

THE RANGJUNG YESHE  
TIBETAN-ENGLISH DICTIONARY OF BUDDHIST CULTURE

version 3

Boudhanath, 2003  
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## INTRODUCTION

It is a great pleasure to present this third version of the Rangjung Yeshe Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Culture. It contains a wealth of information from multiple sources and, even though the editing has — let's be frank here — plenty of room for improvement, this dictionary/glossary can provide the user with enough background to decide on, or narrow in on, the right word choice. That has been and still is my main wish: to facilitate a growth in understanding.

While many of the teachers who grew up in Tibet are still alive, I have been encouraged numerous times to make this dictionary — as imperfect as it may be — available so it can be a contribution to the translation efforts of our generation. What you have here can stand alone as a tool for students and translators, and yet, it is still a work in progress.

Begun in 1980, the first entries were written on small rectangles of paper in Boudhanath — and became stacks that steadily grew. (The first list of Dharma terminology was a hot item in those days: Dungshey Trinley Norbu Rinpoche, for instance, asked me for a second copy, because “his oldest son had snapped up the other.”) Later, coinciding with the first laptops models in the early 80's, these scraps of paper migrated into electronic files. Other translators added their glossaries and in 1996 the first version was published with 72,000 entries. A second followed in 1998 with 84,000 entries. The electronic formats were thanks to Chris Gianottis and Gerry Wiener. A list of everyone to whom thanks are owed is included in the section under acknowledgements.

Now the Rangjung Yeshe Dictionary is approximately 84,000, and with the inclusion of the efforts of Ives Waldo, Jim Valby Richard Barron, Mark Seibold and others, the size is 276,000. To give a comparison, the printable version — set in Autumn 8 points — is about 2950 pages. As a side-remark, though the CD is easy to carry around, it may be the printed version that will survive the longest.

In the electronic format, a search for the desired word is fast. You can look for it, not only as a main entry, but also in context. The different search engines kindly supplied free of charge by their makers, give a variety of valuable usage. Try them out.

Lastly, it is also a great pleasure to be able to write these words as I conclude a project that was directly and indirectly set in motion by my own teachers — Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal. May it be a contribution to fulfill their noble aspirations for the the translation of the Buddha's teachings into all languages of the world.

— Erik Pema Kunsang  
Rangjung Yeshe Gomdê, California  
August, 2003

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my thanks to all the people, venerable as well as ordinary, who have directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly, contributed to the hotchpodge presented here.

First to the benefactors of the project whose contributions made the work possible:

Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche, III  
Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche  
Tulku Pema Wangyal  
George MacDonald  
The Nalanda Individual Assistance Trust  
Nalanda Translation Committee (Larry Mermelstein, in particular)  
Gyurme Dorje  
Gerry Wiener  
Matthieu Ricard  
James Valby  
Lama Chökyi Nyima (Richard Barron)

To the people the dictionary benefitted from directly, by my fortune to receive teachings from, study with, learn from, or translate for, not listed in order of priority; (I apologize for not having kept up with the latest levels of titles — all the lamas are respectively venerable, precious, very venerable, eminent and sublime).

Thanks to everyone:

Adeu Rinpoche  
Alak Zenkar Rinpoche  
Ayang Tulku Rinpoche  
Bairo Rinpoche  
Bakha Tulku Rinpoche  
Beru Khyentse Rinpoche  
Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche  
Chatral Rinpoche Sangye Dorje  
Chhoje Tulku Rinpoche  
Chogye Trichen Rinpoche  
Chokling Rinpoche, Mingyur Dewey Dorje  
Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche  
Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, whose influence has been priceless  
Dabzang Rinpoche  
Dakpo Tulku  
Dalai Lama, His Holiness  
Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Kyabje  
Dodrub Chen Rinpoche  
Dorzong Rinpoche  
Drungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche  
Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche  
Dzogchen Pönlop Rinpoche  
Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche  
Goshi Gyaltsab Rinpoche  
Gyalsey Tulku Rinpoche  
Gyalwang Karmapa Rangjung Rigpey Dorje  
Gyatral Rinpoche  
Jamgön Kontrül Rinpoche

Jigmey Khyentse Nüden Dorje  
 Jigmey Norbu Rinpoche  
 Kalu Rinpoche  
 Karma Trinley Rinpoche  
 Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche  
 Kyabje Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche  
 Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche  
 Khenpo Chadral  
 Khenpo Chödrak  
 Khenpo Chödzö  
 Khenpo Chögah  
 Khenpo Chökyi Gocha  
 Khenpo Drukchung  
 Khenpo Könchok Mönlam  
 Khenpo Ngedön  
 Khenpo Palden Sherab  
 Khenpo Pema Gyaltzen  
 Khenpo Pema Sherab  
 Khenpo Tashi Palden  
 Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso  
 Khetsun Sangpo Rinpoche  
 Khyentse Yeshe Rinpoche  
 Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche  
 Lama "Akhu" Pema Yugyal  
 Lama Chönjor  
 Lama Putsi Pema Tashi Rinpoche  
 Lama Rigsang Dorje  
 Lama Tobgyal, crazy yogi  
 Lama Tubten and Lama Lodrö, resident lamas in Denmark in the late '70es  
 Lama Wangdor Rinpoche, meditator master at the Tsopema caves  
 Lobpon Sherab Ozer  
 Lobpon Yeshe Trinley  
 Mingyur Rinpoche, Tulku of Yongey Mingyur Dorje  
 Minling Trichen Rinpoche  
 Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche  
 Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche  
 Özer Tulku  
 Pema Wangyal Rinpoche, a true nirmanakaya in the guise of a bodhisattva  
 Sakya Tridzin Rinpoche  
 Shechen Rabjam Rinpoche  
 Shelkar "Amchi" Rinpoche  
 Sogyal Rinpoche  
 Suktse Rinpoche  
 Sönam Tobgyal Rinpoche  
 Tai Situ Rinpoche  
 Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche  
 Tarab Tulku  
 Tarig Tulku Rinpoche  
 Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche  
 Tenga Rinpoche  
 Thinley Norbu Rinpoche  
 Trulshik Rinpoche, Ngawang Chökyi Lodrö  
 Tsoknyi Rinpoche

Tulku Chögyal Rinpoche  
 Tulku Pema Rigdzin  
 Tulku Rangdröl  
 Tulku Sang-ngak Rinpoche  
 Tulku Thondup Rinpoche  
 Zangzang Tulku  
 Zatrul Rinpoche

Special thanks to: the members of Nalanda Translation Committee in Boulder and Halifax, especially Gerry Wiener, Larry Mermelstein, Tony Duff, Ives Waldo, Scott Wellenbach, and others  
 Matthieu Ricard, French translator and assistant to Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche  
 the members of Padmakara Translation Group in France  
 the members of Kalu Rinpoche's translation group in Sonoma  
 the members of Marpa School of Translation in Boudhanath  
 the members of Lama Norlha's translation group in New York  
 the members of the Yeshe De Project in Berkeley  
 the members of the translation committee for A Treasury of Mahayana Sutras, headed by the late Garma C. Chang

To the translators of the present age who have generously donated years of their precious life to further the spreading of the Buddhadharma: Allan Wallace

Andreas Kretschmar  
 Ani Jinpa Palmo, nun from Holland  
 Ani Lodrö Palmo, American nun  
 Ani Ngawang Chödrön, Marilyn Silverstone  
 Ann Benson  
 Arie Goldfield  
 Bo Colomby  
 Chökyi Nyima, Richard Barron  
 David Christiansen  
 Erik Haarh, late teacher of Tibetan at University of Copenhagen  
 George Dreyfuss, a Western Geshe  
 Geraldo Abboud, translator from Argentina  
 Geshe Tubten Jinpa  
 Gyurme Dorje, translator from Scotland  
 Jacob Leschley  
 Jules Levinson  
 Kiki Ekselius  
 Lama Dennis, Kalu Rinpoche's translator  
 Lama Lodru,  
 Lama Namze, emissary of Kalu Rinpoche  
 Lama Ngawang, translator of Kalu Rinpoche  
 Lisa Anderson  
 Marcia Binder Schmidt  
 Matthew Kapstein  
 Michelle Martin  
 Maruta Kalnins  
 Namdol Gyatso Lama  
 Ngawang Sonam, principal at Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery  
 Ngawang, Tibetan teacher in Copenhagen  
 Patrick Gaffney  
 Peter Goldfarb

Peter Roberts  
Professor Norbu in Darjeeling  
Sangye Khandro, translator of Gyatrul Rinpoche  
Sarah Harding  
Shakya Dorje, Canadian translator  
Sister Palmo, Mrs Bedi  
Steven Goodman  
Thomas Roth  
Tony Duff, who worked on an early version

Through their work and writings, published or unpublished, works these people have used have greatly helped in the compiling of the dictionary: Akong Rinpoche

Alex Wayman  
Alexander Berzin  
Ato Rinpoche  
Chimey Rinpoche  
Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche  
Christian Lindtner  
Constance Wilkinson  
Cyrus Stearns  
Dagyab Rinpoche  
Daniel Cozort  
David Jackson  
Dhongthog Rinpoche  
Dorje Wangchuk  
Edward Conze  
Elizabeth Napper  
Flemming Faber  
Francesca Fremantle  
Garma C. Chang  
Gene Smith  
Geoffrey Hopkins  
Geshe Kalsang  
Geshe Lundrup Sopa  
Geshe Wangyal  
Guy Newland  
Herbert Guenther  
Jaeschke  
James Valby  
Janice Willis  
Jay "Lama Ngawang" Goldberg  
Joe Wilson  
John Reynolds  
Judith Hanson  
Junsiro Takakusu  
Karl-Franz Erhard  
Katia and Ken Holmes  
Keith Dowman  
Khandro Rinpoche, the daughter of Minling Trichen  
Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup  
Lama Norlha  
Lama Rinchen, resident Lama in New York

Lama Yeshe Rinpoche  
Lati Rinpoche  
Lobsang Lhalungpa  
Lokesh Chandra for his Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary  
Martin Wilson  
Melvin Goldstein  
Michael Roach, Geshe La  
Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche  
Robert Thurman  
Sarat Chandra Das  
Shenphen and Michael Hookham  
Stephen Batchelor  
Tsepa Rigdzin for his Dictionary  
Tubten Zopa Rinpoche

Lastly, thanks to the staff at Rangjung Yeshe Translations & Publications in Boudhanath, and to the other people who directly have contributed to the efforts of compiling and editing of this work: Andreas Kretchmar

Ani Lodrö Palmo  
Ben Rosenschweig  
Chris Gianottis  
Felice Bachman  
George MacDonald  
Graham Sunstein  
Heidi Koepl  
Ives Waldo  
Jacob Leschley  
Joanne Larson  
Judy Amzits  
Kathy Morris  
Mark Seibold  
Marcia Binder Schmidt  
Maria Pelaez  
Matthieu Ricard  
Monika Kretchmar  
Phinjo Sherpa  
Thomas Doctor  
Tina Lang  
Tracy from Australia

Thanks again to everyone named here as well as all of you who have worked on presenting the Dharma preserved in Tibetan to the rest of the world.

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