that due to previous karma?”

Dampa said, “There has never been anything such as karma; if it existed, self-risen wisdom would be wrong! There is no white karma, nor results arising from white karma! Neither is there black karma, nor results arising from black karma!”

“But all the scriptures explain white and black karma!”

Dampa said, “Those are untrue! Shakyamuni never explained even a word of Dharma! A text never even touched his palm!”

“Well, then who is it who taught the three precious pitakas?”

Dampa said, “Did you know that the wish-fulfilling jewel has never granted even a single wish?”
“By meditating on generation stage, I’ve seen the face of the deity!”
Dampa snorted, “Such thoughts are a sign you are bewitched! Meditati-
tional deity! You couldn’t even subdue your own mind!”

What is a yogi who has given up worldly activities like?
Dampa explained, “It’s what you call someone who’s free of aspiration. Because the barren woman has no child, he is free of hopeful figuring! As there are no letters in base reality, dharmata is beyond speech or expres-
sion! As the illusory person has no recognition, he is free from the suffering of samsara! Because Buddha’s intention cannot be exemplified, the renun-
ciant is without similar examples! A wooden person has no one in charge of activities! Since perfect reality is unthinkable, he is without meditation! Since the elephant has no horns, he has no fear of breaking them! Know-
ing that samsara is not inherently existent is what is called nirvana! Kunga!
Free your mind of concepts. Enlightenment is coming!”

[Kunga] asked, “Dampa, is it easy to reject this tirthika view?”
Dampa asked in reply, “What view are you rejecting?”
He replied, “They say that the philosophy of permanence is ousted by the emptiness of mind-itself, and that the nihilistic philosophy is rejected because the continuum of wisdom exists.”
Dampa said, “All that means nothing to me! If it existed, not even I would be able to reject it!”
“But such terms are used!”
Dampa replied, “There is no need to know the meanings of many terms! It doesn’t become an antidote to delusions! It doesn’t stop evil spirits! It doesn’t dispel ailments of wind, bile, nor phlegm! And neither does it help you generate samadhi in your mind!”
“Well, why are there such teachings that are of no benefit?”
Dampa said, “They are unreliable teachings in the hands of pandits!”
“What can they do with such unreliable teachings?”
Dampa said, “They act with uncertainty itself! In the sovereign’s high treasury, they find horses’ hooves and skulls of deer! If the light of Buddha struck sentient beings, they would be liberated. But unfortunate beings are not aware of the appearance of a Buddha! If they stayed alone, they would
be liberated. But they strive to have a household! The instructions are to give up activities, but they don’t cut the entanglements of craving! If you take selflessness onto the path, you’re liberated from subject-object duality. Afraid of that, they don’t put forth the effort! One must have great qualities to even hear the word “Buddha.” But, not having gathered accumulations, born in a remote isolated place, without giving up their arrogance, they cannot enter into a view beyond extremes! Next year, here you will find the corpse of one Acharya! If you eat his flesh, your ultimate aims will be fulfilled! The spineless fault the mind of Dharma!”

. . . .

“Don’t destroy the instructions of the Guru. They won’t work for just anyone! Were an idea to practice Dharma to occur to someone who is lazy and indifferent, not a sesame seed’s worth of benefit would come from it! Committing misdeeds in the face of others, what are they thinking? Recognizing virtue and sin yet not shunning its results, what are they thinking in their hearts? That person who acts harmfully for the sake of wealth, what will happen to him at death? Virtuous practice is impossible in the depths of household affairs. Kunga, your ultimate aspirations have culminated! Rejoice!”

. . . .

“To attain enlightenment you need the instructions of the lineage, but they like the terms of the texts. The path of bliss is induced by suffering, but those without depth can’t accomplish it. Renunciation is the antidote to the eight worldly dharmas, but suffering beings are led by greed. Sharp focus is the yogi’s weapon, but faulty practice does not subdue the mind. The clarity of dependent-origination-rigpa is arising, but those who would practice it like to sleep. Divine Dharma is the preparation for future lives, but people who have never recognized happiness or sadness don’t think of the Dharma! Again, the person who cannot remain alone will have no happiness!”

. . . .

“If you don’t pursue strong practice at first, it will harm your virtuous practice later. By grasping the appearances of deception as real, you won’t let go of suffering. If you don’t complete austerities, you won’t accomplish the purpose of yourself and others. If you haven’t considered practice as pri-
mary, blessings will not arise in your mind. If you don’t remember death, you won’t be able to generate perseverance. If you don’t mentally turn from desire, you won’t be content with material wealth. The person who has never suffered will not know happiness. If you don’t remember the Guru’s mind, you won’t hold the points of the instructions. If you don’t have sincere aspiration when teaching others, they will leave in disgust!”

Dampa said, “I see so many funny people!”

Asked, “What do you see?” Dampa replied, “I see people who are not afraid of the lower realms though not creating even a sesame seed’s worth of virtue. I see people who hope to gain higher rebirth though not protecting their vows in the slightest. I see people without a hair’s worth of realization who even hope to attain enlightenment. I see people who take on the enemy without having made a single preparation. I see people not liking others who kill themselves. I see people carelessly throwing great kindness over the cliff. I see people not thinking of the Guru’s realized qualities thinking of his supposed faults. I see people claiming that meat which is definitely poisoned is good, and eating it!”

Dampa said, “Some people say that someone like themselves cannot practice Dharma! They are not opening their eyes to look up!”

Asked, “How is that?” Dampa explained, “If there are many conditions for suffering, that’s a joy; it’s a cause for Dharma to arise! If you are inferior to others, that’s a joy; you won’t be yoked to public opinion! If you don’t have the benefit of your parents, that’s a joy; you have little basis for attachment to samsara! If you are sick, that’s a joy; remembering death, your perseverance will be galvanized! If you are not beautiful, that’s a joy; you don’t need heaps of external friends! If you have few provisions, that’s a joy; you have little cause for avarice! If you have few lovers, that’s a joy; you have little cause for craving attachment! If you have little wealth, that’s a joy; you will flourish in virtuous practice! If you have few relatives, that’s a joy; you have less mental suffering! If you practice Dharma from the depths of your heart, it is impossible that you won’t become realized! All promotes realization! Again, practicing meditation, if you can cook it, it becomes food!

“If the body gets sick, separate awareness from its support. If you are dis-
tracted by unfortunate appearances, place awareness within. If dense dullness occurs, eject consciousness out. If you are afraid of the four doors of birth,122 train in rigpa energy. If you are shy to practice virtue, place awareness in its own place. If many conceptions arise, abandon them in the nectar of rigpa. If there is no progress in experience, change your type of awareness. If you develop pride of greatness, act in a humble way. If you receive wealth and prominence, put on clothes of rags. If your virtuous practice advances, extend your commitments. If craving persists, cut bindings forcefully. If delusions arise in your mind, afterwards reaffirm your vows. Kunga! Sometimes act crazy, and experiential realization will fall from above!"

... . . .

“Dampa has been to all lands. What great wonders have you seen?”

Dampa said, “I’ve seen some amazing things! I’ve seen a yogi who practiced meditation inside the body of a fish! I’ve seen a spectacle observed at the bottom of the ocean! I’ve seen holidays taken at the peak of a mountain! I’ve seen a sentient being with the body of a pig, the head of a bird, and the tail of a snake, who gave birth to six eggs from its eye! I’ve seen a tree leaf that, if you take it in your hand, flies through the sky! I’ve seen a flower that, if you eat it, generates samadhi in your mind! I’ve seen water that, if you drink one bowl of it, your life span becomes equal to that of the sun and moon! I’ve seen meat that, if you eat one mouthful, you attain siddhi! I’ve seen a yogi teaching Dharma to a stone person who listened with the ears of a turtle. When that was practiced by the king’s queen, it was realized by a yogi practicing in closed off isolation!”

... . . .

Dampa said, “For attainment of enlightenment you need no more than two lines of instruction!”

“Please instruct this humble one what those are!”

Dampa said, “Release mind from subject-object duality! Destroy impurity and deceptive appearances!”

“I don’t understand?”

Dampa said, “Not following after objects, maintain the view of rigpa. These deceptive appearances have caused much regret. Not even hell exists! Neither does a weighed measure of copper. Neither does a bull-headed rakshasa. These are impure deceptive appearances of what has never existed! If
they actually existed, one would be forced to go to hell, because mistaken understanding of beings causes them to experience suffering. It is the mistaken vision of the pretas that causes them their problems. There is no one, at all, guarding the ocean! Not even a drop of water of the river Ganges has ever existed!"

Kunga remarked, “Dampa, these bindings are difficult to cut!”

Dampa said, “Son, the yogi who cuts bindings is inferior! Determine that there is no view; it is free of partiality! Determine that there is no meditation; it is free of pitfalls! Determine that there is no result; it is free of hope and fear! Determine that samsara does not exist; it is free of suffering! Determine that Buddha does not exist; it is free of desire! Determine that Dharma does not exist; it is free of pride! Determine that you need nothing at all; it is free of the eight mundane concerns! Determine that everything is illusion; it is free of subject-object duality! Determine that everything is false; it is free of conception! Determine that appearances are like dreams; it is free of craving! The person who has made up his own mind will not go along with others!”

. . . .

“If you don’t develop admiration and reverence for the Guru, you won’t receive blessing! If you don’t develop ascertainment, you won’t receive the instructions! Without accomplishing your own welfare, there is no need to be a servant for others! There is no need to apply a medicine that doesn’t help! There is no need for instructions that are not practiced! If you don’t renounce this world, your practice will not accomplish anything! Kindness toward a joyless person serves no real purpose! If someone doesn’t decide from within, giving them instructions will not help! It is difficult to heal someone who has trained in a faulty way! There is no end to the harm created by a bad-natured person who does not subdue himself! If you don’t practice sacred Dharma, this world’s power, wealth, and perfections serve no purpose! The person without strength of heart will find enlightenment in short supply!

“Knowing Dharma is not enough; you must practice it! Give up samsara! Going to sea islands without bringing back the jewels will be of no use! The quality of men and women now becomes clear! Since we’re separating men and women from those who are wasting their lives, just relaxing is useless, so don’t! Work of this world serves no purpose! The time for cul-
tivating for eternity is now! Son, willingly take on austerities! It is the way
to escape samsara! Decide conclusively now! You won’t always be with the
Lama! Me, I’ve principally done only practice! You, also, follow my exam-
ple! There is no time in a human life! Abandon laxity and laziness! At this
time when Buddhadharma is shining like the sun, it is the time to distin-
guish yourself! Instruction for people is rare! People of Dingri, wake up!
When the Beggar Acharya has gone, you’ll be thinking of many questions
to ask! Since I’ve asked that the instructions I have given be written down,
do so! It will be of benefit later!

“Rely on the Three Jewels in your heart, mind, and all of your being!
The power of the blessings will arise! When you’re young conscientiously
work hard; when you’re old you won’t regret it! Associate with the Lama
for a long time! When delusions arise, apply their antidotes well, and with
familiarity it will become automatic! Whatever you do, never part from
your armor-like enthusiasm, and you can accomplish anything! This is the
time to accomplish austerities conscientiously; it will be meaningful for
you! Think about the sufferings of samsara, and generate clear faith! Care-
fully meditate on impermanence, and proceed with perseverance! Consci-
entiously diminish self-grasping, and you will become free of its imprints!
Have strength of heart, and eat once now to take care of a hundred future
meals! Extend the duration of your practice; there will be no doubt as to
the results!”

Thus he spoke.

These questions and answers, called *The Completely Clear Mirror of Mind*,
were transmitted by Dampa himself and written down at that time. May all
be auspicious!
Lama Wangdu explains how to do this rejuvenation practice:

In the morning, all of the heroes and dakinis gather, playing their damarus and bells. When you awake, think that it is this sound that awakens you and contemplate, “Now the heroes and dakinis, who are Buddhas already, are celebrating the Dharma. I, a sentient being, must not remain sleeping!” and get up quickly with joy for practice. First, visualizing yourself as the deity, with divine pride, clean your body. Then do the nine-round breathing. Make the beginning and end of the breaths narrow and the middle of the breaths broad. First breathe in through the right nostril and visualize the breath passing down the right channel to the navel, where it runs into the left channel and expels the wind up out of the left nostril with the exhalation. With it come three beings: a red chicken of all that causes attachment to be generated in the mind, a king spirit that causes harmful growth of pride and jealousy in the mind, and another spirit that causes fighting and anger; these three exit. Then, breathe in through the left nostril. The wind passes down through the left channel, enters the right channel at the navel and expels the winds out of the right nostril. Along with the winds comes a snake representing all that causes hatred to be generated in the mind. It is visualized as a snake that could devour the world in its gaping mouth. After it come a female ghost with long hair streaming and another female spirit called dram that is icy like snow. Then, breathing in through both nostrils, the winds enter the central channel at the navel and expel the winds from the central channel at the point between the eyebrows. Expelled also is a black pig that is the source of feeble-mindedness and sleepiness. Then come a black eunuch and another spirit that carries a bag of pills that cause the four hundred and twenty-four diseases.
To take life essence, meditate on your body as hollow inside and then inhale into the central channel and two side channels, the *rölma* and *kyangma*, and into the channels of the chakras, the great bliss chakra at the crown, the enjoyment chakra at the throat, the dharma chakra at the heart, the emanation chakra at the navel and the bliss-nurturing chakra at the secret place. First inhale a white wind from the east that enters all of these channels and chakras. What is it? It is the pure essence or life force in water. It dissolves into the liquids in your body, such as the blood, making them good. Then inhale a yellow wind from the south that enters all of the channels. This is the life essence in earth and stone. That of earth dissolves into your flesh and that of stone dissolves into your bones. It makes your flesh and bones good. Again you inhale a red wind from the west that is the life force, the warmth of fire. Wisdom fire, hell fire, volcanic fire, heat-lightning fire—there are many kinds of fire. The essence of fire dissolves into the warmth in your body. Then a green wind, the essence of wind, is inhaled from the north. Good winds include the wind called the water wind, found on snow-mountains, also called snow wind, forest winds found in forests, and field winds found in meadows. These are inhaled into the channels, dissolving into the breath and energy winds in your body, eliminating shortness of breath. Then inhale the essence of the space element in the aspect of blue light. Mix it with your mind, making you free of small-mindedness and compulsive thought, making your mind vast and free of confusion, understanding everything.

It is also an inhalation of the five transcendent wisdoms. The white water wind is Vajrasattva *yab-yum*. The yellow earth wind is Ratnasambhava *yab-yum*. The red fire wind is Amitabha *yab-yum*. The green wind of the north is Amoghasiddhi *yab-yum*. And the blue wind of space is Akshobya *yab-yum*. These dissolve into you along with the winds. Visualize the winds first entering the central channel of the body and then emanating out through all of the smaller channels and throughout the body. It makes your body feel like a balloon, big and light.

This rejuvenates the body, makes white hair turn black, causes teeth to grow once more, and so forth. Padampa Sangye and Guru Rinpoche did this kind of practice. People should learn it and practice it. It makes you free from many of the problems of old age. I feel youthful, my body feels light, comfortable, and clean, capable of meditating on the deities and reciting mantras. With this practice you can become an actual bodhisattva.
Padampa Sangye’s teachings have their own uncommon terminology. He described training in three periods—shravaka, pratyekabuddha, and bodhisattva periods—and five paths—accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation, and liberated paths. Rather than the sutra connotations of those terms, however, he used them to refer to three periods and five stages of a single individual’s training in Tantra.

During the shravaka or “hearer” period, which he also referred to as the “path of accumulation” and “mind-training,” he devoted himself to his guru, listened to and contemplated the teachings, practiced guru yoga, and after receiving complete highest yoga tantra initiation, realized the meaning of the initiation by performing an initial retreat. This would include high tantric realizations of gross or subtle generation stage and isolated body or isolated speech of completion stage.

Then, during the pratyekabuddha or “solitary realizer” period, also referred to as the “path of preparation” and “time of austerities,” he entered isolated retreat in order to attain the third path, the “path of seeing,” mind-isolation of completion stage, the direct perception of ultimate truth. Instructions for building and ritually blessing a small sealed retreat hut for intensive yogic practice, the tendrel gyi kangpa (“house of dependent arising”), are included in the texts of the tradition.

Once the “path of seeing” was attained, he entered the bodhisattva period of benefiting others. Padampa Sangye emphasized that it was important to undergo whatever austerities necessary for full realization before attempting to benefit others. On the path of seeing, one becomes an ultimate or arya bodhisattva, which, from the tantric perspective, means that one attains clear light and the illusory body and is practically certain
to attain full enlightenment within that very lifetime. Thus the two final paths, the “path of meditation of equal taste,” in which the practitioner becomes able to control all ten stages of the path of meditation simultaneously, and the “liberated path beyond action”—full enlightenment—soon follow.

These five paths of Tantra are the context for the precepts of the fifty-four male and female mahasiddhas, expressed in the following text from *Nectar of the Heart*.

**THE STAINLESS PATH OF THE SILVER EGG OF SPEECH**

Homage to the Holy Gurus!

Here are summarized the fifty-four male and female mahasiddhas’ instructions that are sure to give birth to transcendent wisdom of the great path of seeing in the mind of a supreme of human beings, a protector of beings.

This summary of the five paths was entrusted to the Guru Bodhisattva Kunga.

*The First Path*

1. By determining the nature of all existence to be the two truths, the mind grasping duality disintegrates right where it is. This realization of the truthlessness of all phenomena is the essence of Nagarjuna’s instructions.

2. By equalizing the taste of the variety of objects, the mind grasping duality disintegrates right where it is. This realization of the many phenomena as of one taste is the instruction of Jnanabhadra.

3. By determining phenomena to be rigpa awareness, minds of intentionality are shaved away. Realization of the natural release of deceptive mind is Dharmarakshita’s instruction.

4. By restraining faults of body, speech and mind, there is no such thing as defilement by karmic obscuration. This transformation into power of the antidote is the instruction of Gunaprabha.
5. Having trained the mind in the sources of phenomena, the qualities of enlightenment manifest. The arising of nirmanakaya from the greatness of dependent arising is the instruction of Ratnakarashanti.

6. Having determined that sound and the perception of sound is nothing but consciousness, the mind grasping it as one’s own disintegrates. This realization of the truthlessness of conventions is the instruction of the Brahmin Shankara.

7. Through rigpa wisdom destroying the mind grasping things to be real, transcendent wisdom free of projection is realized. Realization of the nature of samsara to be free of extremes is the instruction of Jnanagarbha.

8. By training the mind in the two bodhichittas, all is complete in one teaching. This manifestation of the welfare of oneself and others is the instruction of Shantideva.

9. Having recognized appearing objects as mind, by training in the energy of skillful means, the natural suchness of dependent origination is realized. This is the instruction of Aryadeva.

10. By summarizing the eight topics within one root, the five paths are practiced on one cushion. This ascension through the ten *bhumis* at once is the instruction of Asangapada.

11. Manifesting the form and wisdom kayas by summarizing the six perfections in means and wisdom and meditating on a unification of emptiness and compassion is the instruction of Suvarnadvipa

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**The Second Path**

12. Purifying the mind in pure appearance, shaving away the mind grasping things to be real so that appearances arise as nirmanakaya, is the instruction of Buddhaguhya.

13. Eliminating attachment and aversion towards the eight mundane concerns by purifying speech in sound and meaning, to realize all reverbera-
tion of sound as mantra, is the instruction of the One Renowned as Lord of Speech.

14. Destroying the root of the eighty conceptions of inherent existence by purifying the mind in emptiness, to realize clear light dharmakaya, is the instruction of Gudharipa.

15. By purifying the points through physical means, deceptive winds are bound in place, causing dualistic conceptions to cease manifesting. This is the instruction of Jawaripa.

16. By purifying and filling the three channels with energies, experiencing the meaning of the innate born free of projections, to realize dharmakaya clear to the foundation is the instruction of Jnanapada.

17. By directing and subduing the five root winds, the five secondary winds are made serviceable, causing realization of many excellent qualities. This is the instruction of Karmavajra.

18. Winds rising and reentering with three-syllable mantra recitation at the three places, the five completion stages are completed in one sitting. This is the instruction of Nagabuddhi.

19. Combining subtle and gross winds in one, the life exertion wind is cut in pieces, subsequent to which ultimate transcendent wisdom arises. This is the instruction of Ananta.

20. By turning the gaze of rigpa wisdom upon objects, superimposition of winds and thought are severed, subsequent to which realization of the unfabricated arises. This is the instruction of Vasudhara.

21. Setting the bird of rigpa wisdom to flight through the gazes, energies of deception can no longer predominate, causing realization of clear light free of coming and going. This is the instruction of Krishnapada.

22. By binding the energy-wind of the root ignorance, all gross and subtle secondary energies enter, leading to realization of the energy-wind of effortless enlightenment. This is the instruction of Padmavajra.
The Third Path

23. By inducing various realized experiences, relying upon the mudra mandala of another’s body, raising them to direct experience of emptiness. This is the instruction of Lotus-Born Vajra, Padmasambhava.

24. Since it is difficult to develop realized qualities in lesser forms, in reliance upon the mudra of sandalwood type, causing the attainment of realization. This is the instruction of Indrabhuti.

25. Since the nectar of realized qualities does not occur in people whose minds are not ripened, setting purification of mind as a preliminary is the instruction of Dombipa.

26. If the skillful means of samaya degenerates, the source of realized qualities is blocked, so relying on having the power of antidotes is the instruction of Kushyapada.

27. If the lower door is subdued from above, the nectars are blocked by themselves, thus binding the mouth of the Vajra Rakshasa. This is the instruction of Luhipa.

28. By loosening the sites of the chakras themselves, wisdom of the four blisses is generated, giving rise to realization of the innate born, free of projections. This is the instruction of Virupa.

29. By the blazing of the great fire of the heat of bliss, pure drops of the five elements melt, exhausting defilements of the elements. This is the instruction of Tilopa.

30. Through the taste of bliss blazing in emptiness, clarity is automatically accomplished and sealed with nonconceptual transcendent wisdom. This is the instruction of Kukuripa.

31. Through experience of being endowed with brilliance of natural clarity, deceptive objects are overcome right where they are and the spread of realization manifests. This is the instruction of Lilavajra.
32. Through the essential points of falling, holding and stopping, the drop becomes the vajra sphere and one enters the citadel of vajra space. This is the instruction of Naropa.

*The Fourth Path*

33. By being struck with the blessings of the lineage-holding Guru, one realizes dharmata free of appearances and is naturally liberated without adopting or rejecting. This is the instruction of Saraha.

34. Through application of methods destroying mental defilement, unfabricated dharmata manifests and one realizes the ultimate mode of phenomena, free of hope and fear. This is the instruction of Sagara.

35. Recognizing that awareness arises through the meeting of conditions, thoughts are free of objective essence, so that all causal minds are realized to be of a single foundation. This is the instruction of Togtsepa.124

36. Mind unmoving from its primordial unfabricated foundation, this system’s experience free of equipoise and movement arises. This is the instruction of Kashapa.

37. Mental entanglements loosened on the spot, deceptive thoughts disappear right where they were, and one abides in experience of the non-fabricated itself. This is the instruction of Kampala.

38. Paying no attention to past, present, or future, one meets with no continuum of earlier and later thoughts, and awareness settles without contrivance. This is the instruction of Ghundaripa.

39. With awareness that whatever appears is birthless, not paying it attention because it is deceptive, no imprints are created. This is the instruction of Charyapa.

40. Knowing whatever appears to be ceaseless, without annihilating thoughts’ perceptions, their movement is left where it is. This is the instruction of Shavaripa.
41. Knowing the five poisons to be conditional, since their essence is without root, realization is catalyzed. This is the instruction of Avadhutipa.

42. By blending that to be abandoned with its antidotes, reaching the state of a wisely discerning Conqueror, the paths and stages are completed at once. This is the instruction of Nyima Pepa.

43. Letting go of signs and meanings, the root of objects is cut, and samsara and nirvana are realized to be one. This is the instruction of Ratnavajra.

44. Through being endowed with heroic confidence, binding rigpa to its object, movement of thought is forcefully severed. This is the instruction of Legminkara.

45. By cutting delusion into bits, imprints of objects are not accepted and rigpa is practiced like a bird in flight. This is the instruction of Ritröma.

46. Arising from the foundation of rigpa awareness’s natural clarity, experience is disturbed on the basis of objects, so pure and defiled awareness can be distinguished. This is the instruction of Drimema.

47. Once subdued, the antidotes are destroyed and, released from mental “handholds,” extreme ideas are shaved away and disappear. This is the instruction of Pemo Shab.

48. By recognizing emerging awareness, its rootless, stainless essence is realized and delusion disintegrates on its own. This is the instruction of Shinglopa.

49. Realization taught as the flight of a bird, by cultivating the energy of ascertainment, experiences of similar type proceed one after another. This is the instruction of Deway Jungne.

50. Binding cognition with support, objects are shaved away and disintegrate, and apprehending thoughts are released on their own. This is the instruction of Kumuta.
51. Binding cognition without support, thought goes dormant and non-apprehension is released on its own. This is the instruction of Ganga Zangmo.  

52. Cultivating pursuit of rigpa alone, the flow of collection disintegrates and thought’s constructions collapse. This is the instruction of Legminkara.  

53. Abiding in natural brilliance, dharmakaya lacks meeting or parting. Being inseparable from this through the adhesive of mindfulness is the instruction of Chintoma.  

54. Bringing out intensity of rigpa awareness, thought disintegrates, released on its own, and one abides in naked awareness. This is the instruction of Sukha Mahasiddhi.  

This completes the instructions of the fifty-four mahasiddhas called “Concerning the Path of the Stainless Pure Silver Egg.”
APPENDIX 3

Transmutation of Speech into Mantra

By harnessing the elemental vibrations of speech and the breath to pure appearance, all speech is transformed into mantra. To quote Nectar of the Heart:

As Queen Sri Devi Light Rays said,

Even idle talk
Becomes full mantra recitation:
That is the point of Ali Kali!

The way the practice for transforming all speech into mantra is performed in this tradition is as follows. In the morning, when there is barely enough light to see the lines on the palm of one’s hand, before one has uttered any other words, one recites the sixteen vowels, beginning with OM, three times. Then, in the evening when one is lying down for bed, one recites the thirty-four consonants three times, each time ending with SVAHA. In this way, one places upon all movement of thought a seal of its being the natural effulgence of the emptiness of elemental mind, and a seal upon mind as being nonproduced, like space. With this, one sleeps. When waking in the morning, reciting the vowels three times puts a seal on all appearing objects as being the unceasing creations of one’s own mind, like illusions. Through this, it is said, one completes the two accumulations necessary for enlightenment even while one’s body and speech remain ordinary.
This much is basically the same as the practice performed in other lineages. To give some idea of the extensive permutations of the practice found in Padampa Sangye’s lineage, again, from *Nectar of the Heart*:

...thirdly, the essential point by which the energy of samadhi is naturally perfected in the mind of a deluded being. Since delusions are natural energy of mind, they are not eliminated by rejecting them, so a special method transforms them into the path. If a thought of attachment appears to the yogi, by looking directly at the entity or nature of the attachment, it becomes baseless. Within that state recite 21 or 100 times:

\[OM\ \text{PA} \ \text{PHA} \ \text{BA} \ \text{BHA} \ \text{MA} \ \text{AA} \ \text{I} \ \text{I} \ \text{U} \ \text{UU} \ \text{E} \ \text{EE} \ \text{O} \ \text{OO} \ \text{OM} \ \text{AH} \ \text{SV} \ \text{AHA}\]

Through this, that very delusion dissolves into the sphere of its empty nature and attachment dawns as transcendent wisdom of discernment. Likewise, if anger develops, by recognizing its nature in the same way as just described and reciting TA DÉ and the twelve vowels, it dawns as mirror-like wisdom. If jealousy develops, recognize it and recite TSA DÉ and the twelve vowels. This causes it to dawn as all-accomplishing wisdom. If pride develops, recognize it and recite KA DÉ and the twelve vowels, which causes it to arise as equalizing wisdom. If one is confused with ignorance, identifying its nature and reciting TA DÉ and the twelve vowels, it dawns as dharmadhatu wisdom. Thus, witness the delusions that develop due to circumstances and practice looking directly at whatever delusion develops. Recognizing that it cannot establish itself and is baseless, it is released, liberated. Continuing to meditate in that state, to stabilize it, the specific mantras are recited.

In the symbol lineage commentaries and old written commentaries nothing more than this is said. However, the Gurus perform certain physical postures and transformations of gaze in connection with these. In general, the body is seated in vajra posture with the spine straight. In particular, for anger, the fingers of both hands are extended and crossed to embrace the left
knee and the gaze is turned to the right. For attachment, it is reversed, with the hands embracing the right knee and the gaze turned to the left. For ignorance, the thumbs of each hand hook back their ring finger, they are placed in the mudra of meditative equipoise, and the gaze is cast down toward the tip of the nose. For jealousy, the elbows are slightly swung out with open palms crossed in the lap, and the gaze is straight forward. For pride, the two hands are placed in the earth pressing mudra and the eyes are turned upwards.
In the last of The Great River Tantra of Inconceivable Secret Ali Kali’s twenty-four chapters, the entourage asked, “What is the path, the tracks left by your realized Sangha?” Buddha replied to the assembled entourage:

Having found the blissful path of profound secret mantra,
Abandon faith in the path of suffering!

Having found the path of the Guru, profound, best of paths,
Give up grasping at the path of happiness!

Having found the path realizing your own mind is the Guru,
Give up all striving and effort!

Again questions came from the assembly, “O Teacher, Bhagavan! What is the path of profound secret mantra? What is the best of paths, the path of the Guru? What is the actual path of realization?”

The Lord of Secrets, Vajrapani, gave the reply:

Listen to me, O holy beings!
Having delighted the Guru and ripened your mind
Cast off physical and verbal activity in isolated retreat!
On a comfortable seat, having generated bodhichitta,
Honor the Guru and the Three Jewels!
Having meditated on the deity’s mandala, simply or elaborately,
Complete offerings, praises, and mantra recitation.

The body has three channels and four chakras.
Fanned by the winds, tummo fire is ignited.
The five elemental drops pour into Avadhuti.
Path of the messengers swiftly generates *prajna-jnana*.
Finding a qualified *karmamudra*,
Afflictions enter the path of the mandala of bliss.
The ultimate Bodhisattva sees this and,
Relaxing within, ceases conceptual analysis.

Meditate on the illusory body!
Train the winds in transference of consciousness!
Enter the city of the corpse!
Recognize the clear light!
Practice the dream instructions!
Conquer the city of *bardo*!
All these have a nature of Guru Yoga!
I prostrate and go for refuge to the holy Gurus! Please bless me to fully awaken soon! Until full awakening as well, please bless me to have inconceivable awe and devotion for the holy Gurus! I prostrate and go for refuge to the hosts of yidam deities! Please bless me to fully awaken soon! Until full awakening as well, please bless me to have inconceivable awe and devotion for the hosts of yidam deities! I prostrate and go for refuge to the hosts of dakinis! Please bless me to fully awaken soon! Until full awakening as well, please bless me to have inconceivable awe and devotion for the hosts of dakinis! Hosts of Gurus, yidams, and dakinis, please listen to me! Gathering all roots of virtue, past, present, and future, I offer them to the Gurus! Having accepted this offering, may the holy Gurus have a completely special wisdom experience of it! Through the roots of virtue arising from that, may various offerings equal to space arise in view of the Tathagatas! The roots of virtue arising from that I dedicate to all sentient beings in common! Through that dedication, may all sentient beings be liberated from the suffering of samsaric existence and quickly attain precious unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment! Until that time comes, may I be swiftly enlightened, and become the Guru of all sentient beings without exception!

May just that be accomplished!
May just that be accomplished!
May just that be accomplished!

The Commentary states:

This is supreme refuge, unexcelled bodhichitta, a wondrous offering, a dedication that is inseparable from sentient beings and a prayer that is certain to benefit others. Recite it three, five, seven times or until your mind is moved with it because, as King Powerful Heart said:

Immersing yourself in energy of the Refuges
Causes attainment of the two siddhis in your mind!
Raise the blessed instructions of the lineage ever higher!
Keeping the six natural facets of yoga means (1) not praying to worldly gods because what they are imagined to be is deceptive and false so one cannot ultimately trust them. Therefore, do not expect to find the nature of any Buddha to be other than your own Guru. (2) Not seeking attainments from ghosts means that the yogi’s obstructive beckoning of groups of spirits harms the path of liberation, like the constipating action of yogurt. Therefore, the practitioner accepts loss in food and clothing, relying on the bare minimum for sustenance and arriving at the end of practice. (3) Not giving energy to this life means that because efforts on behalf of this life are ineffective in the long run and, compared to that, the path of future lives is a long way off, the hero does not invest a lot of energy in mundane concerns nor seek high position for the future, just keeping a low position and seeking only liberation. (4) Not giving your tether to others means that if you get embarrassed before others, the purpose of Dharma will be lost. No one but yourself must take advantage of the freedom to practice Dharma. (5) Not letting secrets escape your lips means that revealing your experiences and realization to others stops them from developing further, so keep qualities secret and make them grow. (6) Not displaying arrogance from the top of the victory banner means letting practice be seen by everyone causes maras of obstacles to arise, so complete the practice by way of secret conduct. King Moonlight said, “Keeping the six facets of yoga undegenerating keeps the mind from gravitating away from Dharma. It is an instruction that destroys mistaken awareness.” Here, one should also be aware of the four defilements of these facets of yoga. If the eight mundane concerns grow, that is a defilement, so level all concern toward them. If conduct conforms with the worldly it is defiled, so be self-sufficient. If samsaric mind is not reversed it fills oneself, so contemplate the suffering nature of samsara. And, since it is a mistake not to shift one’s attention away from samsara by keeping impermanence in mind, one must strive to accomplish one’s ultimate goals. From Nectar of the Heart: A Single Compilation of the Commentaries of the Early, Middle, and Later Lineages of the Pacification of Suffering Teachings by Dharma Shri, translated by David Molk, April 2005. Unpublished.

These very blessed verses are also often used by His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama during public teachings.

The flat piece of marble imprinted with Padampa Sangye’s foot; the stone with Buddha’s fingerprints in it; a dark stone that subdues enemies; a stone that is the jewel of the Viras; three of the white ox’s teeth, a single object which emanates relic pills; part
of Padampa's heart; a small silver reliquary stupa; a small copper reliquary stupa; and a crystal bowl.

During the Perfection of Wisdom Teachings Buddha is said to have thrown this stone to prophesy where the teachings would thrive to the north. It was later found by Padampa Sangye in Dingri with musk deer circumambulating it, dissolving into it as he watched. The powerful medicine of the musk deer is one of the symbols of Padampa Sangye's teachings.

This bull was a white bull given to Padampa Sangye by the King of Pongrong. The king had made a pilgrimage to Padampa Sangye's cave bearing offerings. After he had made many offerings of silver and gold, however, Padampa failed to react in any way. The king became exasperated and angry, and said, “Here, I've made all these offerings of gold and you haven't accepted them or reacted in the slightest way! What do you want?” Padampa Sangye leaned over and scraped some dirt off the ground into his palm. “If I wanted gold, this is all gold for me!” he said, showing the king that the dirt in his hand had all turned into gold. He continued, “But there is in your possession a white bull without a single black hair that you can give to me.” The king had known nothing of this bull, but according to the legend, the bull was found already making its way along the pass to Padampa's cave. Padampa taught it to circumambulate the stupa (hence the name “Langkor”—the “bull's circumambulation route”) and to carry water and ice to his disciples in their retreats. When the bull finally died, Padampa Sangye did fire puja, cremated the corpse, and constructed a large stupa housing the remains called the Langdrub Stupa, the Bull Stupa. There were three teeth of the bull that did not burn that were placed inside the stupa. Many relic pills are emitted from them. The three teeth are referred to as Rigsum Gönpo, the Lords of the Three Lineages—Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri, and Vajrapani.

Lama Wangdu's monastery, Pal Gyi Dingri Langkor Jangsem Kunga Ling, near the Boudhanath Stupa in Kathmandu, was consecrated in November, 2004, and is now home to fourteen young monks.

See The Chöd Practice: Instructions and Commentary, privately published, Nityananda Institute.

Shijay is the Pacification of Suffering Dharma lineage stemming from Padampa Sangye.

The Story of the Liberated Life of the Great Lord of Siddhas, Venerable Padampa Sangye, A Sun Ablaze with Thousandfold Rays of Attainment (Grub pa'i dbang phyug chen po rje btsun dam pa sangs rgyas kyi rnams par thar pa dngos grub 'od stong 'bar ba'i nyi ma zhes bya ba).

Keajra: Kechari, Pure Land of Heruka and Vajrayogini.

Pha dam pa sangs rgyas kyi phyag rgya chen po brda'i skor gsum.

The abridgement was of a lengthy account of the lives of disciples of successive generations who had not had direct contact with Padampa. Some redundancies between the two texts have also been eliminated.

Accomplished Just by Reading, A Compilation of the Initiation Rituals of the Early, Middle, and Late Pacification of Suffering Tradition (Zhi byed snga phyi bar gsum dbang chog rnams phyogs gchig tu bsgryis pa bklaṅgs pas grub pa zhes bya ba).

Dharma Shri of Nyö. Nectar of the Heart, A Single Compilation of the Commentaries of the Early, Middle, and Later Lineages of the Pacification of Suffering Teachings (Zhi byed snga phyi bar gsum gyi kbri dzig rnams phyogs gchig tu bye thugs pa bsdud rtsi'i nying khus zhes bya ba). Translated by David Molk, 2005; unpublished.
\textbf{ENDNOTES}


16 A slightly different version of Padampa Sangye’s “Last Will and Testament, the Lines of Advice to the People of Dingri” has recently been published in Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and Padampa Sangye, \textit{The Hundred Verses of Advice: Tibetan Buddhist Teachings on What Matters Most}, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group (Boston: Shambhala, 2005).

17 See note 3 of Lama Wangdu’s introduction.

18 The Vinaya system into which he was ordained was Mahasanghika, and he is said to have translated all six volumes of the Mahasanghika scriptures, presumably into Tibetan, although it is said that the Sarvastivadin was the only Vinaya system that was ever translated into Tibetan.


20 \textit{Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo} (China: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1984), volume 3, pp. 318-19, chart of major events in Tibetan history.


22 A millennium later, in 1936, Lama Wangdu Rinpoche was born here. The Vajravarahi field where the stone landed was where his mother had her garden. The stone with the fingerprints is to be seen among the collection of nine sacred objects. The musk deer, with its powerful medicine to relieve suffering, became one symbol of Padampa Sangye’s Pacification of Suffering or Shijay lineage.

23 Although the monastery building survived the Cultural Revolution, the texts from the monastery were burned in bonfires that lasted for days.

24 \textit{Accomplished Just by Reading}, pp. 1–71. Padampa Sangye’s teachings are an important source for all traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, often in a fuller, original form. \textit{The Great River Tantra of Inconceivable Secret Ali Kali} is, for example, a source for the practice of blessing the speech through recitation of the Sanskrit alphabet. In Appendix 2, I have excerpted from \textit{Nectar of the Heart} an extensive explanation of practice for transmutation of delusions into transcendent wisdom that is done in connection with recitation of the Sanskrit alphabet in different combinations, along with various types of gazes and physical postures.

25 It is said that stabilizing even the preliminary stage of the \textit{The Ali Kali Scripture Initiation} can give rise to all realizations of the five paths. In Appendix 5, I offer this practice for readers who would like to make a personal connection with Padampa Sangye’s teachings by means of a recitation/meditation practice.

26 Jeffrey Hopkins, \textit{Meditation on Emptiness}, p. 537.


28 Lama Wangdu, personal interview.


30 Of course, such paths are also free from the dogma of scientific materialism that is a virtual blindness to the very existence of consciousness!

31 This and the following two quotations are from \textit{Lojong, Training the Mind}, by His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1999), pp. 5-6.
Elemental mind: *sens nyid*, “mind itself.”


Sometimes people mistake “realization of non-self” in Buddhism to mean an annihilation of self, whereas it actually means realization of the actual or ultimate mode of existence of self.

Five declines: worsening of the times, beings, life span, delusion, and spiritual vision.

*Yuganaddha*: Tib. *zung’jug*: unification, union of enlightened body and mind.

The science of sound: knowledge of Sanskrit.

The field of the inner sciences: Dharma.

Yakshini: a female wealth deity.

When Buddha Shakyamuni revealed himself in the form of Vajradhara or a yidam deity to confer initiation, afterwards the mandala was collected and dissolved. When Buddha emanated as Heruka-Vajrayogini to give the initiation, however, the mandala was left afterwards, giving this tantra, according to tradition, an ongoing presence countering negativity in our world, making its blessings even stronger and swifter the more time passes and the more difficult circumstances become.

Eight worldly dharmas: being overly swayed by gain, loss, praise, blame, good news, bad news, fame, and ill-repute.

*Bla ma rdo rje gdan pa*, the Bodhgaya Guru, a metaphoric term for Buddha Shakyamuni.

The lords of the three lineages: Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri, and Vajrapani.

Wearing a single shoe: he left the other behind for the sake of auspiciousness so that the merit of the Chinese people would not decline.

This stone is currently in the possession of Venerable Trulshig Rinpoche.

It is considered very negative to sit on top of holy scriptures. That is why they were ridiculing him.

The House of Dependent Arising: the small hut built for the purpose of austerities in Padampa’s system. It is big enough only to sit in, though not to stand, and is built in a prescribed way, inscribed with mantric syllables, etc. The manner and ritual of its construction are taught in great detail in the scriptures, but there is no longer a transmission of its use for meditation. For auspiciousness, the late great Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche would use it to give initiations to major disciples, one at a time.

Doha: songs of spiritual realization.

The six-syllable mantra: *OM MANI PADME HUM*.

Tsara Singha is the name of Dampa’s birthplace in India, where the people wear such garlands.

This refers to shaving his head and taking ordination.

*Alayavijnana*: the foundation consciousness as asserted in Chittamatra tenets, or the most subtle clear light mind out of which all of samsara and nirvana arises, as asserted and experienced in highest tantra.

Pitakas: the three baskets or collections of the teachings: sutra, vinaya, and abhidharma.
Venerable Lama Wangdu says that many of the scriptures mentioned here and in the following lists have been saved from destruction by being hidden in Kham. That was not the case for the many volumes of Prajnaparamita Scriptures hand-written by Padampa and his disciples in gold, silver, and turquoise that lined the upper walls of the Langkor Monastery. It took a whole month for them all to be burned when the invasion occurred.

Lady Gyamo Zakong: the Chinese queen of King Songtsen Gampo.

Dukha: suffering.

As of the writing in 1906. They remained until 1960 when the events that Lama Wangdu describes in his introduction took place.

There is also an alternative tradition regarding the dispersal of Padampa’s remains:

Not a single bone of Dampa’s body was left there. The flesh came together gradually to form four stupas, but after a few days they could not be found at the bottom of the site. There were one kbel and a dre [about thirty pounds] of relic pills, but they were later taken to the land of the nagas.

Since the humans received nothing, Lady Shachungma said, “In Dingri, although there are now some who have generated view and meditation in their minds, it doesn’t seem that there are attainments in tantric retreat! Precious Dampa has left for Kechari Pure Land but as for Dampa’s relics, what would have been a focus for prayers of the faithful, a standard for practitioners to develop conviction and understanding of the instructions, a standard for those doing difficult practices to delight in, a sign for the devoted to develop perseverance and for future generations to develop endurance, they have all, without exception, been taken by the nagas! Now, whatever we do, they won’t be found!”

Also, on the evening of the ninth day after Dampa died, at a time when great offerings were being made, Kampa Gocha prayed at the House of Dependent Arising. Dampa came in actuality and taught him Dharma. He gave him the bag of dependent arising and then left.

On the evening of the thirteenth day after Dampa died, a voice was heard to prophesy, “Dig down an arm-span and a cubit; the body is there!” When they dug, the first relic of the body to emerge, called Kedu, was bright golden in color, about three quarters of an inch tall. Continuing to dig, three flesh-formed stupas emerged. The Dingri people then made grand offerings and enthroned them at the House of Dependent Arising.

The middle transmission of Padampa’s teachings are categorized in three major lineages, the Ma, So, and Kam, referred to by the names of the principal disciples. The addition of gom in the name means “the meditator Ma,” etc.

Here and below, most accounts of the lineage beyond Padampa’s direct disciples have been abridged.

Kunga’s wife did not get along well with others and would abuse Kunga, grabbing him by the hair. He was known as the Bodhisattva Kunga because he was very gentle-natured and would never retaliate.

The four texts: the four areas of perfection of wisdom, logic and epistemology, vinaya, and abhidharma.

Stakes for Decease Mothers: ma gshin phur.

Six-Part Chöd instructions: gcod brul tso drug ma.
Abiding by way of emptiness: stong bar gnas pa.

*Matrika* (Sanskrit): Tibetan mamo, a class of usually ugly and terrifying goddesses or fierce dakinis.

Swastika: ancient symbol of auspiciousness and indestructibility.

*Bhaṣūkūwa*: one who does nothing but eat, sleep, and defecate.

The zi bead is considered to be a valuable asset and also to have the power to bring one good fortune.

Dzo: a cross between a yak and a cow.

The ship’s crow: the crow’s nest of a ship with its view in all directions.

I.e., a baby will pick up chocolate or excrement and put it in its mouth without discrimination of good and bad.

*Lang tang tse*: a medicinal herb that grows in meadows. It has a spicy taste and kills parasites.

Putting mind to watchfulness: sens lta thog tu ’jog pa.

“Dog’s heart” here symbolizes the mind that would carelessly waste one’s life and spiritual potential.

I.e., the solitary hermit has fewer causes for suffering.

Nudity symbolizes utterly unobscured awareness.

The left symbolizes wisdom, which itself must also be realized to be empty of true existence. Until it is, it continues to obscure reality.

The lion and king refer to Padampa Sangye and Kunga, respectively.

That is, having realized the illusory nature of “real” appearances.

Rather than talking about Dharma, she internalized it and now even her physical body embodies it.

The House of Dependent Arising: the name of Padampa Sangye’s meditation hut.

I.e., he took her as his consort and she attained realization.

Padampa could transform earth into gold at a touch, but, like all material wealth, it was of no more significance to him than clay.

Emptiness can only be realized for the sake of freeing oneself and others from suffering.

They can be transformed into the five wisdoms: ignorance into mirror-like wisdom, greed into equalizing wisdom, attachment into discriminating wisdom, jealousy into all-accomplishing wisdom, and aversion into wisdom of the sphere of reality.

I.e., they develop faith in those they find attractive.

See note 48.

The pigeon, snake, and pig represent attachment, aversion, and ignorance, respectively.

I.e., something that will soon burst.

See note 1 on six natural facets of yoga in Lama Wangdu’s introduction.

I.e., no one cares as much about us as ourselves, and if we do not take responsibility for our own ultimate welfare, who will?

This occurs because of knowing more practices than one is able to actually perform and finally not being able to maintain any of them.

Leap over: tögel (*thod rgal*).

Subsequent attainment refers to experience subsequent to and between meditative sessions in which realization has developed.

Here, the word “abandon” refers to the great Indian masters’ abandonment of conceptions of the true existence of these things. The pandit, or master scholar, deals with
words and concepts, but without clinging to them as truly existent. Blessings are indispensable to the yogi’s practice, but he realizes them to be like illusions, not truly existent. And the kusulupa, who externally appears to do nothing but eat and sleep, is a completely renounced yogi who does nothing but remain absorbed in subtle awareness-energy, but again, all clinging to that as truly existent is abandoned. Padampa Sangye’s last comment expresses skepticism that many Tibetan practitioners had not yet realized emptiness directly and become arya beings.

99 “Becoming windswept” means being ruined.
100 I.e., give up seeking samsaric rebirth as something attractive.
101 Shri Mountain: Tsibri, sacred abode of the Indian mahasiddhas. The mountain is said to have miraculously flown from Bodhgaya to Tibet.
102 Bhigyapa: a general term for the naked sadhus of India.
103 The four mistaken attitudes: perceiving suffering as happiness, defilement as purity, the impermanent as permanent, and the selfless as endowed with self.
104 Wild yak: Tib. ’brong, pronounced “drong.”
105 From the ultimate point of view there is no attainment and no non-attainment, i.e., there is no truly existent ignorance that is destroyed. On the valid conventional level, it is merely labeled “realizing emptiness” when the self that ignorance previously grasped as real is “destroyed” or “lost.”
106 This is symbolic language for giving the tantric teachings to a well-qualified aspirant destined for greatness.
107 To request gold: since Dampa could create gold by scooping up a handful of dirt.
108 Tsampa is the roasted barley flour used in making tormas, ritual offering cakes.
109 This “flying bird method” refers to the ejection of consciousness and merging of awareness with space as practiced in Chöd, which, as Padampa asserts in the next sentence, does not harm the energy winds. Powa ejection of consciousness, on the other hand, can “harm” the energy winds in the sense of shortening life span; therefore, long life practice is done following Powa practice.
107 For the three paths, see Appendix 2.
111 Sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya, the “complete enjoyment body” and “emanation bodies,” are the two types of form bodies (rupakaya) that are said to fulfill the aims of other sentient beings. The dharmakaya, on the other hand, is said to fulfill one’s own aims.
112 This reflects Padampa Sangye’s emphasis on perfecting one’s own realization through solitary austerities before thinking of attempting to benefit others.
113 Padampa Sangye seems to be scolding Kunga for not understanding his intent the first time. What he said was that it is possible if the practitioner is highly qualified, but that very few, even those in high position, are actually capable of it. In emphasizing his wrath, he is also implicitly proclaiming to Kunga that he is quite capable of such transformation. Kunga, in the following question, continues to fearlessly pursue the matter and is rewarded with further clarification, again revealing that Padampa was not merely being angry with him in an ordinary sense.
114 This relates to the tantric “technology” of affecting consciousness and appearances to consciousness by controlling elements of the subtle body, winds, and drops. Padampa Sangye is referring to a state of realization in which the grosser energy-winds that serve as the mount for deluded states of consciousness are no longer operable.
115 Here Padampa is referring to putting up a sign saying, “In retreat, do not disturb!” Although that may be necessary, the retreatant can hardly prevent himself from imag-
ining those who see the sign thinking, “Ah! He’s in retreat!” and developing concepts about it, pride, etc. He points out that actual retreat involves simply withdrawing one’s body, speech, and mind from mundane perceptions and involvements.

116 I.e., one cannot expect to have powerful realizations by just making offerings.

117 Dampa is making a pun on the word *mudra*, in Tibetan *chag gya*, which can be read as “hand seal.”

118 Vajrapani taught King Indrabodhi the *Guhyasamajatantra* as a means by which he could attain enlightenment and still administer his kingdom.

119 Understanding, examination, joy, bliss, and single-pointed mind.

120 Reference to the mantric syllable *PHAT*.

121 Here, Padampa gives a quintessential “Zen” type of response, cutting directly through to the ultimate nature of phenomena. He is challenging the questioner not to be satisfied with concepts such as “I am meditating” or “I see the face of the deity” during meditation.

122 Four doors of birth: birth from a womb, an egg, from moisture, or miraculous birth.

123 Gegpay Dorje (sGeg pa’i rdo rje): Lilavajra or Lalitavajra, the Indian sage who spread Buddhism to Oddiyana, ancient Afghanistan.

124 Togtsepa: Tog tse pa.

125 Nyima Pepa: Nyi ma spas pa.

126 Legminkara: Legs smin ka ra.

127 Ritröma: her name means “Retreatant” or “Mountain-cave Ascetic.”

128 Drimema: her name means “Stainless One.”

129 Pemo Shab: her name means “Lady Lotus.”

130 Shinglopa: his name means “Tree-leaf One.”

131 Deway Jungne (bDe ba’i ‘byung gnas): “the Bliss-Born One.”

132 What I have translated as “cognition” in this and the following instruction is the Sanskrit *karana*.

133 Ganga Zangmo: her name means “Good Ganges.”

134 A repetition of the name cited earlier in the list.

135 *Nectar of the Heart*, unpublished translation by David Molk, p. 35.

136 “Idle talk”: literally, “telling stories about yetis.”

About Nityananda Institute

Nityananda Institute is a spiritual community and center for meditation and yoga practice based in Portland, Oregon, with branches in Santa Monica, California, New York City, Boston, and Oslo, Norway, and a retreat center in Kathmandu, Nepal. Founded by American-born Swami Chetanananda in 1971, Nityananda Institute offers programs in meditation, hatha yoga, Vajrayana sadhanas, philosophy, and sacred art and music. The core of the spiritual practice at Nityananda Institute is Trika Yoga, a system derived from the nondualistic philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism.

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