

Text One

THE THREE ROOTS UNIFIED: ABANDONING FALSEHOODS

ཙ་གསུམ་ངྲིལ་སྐྱབ་ཚེ་སྐྱབ་རྩུན་སྦངས་མ

**“TREE OF IMMORTAL NECTAR” COMMENTARY AND SADHANA BY THE 17TH
KARMAPA**

ཀར་ལུགས་ཙ་གསུམ་ངྲིལ་སྐྱབ་ཀྱི་ཐོན་ལས་བཤག་ཚོག་ཏུ་བཀོད་པ་འཆི་མེད་བདུད་ཚིའི་ལྷོན་པ་

A summary and translation of the Introduction



Translated, edited, and compiled by Adele Tomlin

Translator's Introduction

"In short, the three, Nag [Mahakala]-Gyal [Gyalwa Gyatso], Phag [Vajravarahi], and Guru, are inseparable, and are practiced as the essence of Amitayus."

"Here, the essence of the three roots of the Karma Kagyu lineage is practiced. Furthermore, the practice of the unequalled Vajra Saraswati Amitayus, a ritual text for the activity of dispelling falsehoods/lies, is propagated. It includes a statement of origin and the actual ritual."

"Altogether, this deity represents all the important Lamas, deities and dharma protect or Karma Kagyu lineage. Therefore, it is regarded as very sacred and unique because everything is encompassed within a single deity."

"However, there seems to be a tradition of other schools criticizing the Kagyu tradition, saying that they are too strict with empowerments and transmissions. And there is some truth to that. For example, it is said that the Kamtsang Kagyu once had a hundred root tantras of the Tsurphu tradition and forty-two mandalas of Saraswati (Yangchen) , but nowadays, there is no conflict in the Bird Lineage, Kunrig in the Yoga Tantra, Gyalgyam in the Anuttara Tantra, and of the five sets of five of the Dusum Khyenpa Tukdam, only the five-deity Chakrasamvara and the five-deity Vajravarahi are practiced."—the 17th Karmapa

Translator's Introduction

Last month, the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje published a set of three important Karma Kagyu texts online related to the *Three Roots Unified* (ཅ་གསུམ་ངོལ་སྦྱབ་ tsa sum dril drub) practice tradition said to have been revealed as a mind-treasure of Padmasambhava by the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje. It is the first time such research has been composed on this practice by the Karmapa since the time of the 8th Karmapa it seems.

In this new trilogy publication, the 17th Karmapa demonstrates his original scholarly research on this text and its importance to the Karma Kagyu lineage preservation. It comprises of three separate texts:

- ཅ་གསུམ་ངོལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་མཚན་གཞུང་། *Three Roots Unified* Official Text main sadhana and origin of the textual tradition
- ཅ་གསུམ་ངོལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་བརྟན་བཟུགས། *Three Roots Unified* Long-Life Offering of Tenshuk
- ཅ་གསུམ་ངོལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་བསུན་ལོག། *Three Roots Unified to Send Off the Invitation to the Dakinis*

The 17th Karmapa completed his revision of the main text by combining the writings of the former Karmapas, 4th Gyaltsab Rinpoche and 1st Jamgon Kongtrul, as well as writing several praises and necessary explanations by himself.

As my humble offering for the 17th Karmapa's 41st birthday today, now generally celebrated on the first day of the fifth Lunar month, and for his long-life and activities in general , I gratefully offer this first translation in the English language of the 17th Karmapa's lengthy introduction on the origin, history and importance of this tradition to the Karma Kagyu lineage from the *first of the trilogy set*. I plan to translate the Introduction to the second text, on the offering of *Three Roots Unified Ten-Zhug* (Remaining Stable) soon.

The practice is called the *Three Roots Combined/Unified* because there are several deities combined in it representing the *three Vajryana roots* of guru, yidam deity and protectors. The first main deity is Amitayus, red in colour, his first pair of hands holds the vase of long life. The second deity is represented by a white face on the right, Avalokiteshvara (Chenrezig), with its second pair of hands holds a rosary and red lotus, representing Red Avalokiteshvara. Its third pair of hands holds a curved knife and skull cup, representing Vajravarahi. Its face on the left is black representing the Dharma Protector, Mahakala. Altogether, this deity represents all the important Lamas, deities and dharma protectors of the Karma Kagyu lineage. It is a sacred and unique practice because everything is encompassed within a single deity.

History of Three Roots Unified

In the first text, called *The Practice Manual of the Karma Kagyu Tradition Three Roots Unified: Tree of Immortal Nectar* (ཀར་ལུགས་རྩ་གསུམ་དྲིལ་སྐྱབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱིན་ལས་བཞག་ཚོག་ཏུ་བཀོད་པ་འཆེ་མེད་བདུད་ཚིའི་ལྗོན་པ་) the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa talks about the origin and importance of the practice within the Karma Kagyu tradition from the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje to the 8th Karmapa onwards, and how it came to be "lost" when the Choje Lingpa version of it became more prevalent after the 8th Karmapa. The reason why it is so unique and important for the Karmapas and Karma Kagyu tradition is because:

“In this, the root of blessings is the Kagyu Lamas, the root of accomplishments is the Yidam deities, and the root of activities is the Dharma protectors. Since they are inseparable from Guru Padmasambhava and Karmapa in essence, and are practiced by combining them into the form of Amitayus, the early practitioners up to the eighth Karmapa. It is also well-known as the *Abandoning Lies/Falsehoods Long-Life* practice (ཚོ་སྐྱབ་རྩུན་སྦངས་མ་ Tse-drub Pangma).”

The 17th Karmapa discusses how the practice became more well known in Tibet after the 8th Karmapa Mikyo Dorje composed a text about it, called *Abandoning Falsehoods/Lies: Long-Life Practice* due to what he saw were many texts on the practice that were false/incorrect. However, the 17th Karmapa also writes that there are textual sources that clearly show that the practice and tradition was present in Tibet before the 8th Karmapa's work on it and its origin revelation from the mind-treasure of the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje and Guru Padmasambhava:

“The method for this is said to have originated from the mind treasure (དགོངས་གཏེར་) of the Dharma Lord, 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, according to the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje. Some texts also state that it was directly heard from Guru Padmasambhava himself. It is also said that Guru Padmasambhava concealed it as a treasure, and the Omniscient Rangjung Dorje extracted it from the treasure.

In some lineages, it is said that the great teacher Padmasambhava spoke to Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal, who then gave it to the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje himself. Some say it is a treasure of Padma Ledrel Tsal. In general, it is said that any treatise composed by 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje was only created when the guru and yidam blessed his mindstream, and when the manifestations of his body, speech, and mind arose as the play of wisdom. Therefore, its blessing is greater than others.”

The 17th Karmapa also gives several citations from the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje including this one:

“In this, since the Bhagavan Amitayus is actually present and the colour of his body is red, it symbolises rāga and attachment/lust and is red. As it engages with colours, it is the nature of Padma Gharwang, so it is Guru Padmasambhava. As he holds a curved knife and a skull cup in his hands, it is Vajrayogini. As the right face is white and holds a lotus rosary, it is Avalokiteśvara Great Compassionate One

Gyalwa Gyatso. The left face is black, Mahākāla, the primordial awareness-protector. The complete form unified is the Karmapa.”

I recently wrote about the origin of this practice tradition [here](#), and received the empowerment for it, from HE 12th Gyaltsab Rinpoche in Bodh Gaya, February 2025 (see report of that [here](#)). According to a [brief report](#) (4th June 2025) on the 12th Gyaltsab Rinpoche FB page, by his translator Zichee Leethong, the 17th Karmapa completed these three texts, and then met the 12th Gyaltsab Rinpoche offered Tenshug and bestowed the oral transmission of these texts upon Rinpoche too.

For full translation of the Introduction to this first text by the 17th Karmapa, see below and also this pdf download [here](#). I plan to translate the Introduction to the second text, on the offering of *Three Roots Unified Ten-Zhug* (Remaining Stable) soon. As the 17th Karmapa taught recently about the mass destruction of Karma Kagyu shedras in central Tibet, due to the Mongol-Gelug military violence that destroyed almost all of them, and the [need to revive and preserve the unique traditions and practices of the Karma Kagyu as a result](#), which were suppressed and hindered by those Gelug sectarian forces in Tibet [my words!] for centuries, this new publication and activity by the 17th Karmapa is again a remarkable and original feat, especially considering the many challenges he has faced (and still is facing) since leaving Tibet in exile from various factions, as I wrote about [here](#).

May it be of benefit to the root guru, 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje's life-span, activities, to the Karma Kagyu, to Buddha Dharma and beings in general!

Music? [Om Mani Padme Hum mantra with Dakini melody of 2nd Karmapa](#), and [One](#) and [All I Want is You](#) by U2.

Written, compiled and translated by Adele Tomlin, 26th June 2025¹.

Tree of Immortal Nectar: The Main text of the Three Roots Unified

by 17th Karmapa: Introduction only

ཅུ་གསུམ་དྲིལ་སྐྱབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱིན་གཞུང་།

། ར་མོ་གུ་ཅུ་ཀམ་ཀ།

བདེ་ལྡན་ཞིང་དུ་མགོན་པོ་ཚེ་མཐའ་ཡས།།

གུ་འཛིན་གནས་སུ་འཕགས་མཚན་ལུགས་རྗེའི་གཏེར།།

རྩ་ཡབ་སྐྱེང་ན་བརྒྱ་ཐོད་འཕྲེང་རྩལ།།

སྐྱ་གསུམ་དབྱེར་མེད་ཀམ་པ་དེས་སྐྱོངས།།

Namo Guru Karmapa!

In the blissful realm (Sukhavati), Amitayus (Tse-phagme) is the protector.

In the Potalaka realm, Avalokiteśvara is the treasure of supreme compassion.

In the Copper-Colored Mountain, Padmakara [Wrathful Guru Padmsambhava] is the skilful tantric master.

May the Karmapa inseparable from the three kayas, protect us!

Here, the essence of the three roots of the Karma Kagyu lineage is practiced. Furthermore, the practice of the unequaled Vajra Saraswati (Yangchen) Amitayus, it is to promote a ritual text for the activity of abandoning falsehoods/lies and includes a statement of origin and the actual ritual.

First, from the words of the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje:

“I prostrate to the holy gurus. The history of this is as follows: When the son of the Victorious One, Rangjung Dorje himself, was absorbed in the non-dual wisdom, It became evident that you were none other than the embodiment of Gyalwa Gyatso, and you composed this sadhana. Later, when I practiced it, I dreamt that a moon, said to be that of Chandragomin, appeared in the sky. A light, redder than the sun, spread its radiance, and when it touched my tongue, it tasted like the bitterness of gentian. Then, someone resembling an acharya woman said, “Please offer incense this month”. It is said that immeasurable wonders occurred, such as the emanation of Samantabhadra's incense as described in the Avatamsaka Sutra.” and bestowed blessings.

In this, the root of blessings is the Kagyu Lamas, the root of accomplishments is the Yidam deities, and the root of activities is the Dharma protectors. Since they are inseparable from Guru Padmasambhava and Karmapa in essence, and are practiced by combining them into the form of Amitayus, the early practitioners up to the eighth Karmapa. It is also well-known as the *Abandoning Lies/Falsehoods Long-Life* practice (ཚེ་སྐྱབ་རྩུན་སྲངས་མ་ Tse-drub Pangma)).

The Five-Deity Gyalwa Gyatso and accomplishing the Three Roots Unified

Also, in this Karma Kamtsang tradition of the Practice Lineage, the primary method for accomplishing the Three Roots Mandala as one is through the practice cycle of Five-Deity Gyalwa Gyatso. In the centre, the glorious Karmapa himself is visualized in the Sambhogakaya form as Avalokiteshvara Gyalwa Gyatso, surrounded by an ocean of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas from the ten directions.

To the right, he is visualized in a wrathful form to subdue the wicked, as the glorious Hayagriva, surrounded by an ocean of heroes. To the left, the wisdom aspect of emptiness appears as a goddess, Secret Awareness Dakini (Sangwa Yeshe Khandro), namely Vajravarahi (Dorje Phagmo), surrounded by an ocean of heroines. Below, in the form of a protector, the lama himself is visualized as Mahākāla, surrounded by an ocean of oath-bound protectors.

Above all of these, inseparable in essence from the root guru, is the form of Guru Padmasambhava, or Saraha, surrounded by a gathering of vidyadhara lineage holders, an ocean of accomplished ones. This is known as the Five Oceans.

There is also an extensive commentary on this written by Dorje Nyingpo². According to the profound instructions, it should be understood that in this mandala of Five-Deity Gyalwa Gyatso, not only Gyalwa Gyatso but also the three of Mahakala (Nag), Avalokiteshvara (Gyal), Vajravarahi (Phag) are all complete within a single mandala.

If that is again condensed into one deity, it is gathered into what is known as the union of the three roots. As the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje said:

“In this, since the Bhagavan Amitayus is actually present and the colour of his body is red, it symbolises rāga and attachment/lust and is red. As it engages with colours, it is the nature of Padma Gharwang, so it is Guru Padmasambhava. As he holds a curved knife and a skull cup in his hands, it is Vajrayogini. As the right face is white and holds a lotus rosary, it is Avalokiteśvara Great Compassionate One Gyalwa Gyatso. The left face is black, Mahākāla, the primordial awareness-protector. The complete form unified is the Karmapa.”

In short, the three, Mahakala (Nag), Avalokiteshvara (Gyal), Vajravarahi (Phag) are inseparable, and are practiced as the essence of Amitayus.

Mind-Treasure of 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje: Guru Padmasambhava and Padma Ledrel Tsal

The method for this is said to have originated from the mind treasure (དམོངས་གཉེན་) of the Dharma Lord, 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, according to the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje. Some texts also state that it was directly heard from Guru Padmasambhava himself. It is also said that Guru Padmasambhava concealed it as a treasure, and the Omniscient Rangjung Dorje extracted it from the treasure. In some lineages, it is said that the great teacher Padmasambhava spoke to Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal, who then gave it to the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje himself. Some say it is a treasure of Padma Ledrel Tsal³.

In general, it is said that any treatise composed by 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje was only created when the guru and yidam blessed his mindstream, and when the manifestations of his body, speech, and mind arose as the creative display of primordial awareness (yeshe). So, its blessing is greater than others.

Presence of the tradition before the 8th Karmapa who spoke about the existence of many fake texts

Some scholars believe that this practice, known as the *Accomplishment of the Three Roots Unified* (Dril-Drub) Sadhana became widespread in our tradition after the Eighth Je Karmapa composed the sadhana method. However, I wonder if it existed before that or not.

In the Collected Works of the Fourth Zhamarpa, Chokyi Drakpa, in the section called *In the lineage of hearing the Dharma at the feet of Jetsun Lotsawa Chenpo Sonam Gyatso* (རྗེ་བཙུན་ལོ་ལྷ་བ་ཚེན་པོ་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་མཚོའི་ལྷའི་ཞབས་ཀྱི་དྲུང་དུ་ཚོས་ཐོས་པའི་བརྒྱུད་རིམ་) it is said that:

“The unique/uncommon lineage of Padmasambhava Amitayus's practice is: Dharmakaya Amitabha, Sambhogakaya Avalokiteśvara, Nirmanakaya Padmasambhava, Dakini Yeshe Tsogyal, Sempa Rangjung Dorje, Nyamme Tokden Lodro (མཉམ་མེད་རྟོགས་ལྡན་སློ་གོ), Drinchen Ripa Kunga (རྗེ་ཚེན་རི་བ་ཀུན་དགའ་), Rigzin Shakya Drakpa (རིག་འཛོན་གྲུ་གཤམ་པ་), Khenchen Kunga Gyaltsen (མཁན་ཚེན་གུན་དགའ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་), Khedrup Sonam Gyatso (མཁས་གྲུབ་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་མཚོ), Togden Lodro (རྟོགས་ལྡན་སློ་གོ), Drinchen Ripa Kunga (རྗེ་ཚེན་རི་བ་ཀུན་དགའ་), Khenchen Shakya Drakpa (མཁན་ཚེན་གྲུ་གཤམ་པ་), Khenchen Kunga Gyaltsen (མཁན་ཚེན་གུན་དགའ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་), and Lotsawa Sonam Gyatso (ལོ་ཚེན་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་མཚོ).”⁴

Likewise, in the biography of the 16th Drikung Kyabgon, Kyabgon Kunga Rinchen, it says that this master received the instructions on the practice of the *Union of the Three Kayas* from Chokyi Drakpa, as well as the uncommon long-life practice of Padmasambhava’s Amitayus.

Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche also said that the Karma Kamtsang tradition of the *Three Roots Unified* tradition’s generation and completion stage sequence as Ngondrup Palbar stated was arranged according to the tradition of the instruction manual transmitted from Lo Chen Sonam Gyatso to the Zhamarpa, Chokyi Drakpa. In dependence on that reasoning, it is certain that the Kagyu tradition *Three Roots Union* Practice lineage was present up to the 8th Karmapa. As the 8th Jetsun Karmapa himself said,

“The older ones called this *Three Roots Unified* , but this seems to have a great mixture of texts, all of which are artificial/fake, so blessings will not arise. I showed this instruction to a lama before, but it was also mistaken. Therefore, it is impossible to practice according to the explicit teaching.

“འདི་ལ་ཚུགས་ལྷུ་འདྲིལ་སྐབ་ཅེས་སློན་རབས་པ་རྣམས་ཟེར་ལ། འདི་ལ་ཡིག་ཆའི་བསྐྱེད་ཤིན་ཏུ་མང་བར་འདུག་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་བཅོས་མ་འབའ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པས་བྱིན་རྒྱལ་མི་འབྱུང་། འདི་ལོ་བོས་སྤར་སླ་མ་ཞིག་ལ་གདམས་པ་དེའང་འབྲུལ་བཅས་སུ་བསྟན་སྟེ། དེ་དངོས་བསྟན་ལྟར་ཉམས་སུ་སྦངས་མི་ཤེས་པའི་བྱིར་རོ།”

Moreover, there is a text composed by Je 8th Karmapa himself, including empowerment, sadhana, and completion stage, called *Incomparable Vajra Melody Amitayus Sadhana* (མཚུངས་མེད་རྗེ་རྗེ་དབྱངས་ཅན་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་དུ་སྐབ་པ་), and a *Three Roots Unified* pith instruction in verse given to his nephew, Kunga. It should be examined whether that is the instruction containing errors, which the 8th Karmapa had shown to a guru previously.

The 4th Gyaltsab, Dragpa Dondrup (རྒྱལ་ཚབ་བཞི་བ་གྲགས་པ་དོན་གྲུབ་ 1550-1617), personally received this practice method from Je 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje. Later, in the presence of the 5th Zhamarpa,

Konchog Yenlag (ལྷ་དམར་ལྷ་པ་དགོན་མཚོག་ཡན་ལག་), he received the transmission of seeing the practice of the lineage more than once.

Based on these, and as per the instructions of the 9th Karmapa [Wangchug Dorje] (1556 - d.1601/1603) he also composed a text called: *Incomparable Vajra Melodious Immortal Accomplishment Abandoning Lies, adorned with supplementary practices* (མཚུངས་མེད་དོ་རྗེའི་དབྱངས་ཅན་ ཚོ་དཔག་མེད་དུ་སྐྱབ་པ་རྒྱན་མོང་བ་ལྷན་ཐབས་ཀྱིས་བརྒྱན་པ་).

In addition, the 9th Je Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, supplemented it according to the Nyingma tradition, elaborating on the activities, empowerments, and so forth. This is known as the *Incomparable Vajra Melodious One (Yangchen) Immortal Accomplishment of Amitayus Abandoning Falseness, the Three Roots Unified Practice, complete with generation and completion stage empowerments*.

In addition, the accomplished Karma Chakme, who was a disciple of both the 10th Karmapa and the 6th Zhamarpa, composed various extensive and concise documents, such as the root text of *the Essence of the Three Roots Practice* were composed in verse form on the generation and completion stages. These are still available to be seen.

The Tradition of Choje Lingpa and the minor differences with the Karma Kagyu tradition

Later, the fifteenth generation of the lineage of Lhaje Nyichung (ལྷ་རྗེ་སྡི་རྒྱུང་), the brother of Gampopa, was recognized by 7th Zhamarpa, Yeshe Nyingpo (ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡིང་པོ་), as the reincarnation of Rechung Phuk, Chime Wangpo (རས་རྒྱུང་ཕུག་གི་སྐུ་ལ་སྐྱེ་འཆི་མེད་དབང་པོ་), the great treasure revealer Choje Lingpa (གཏིར་ཚེན་ ཚོས་རྗེ་གླིང་པ་), also known as Dzamling Dorje, or Dewai Dorje. He revealed from the Powo Makong Lung, the lower Keutsang of Immortal Vajra in the cave of the immaculate rainbow of Dakini Gawai Tsal (Joyful Display), the *Immortal Three Roots Unified*. According to Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche, that deity mantra is similar to the Karma Kagyu Three Roots Unified practice, and they became like a single river. In fact, the Cho Ling Treasure's new system, the main deity has three faces and six arms, and all the body colours and hand symbols are in accordance with the Karma Kagyu system, and the root mantra also seems to be mostly the same.

It is said that the only difference in the Choje Ling Tersar is the Yum/Consort Sangwa Yeshe Mandarava, is red and clear, with a pig face on the crown, embraced by the one holding a curved knife and skull cup. The palace has two parts, inner and outer. The inner part is crescent-shaped with one door, and Red Hayagriva, with one face and two arms, sits as a gatekeeper. On the four outer lotus petals are the three protectors of the families and Padmasambhava. The outer palace is square with four doors, and it is said that the four gatekeepers and four Mamo goddesses are in standing posture. Whereas in the Karma Kagyu tradition, except for the empowerment, both the self-generation and front-generation are mainly solitary without Yum/Consort.

The way in which that same Choje-ling Tersar became popular in this direction of the Karma Kagyu Kamtsang is as follows. In Central Tibet, the *All-Excellent Guide-book to U-Tsang* (དབུས་གཙང་ལམ་ཡིག་ ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་), composed by Choje Lingpa himself, it says that in the Fire-Monkey year of the twelfth Rabjung, in the sixth Hor month, he arrived at Tsurphu Monastery, and on the sixth day of that month, he offered the empowerment and lung (oral transmission) of the *Three Roots Unified* to the 12th Gyalwang Karmapa, Jangchub Dorje.

According to what is stated, on the full moon day of the seventh month of that year, in Dechen Yangpachen, in the Silver Stupa Temple of the Fifth Zhamar, the empowerment of the Three Roots

Unified was offered to the Gyalwang Zhamarpa Nag and the Zhamarpa's treasurer, etc. So, according to what is clear, I wonder if that was when it started to become widespread.

In brief, in later times, in this part of the Karma Kagyu, there was too much emphasis on the practice of the three roots of Choje Lingpa, so fewer and fewer people paid attention to this unique profound Dharma of the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje lineage.

འདྲམ་མགོན་ཀོང་སྐུལ་རིན་པོ་ཆེས་“འདིའི་རྒྱན་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྤྲ་བས་ཞབས་ཏོག་ཏུ་དམིགས་པའི་ལྷག་བསམ་སྒོས་སྦངས་ཏེ།” ཞེས་གསུངས་དགོས་བྱུང་འདུག་ལ། རྗེ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ཀར་ལུགས་རྩ་གསུམ་དྲིལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱིན་ལས་དབང་ཚོག་དང་བཅས་པ་འཆེ་མེད་བདུད་རྩི་རྩུ་གཏེར་ཞེས་པ་དང་། ཀར་ལུགས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་རྩ་གསུམ་དྲིལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་བསྐྱེད་རྫོགས་དམིགས་རིམ་གསལ་བར་བཀོད་པ་དངོས་གྲུབ་དཔལ་འབར་ཞེས་པའི་ཡིག་ཆ་གཉིས་གསར་དུ་ལྷགས་བསྐྱིགས་མཛད་ནས་རིན་ཆེན་གཏེར་མཛད་ཆེན་མོར་བཞུགས་སུ་གསོལ་བའི་བཀའ་དྲིན་གྱིས་ད་ལྟ་ཚོས་རྒྱན་མ་ཆད་ཅམ་འདི་བྱུང་བ་ཡིན་ནོ།

Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche said:

“ This lineage is very fragile, serve it with superior intention and dedication.” “འདིའི་རྒྱན་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྤྲ་བས་ཞབས་ཏོག་ཏུ་དམིགས་པའི་ལྷག་བསམ་སྒོས་སྦངས་ཏེ།”

Moreover, Jetsun himself newly composed two texts: the *Empowerment ritual of Three Roots Unified of the Karma Kagyu lineage*, *The Ambrosia/Nectar Water of Immortality* (གསུམ་དྲིལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱིན་ལས་དབང་ཚོག་དང་བཅས་པ་འཆེ་མེད་བདུད་རྩི་རྩུ་གཏེར་)⁵. Also, there is a clear arrangement of the generation and completion stages of the *Three Roots Unified of the Karma Kagyu lineage Amitayus*, *Clarity of the Generation and Completion Stages*, *Blazing Glory of Accomplishment* (ཀར་ལུགས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་རྩ་གསུམ་དྲིལ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱི་བསྐྱེད་རྫོགས་དམིགས་རིམ་གསལ་བར་བཀོད་པ་དངོས་གྲུབ་དཔལ་འབར་)⁶. Through the kindness of having installed them in the *Great Treasury of Precious Termas* (Rinchen Terdzo), this unbroken Dharma lineage has come about until now.

Colophon/Conclusion by the 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje

རང་བྱུང་བླགས་ཀྱི་ནམ་མཁའ་ཡངས་པ་ལ།
དབྱངས་ཅན་དགའ་བའི་སྒྲ་གཞོན་གསར་ཆོས་པས།
རྩ་གསུམ་ཚེ་ཡི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཀྱི་ལྷ་ཏུ་ཉ།
ཡོངས་སུ་བཞད་པའི་རྫོགས་ལྷན་སྦང་བ་སྦྲར།
དེ་ལས་འོངས་པའི་རབ་དཀར་དགའ་བའི་ཆོགས།
སྐྱབ་བདུད་རྩི་ཟེགས་མ་འབྲམ་འབྱུལ་བས།
ཡངས་པའི་ས་འདི་ནད་མཚན་སྲུ་གུ་སྦྱོར།
མི་མཐུན་རྒྱུད་པ་ཀུན་ལས་གྲོལ་བྱེད་ཤོག།
བསྟན་པ་རིན་ཆེན་འཛིན་ཅིང་སྤེལ་བ་ཡི།
བསྟན་འཛིན་མཚོག་ནམས་དོ་རྗེ་ལྷར་བརྟན་ཅིང་།
བསྟན་པའི་སྤྱིང་པོ་བཤད་དང་སྦྱབ་པའི་སྤེས།

འཇོན་སྒྲིང་ས་ཚེན་ཡོངས་སུ་བྱུང་གྱུར་ཅིག།

In the vast sky of innate space/, mind,
The newly rising moon of Melodious Joy (Yangchen Gawa),
The life of the three roots mandala lotus,
May the light of the perfect age spread in full bloom.
With the pure white mass of virtue that comes from it,
With hundreds of thousands of drops of nectar,
May this vast land be free from disease, weapons, famine, etc.,
And be freed from all unfavourable decline.
May the precious teachings be upheld and spread,
May the supreme holders of the teachings be as firm as a vajra,
May the essence of the teachings, the community of teaching and practice,
Spread throughout the vast earth of Jambudvipa.

“Also, the Karma Kagyu tradition of the *Three Roots Unified* (Tsa Sum Dril-Drub), also known as *Abandoning Falsity/Lies Long-Life* (Tsedrup Dzunpangma), has been highly cherished by our previous lineage masters. It seems that in the past, the Gyalwang Karmapa father and heart-sons had a tradition of receiving a hundred long-life empowerments of this practice at the beginning of their empowerment teachings. Gyalwang Mikyo Dorje also said:

“If you obtain this empowerment, it is equivalent to receiving the empowerment and command transmission of all the deities and Dharma protectors of the four tantras. It is well-known that you are also permitted to practice according to the four tantras as appropriate.”

This is how the 9th Karmapa quoted it later:

“As the Rigzin Chöje Lingpa's terma, the immortal Three Roots Unified sadhana, and the Five-Deity became one, and the Karma Kagyu tradition's emphasis gradually weakened.”

In general, devotion to the lama, pure perception of dharma friends, compassion for sentient beings, impartiality towards philosophical views, and renunciation of samsara should be sincerely learned from the biographies of the previous lineage masters. If these qualities increase and improve, and one's own pride and arrogance decrease, it is a genuine sign that the Dharma has entered one's mind.

In particular, from the Kadampa forefathers' teachings:

“Although there are many religions, hold to your own.

Do not be attached to your own system,

but also learn from others.

Avoid criticizing other systems.

Learn everything and integrate it into one.”

ཚོས་ལྷགས་མང་ཡང་རང་ལྷགས་བརྩུང་།།

ལྷགས་ལ་མ་ཞེན་གཞན་ལ་འདྲ་སྦྱོབས།།

གཞན་ལྷགས་དག་ལ་སྦྱོར་སྦྱར་སྦྱོངས།།

ཐམས་ཅད་སློབས་ལ་གཞིག་ཏུ་བྱིས། །

As it is said, it is best to develop and restore the Dharma or lineage that has become one's own destiny, and on top of that, to purify one's perception of the non-sectarian teachings and to accomplish as much hearing, thinking, and meditation as possible on the infinite Dharma doors, one's knowledge will increase and one's understanding of Dharma will become stronger, and one will not accumulate the terrible karma of abandoning the Dharma, etc. There is no need to mention the great benefits of this.

Even if one does not have the fortune to practice the Victorious Teachings from all directions, one should still try to understand even a single word of the unique profound teachings of one's own lineage. Whether it is needed for village rituals or feasts, one should cherish all the teachings of that lineage as ancestral heritage, and obtain as many empowerments, transmissions, and instructions as possible. It is certain that one's own task is to try to engage in some hearing, contemplation, and meditation on these teachings.

However, there seems to be a tradition of other schools criticizing the Kagyu tradition, saying that they are too strict with empowerments and transmissions. And there is some truth to that. For example, it is said that the Kamtsang Kagyu once had a hundred root tantras of the Tsurphu tradition and forty-two mandalas of Saraswati (Yangchen) , but nowadays, there is no conflict in the Bird Lineage, Kunrig in the Yoga Tantra, Gyalgyam in the Anuttara Tantra, and only the five sets of five of the Dusum Khyenpa Tukdam are practiced. Only the five-deity Chakrasamvara and the five-deity Vajravarahi are practiced. Thanks to the Kagyu Ngakdzö, the lineage of empowerment and rituals of some tantras, mainly the seven main Ngok mandalas, has not been interrupted, but most of the traditions have disappeared. Even the good old documents could not be preserved. Because they have not grasped the basics of their own school, they are new to other religions and lamas and associate with higher people. Because they have not grasped the basics of their own philosophical tenets/school, they quickly follow other religions and lamas and associate with higher people. Even worse, Choje Sakya Pandita stated:

"It is like beating a victory drum at killing one's own father."

Alas, by engaging in various kinds of distorted behaviors that are close to arising as prophecies, this situation, in which nothing is gained other than losing one's own system in terms of accomplishment, is truly regrettable. If there are still some who possess the tenacity to uphold this lineage, then instead of abandoning the ancestral teachings, which our previous victorious ones cherished, as if they were stones on the road, it is crucial to cherish and practice them in a way that allows us to enjoy our own wealth. This is my exhortation.

Having unwavering faith in the glorious Dagpo Kagyu lineage, and purifying perceptions of all unbiased teachings, bearing the weight of the name of the glorious Karmapa, called Orgyen Trinley Dorje, it seems to incorporate the very words of the ninth lord, Wangchuk Dorje, and thus that is emphasized.

Furthermore, the root three integrated sadhana ritual texts composed by the eighth lord Mikyo Dorje, the fourth Gyaltsab Drakpa Dondrup, the scholar-adept Karma Chakme, and Jamgon Kongtrul Lama Lodro Thaye, as well as the immortal root three integrated sadhana activity manual of Chöje Lingpa, and the ritual of stable presence, etc., are also aligned.

Primarily, may this serve to support the activities of this Dharma, which have become extremely diminished in modern times. This was composed on the fifteenth day of the upper Chutmey month of the Wood Male Dragon Year (October 17, 2024).

By this merit, may the lotus feet of all the sacred beings who uphold the teachings, wherever they may reside, remain firm for vast eons. May your activities increase like the waxing moon, and may we practitioners also have temporary longevity, freedom from illness, happiness, and perfect prosperity. May we perfect the qualities of the paths and grounds and easily attain the state of non-duality with matchless Vajradharma and Lord Amitayus. May it be virtuous! May it be virtuous!”

Compiled, written, translated and edited by Adele Tomlin, 26th June 2025. Apologies for any errors!

Text Two

CASTLE OF INDESTRUCTIBLE VAJRA LIFE-FORCE

Introduction to Way of Offering Ten-Zhug (Long-Life) in a Sacred Place

(Three Roots Unified II)

by 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje

༄༅། །ཡུལ་དམ་པ་ལ་བརྟན་བཟུགས་འབྲུལ་ཚུལ་མི་ཤིགས་རྩོམ་རྩེའི་སྲོག་མཐར་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཟུགས་སོ།



Written, translated and edited by Adele Tomlin

Adele Tomlin/Dakini Publications (2025). Copyright.

Translator's Introduction

"In particular, due to the power of skilful means of Secret Mantra, there are many rituals for arranging the outer, inner, and secret connections to prolong life, not just supplicating as in the Sutra system." -17th Karmapa in *Castle of Indestructible Vajra Life -Force*

Āyurjñānasiddhirastu.

Guru Amitayus [Tse-phagme]

I bow my head at your feet in reverence.

For the sacred protectors of the teachings and beings.

I write the ritual for stabilising life.

ཨ་ཡུར་རྒྱ་ལ་སྤྲོ་བ་ལྟུང་།

སྐྱེ་མཚན་དབུགས་མེད་པ་ཡི།

འབྲས་ལ་སྤྱི་བོས་ཉེར་བལྟ་དེ།

བསྟན་འགྲོའི་དབུགས་མཚན་དམ་པ་རྣམས།

སྐྱེ་མཚན་བརྟན་པའི་ཚལ་འབྲི།

Translator's Introduction

In this second translation from a trilogy of texts that the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje recently composed and published, on the unique Karma Kagyu *Three Roots Combined* long-life practice tradition⁷, here is the second text's Introduction, translated into English for the first time.

The second text is called "*Castle⁸ (or Fortress) of Indestructible Vajra Life-Force*" which contains a ritual text for a guru offering a long-life empowerment. In the Introduction, the 17th Karmapa, using his own expertise, experience and original research, discusses why and how from the time of the Shakyamuni Buddha onwards, the notion and practice of bestowing long-life (known as Ten-Zhug in Tibetan), which literally means *remaining stable*, originated and remains to this day. The main thrust of the Introduction is providing textual and historical evidence for the presence of long-life supplications, which then led to long-life rituals being performed and given.

Did Long-Life rituals originate from Buddha's teachings and example?

Some people assert that there is no real precedent in Original Buddhism for such long-life practices. On the one hand, this is correct. Certainly the "formal" mass ceremonial use of long-life rituals seems to have started predominantly in Tibetan and Himalayan Buddhist cultures. In other Buddhist cultures, in SE Asia for example, there is no real evidence of their practice and use there.

However, in the introduction to his new "Ten-Zhug" text, the 17th Karmapa cites sources and examples of such requests and ideas from the time of Shakyamuni Buddha from the Sutra tradition. Although, the 17th Karmapa also states that most of the evidence is in the Vajrayana Secret Mantra tradition.

The 17th Karmapa cites the Vinaya Sutras regarding the story of one of his main disciples, Ānanda not supplicating the Buddha for a long life and a teaching that Buddha gave Ānanda before he passed away about how to prolong one's life with "the four supports of magical manifestation" and that the Buddha himself had done this. The 17th Karmapa also cites a well-known Chinese translated Sutra called *Golden Light Sutra (Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra): the King of Sutras* (གསལ་ལོད་དམ་པ་མདོ་ཟླེའི་དབང་པོའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་) as an example of where long-life supplication was mentioned.

The 17th Karmapa concludes that the majority of textual and historical evidence from the Sūtra tradition, is the presence of long-life supplications, which then led to more formal long-life rituals being created and performed later. Thus, it is a valuable new piece of research from the head of a Tibetan Buddhist lineage. For a video clip of the 17th Karmapa (in 2024) speaking about the great "meaning" of the passing away of a fully awakened Buddha, see [here](#)⁹.

In his colophon to the text, the 17th Karmapa describes when and why he created the new ritual text, in particular for the two Karma Kagyu masters, Tai Situpa and Goshir Gyaltzab, who have both reached beyond the age of 70. And also mentions the efforts of the first Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche in ensuring the tradition did not disappear and was preserved in his *Rinchen Terdzo* (Precious Treasury of Termas)

The use and misuse of long-life rituals in Vajrayana/Tibetan Buddhism?

As a more personal observation on this next text and the long-life rituals in general, I recently attended and participated in two long-life offerings for the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen

Trinley Dorje in Taiwan, first one (19th June 2025) led by HE 7th Gyalton Rinpoche (a small event at the Palpung centre in Taoyuan) with only a few people in attendance.

The second long-life offering for the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa (which I also attended in person) was given by 12th Goshir Gyaltzab Rinpoche in Taipei, Taiwan (26-27 June 2025). Rinpoche's translator, Ziche Leethong, posted on social media that the 17th Karmapa had bestowed the Three Roots Unified Ten-Zhug privately to Gyaltzab Rinpoche before he went to these events (in an undisclosed location). Rinpoche then performed the *Three Roots Unified* ritual in Taipei (which I also attended), for the commemoration of the 17th Karmapa's 41st birthday (26 June), which I reported on [here](#). These events are not that common in Karma Kagyu at all though, certainly not when compared to the Gelugpa use of them.

In contrast, the excessive use of the longevity rituals by the Gelugpa tradition over the last two decades, to prolong a person's life past one hundred years, for mainly political reasons (such as the current 14th Dalai Lama, who has recently stated he plans to live until he is 130 years old) has been criticised by some more objective observers. Some might say that regardless of the Dalai Lama's institutional historical and political significance prolonging a person's life-span beyond even that of the Shakyamuni Buddha, is not only unnatural and potentially unhealthy/unethical for an elderly man who recently turned ninety years old, but also a misuse of the Long-Life ritual purpose. In the same way, the Gelugpas have been accused of misusing the Highest Yoga Tantra Kālacakra empowerment and practice for political power, renown, entertainment and social reasons--see [article about that here](#))¹⁰.

It is also interesting to note as a remnant of the Gelugpa sectarian domination of Tibet for three hundred years, almost all the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and nunneries recite the long-life prayer for the 14th Dalai Lama, yet they do not offer the same daily for other lineage masters, or within their own traditions even!

As a final personal observation, as Buddhism is a philosophical and spiritual tradition that emphasises the importance of preparing for death and impermanence, the intense focus on prolonging life, seems rather at odds with that. As did the continued (way past the lockdown) use of masks and untested injections for an endemic virus in India when the vast majority of Indians had stopped months before that. Also, considering the intense cultural focus these days on adult women trying to look like teenagers, and even women in their twenties getting

plastic surgery, one has to also wonder if the focus on "looking forever young" is healthy in particular for women.

However, rather than wade deeper into those controversial "muddy waters" here, I leave the reader to consider this question using their own discernment. Does anyone really want to live forever in a human body? Even the incomparable Shakyamuni Buddha himself "chose" to demonstrate impermanence and passed away around eighty years old.

Regardless of how it is being used now, it is certainly now a well-established tradition in Vajrayana tradition in the Himalayan and Tibetan Buddhist regions. For that reason, this new text which attempts to explain the long-life origin in root Buddhist texts, as well as provide a new ritual on a unique Karma Kagyu tradition of long-life, is a valuable (and thought-provoking) contribution to the intellectual and spiritual Buddha Dharma.

Regardless of how it is being used now, it is certainly now a well-established tradition in Vajrayāna tradition in the Himalayan and Tibetan Buddhist regions. For that reason, this new text which explains its origin in root source texts, as well as provide a new ritual on the practice, is a great contribution to its historical and spiritual import and legacy.

Music? [*Forever Young*](#) by Bob Dylan and [*All Things Must Pass*](#) by George Harrison.

Dedicated the long-life and activities of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Karma Kagyu and to the health and awakening of all sentient beings, all of whom would like to stay youthful and alive (including animals we butcher for meat in slaughterhouses)!

Compiled, translated, and edited by Adele Tomlin, 17th July 2025.

**Castle of Indestructible Vajra Life-Force: A Method for Offering a Steadfast
Abode in a Sacred Place by 17th Karmapa**

Translated Introduction: The Sutra and Secret Mantra Origins of Long-life rituals (Ten-zhug)

༄༅། །ཡུལ་དམ་པ་ལ་བརྟན་བརླགས་འབྲུལ་ཚུལ་མི་ཤིགས་ཅོ་རྗེའི་སྲོག་མཁར་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བརླགས་སོ། །

ལྷུ་རྩེ་ན་སི་རྩི་རྩུ།
སླ་མ་ཚོ་དབག་མེད་པ་ཡི།
ཞབས་ལ་སྤྱི་བོས་ཉེར་བཏུང་དེ།
བརྟན་འགྲོའི་དབལ་མགོན་དམ་པ་རྣམས།
སྐྱེ་ཚེ་བརྟན་པའི་ཚོག་འབྲི།

Āyurjñānasiddhirastu.

Guru Amitayus [Tse-phagme]

I bow my head at your feet in reverence.

For the sacred protectors of the teachings and beings.

I write the ritual for stabilising life.

Here, either through the *Three Roots Unified* of the Karma Kamtsang tradition, or through the *Long-Life Abandoning Falsehoods* (Tsedrup Dzunpangma ཚོ་སྐྱབ་རྩུན་སྤངས་མ), I will set down a fitting, elaborate, and concise ritual as an auspicious method for the lotus feet of the great, sacred upholders of the teachings to remain for hundreds of eons. This includes mentioning the source of the “Remaining Stable” [Ten-Zhug] and directly presenting the ritual of the “Ten-zhug.”

Firstly, generally it is well-known that the ceremony that arranges the interdependent conditions (རྟེན་འབྲེལ) for the long life of great and holy beings for the benefit of the teachings and beings is called *Ten-zhug/Remaining Stable*.

Origin of the meaning of Long-Life aspiration (Ten-Zhug) in the Sutra Tradition

Although the term *Ten-zhug* is not very well known in the Sutra tradition, its meaning is established [དོན་གྱིས་ཡོད་པར་གྲུབ]. In the Vinaya, in the Lesser Sections, it is said that when the Buddha was staying in Vaishali, he said to Ananda:

“Humans cherish life. O Ananda, anyone who cultivates and meditates extensively on the four supports/limbs of magical manifestation [རྩུ་འབྲུལ་] can remain for an eon or even

longer, if they wish. Ananda , the Thus-Gone One has also cultivated and meditated extensively on the four supports of magical manifestation. Therefore, the Thus-Gone Ones can also remain for an eon or even longer than that, if they wish.”¹¹

He said this three times, but Ananda was possessed by an evil Mara, and could not say anything. Later, during the first council, the great Mahakasappa [Osung Chenpo འོང་སྤུང་ཆེན་པོ།] enumerated many faults of Ananda, one of which was that at that time Ananda did not supplicate and say:

“Bhagavan, please remain for eons for the sake of benefiting the world. Please remain for more than eons, Sugata,”

according to the Vinaya of the Sravaka ‘[ཉན་ཐོས།] schools, where it is unanimously stated. It seems that this is an important source for offering long life [Ten-Zhug] or making supplications for long life to sacred beings.

Similarly, in the Abhidharma, it is said that when Arhats who possess magical powers and have mastered their minds are offered robes, begging bowls, or any of the necessities for monastic life to the Sangha or an individual, they enter into the ultimate state of meditative absorption. Upon arising from that state, they generate the thought, and also express it in words, that whatever karmic ripening of their possessions may be, may it ripen into long-life Therefore, this is also seen as a source for the meaning of offering a long-life [Ten-Zhug] empowerment to the Guru.

Moreover, from inviting the Sthaviras¹² བརྟན་སྐྱུན་ and others, before the Teacher passed away, the great Arhats, such as Angiraja [ཡན་ལག་འབྱུང་།]¹³, entrusted the holy Dharma to the sixteen great Sthaviras. It also appears that they were instructed to remain as the glory of merit for beings without passing into sorrow, and to protect the sacred Dharma.

Most of the long-life prayers are mainly offered by students to their guru, but this is the opposite, with the distinction of being bestowed by the guru. However, this also seems to be a genuine source of the Ten-Zhug (long-life).

Specifically, in the Mahāyāna teachings, the noble Bodhisattvas who are free from rebirth due to the influence of karma and afflictions in general, and in particular, the noble Bodhisattvas who have attained the ten powers, those on the eighth Bhumi and above, as well as the

Tathagatas, either have perfected the purpose of those to be tamed by their actual presence in that realm, or the merit of those to be tamed has not matured.

In particular, in the Mahāyāna teachings, it is said that noble Bodhisattvas who are not reborn due to the power of karma and afflictions, especially noble Bodhisattvas who have attained the ten powers and are at the eighth level or higher, as well as the Tathagatas, either complete the purpose of taming beings as the actual embodiment in that realm; or the merit of the beings to be tamed is not exhausted, or they show the manner of passing into nirvana for the sake of beings who cling to permanence.

Considering these points, the sixth of the seven branches, the essence of accumulation and purification, is mentioned in the *Prayer of Noble Excellent Conduct* (བཟང་པོ་ལྷོད་པའི་སྐྱོན་ལམ): requesting not to pass into nirvana. That is, from the perspective of negation, one makes the supplication not to pass into nirvana, and from the perspective of affirmation, one makes the request to remain firmly with lotus feet; in essence, it comes down to one crucial point.

Also, from the *Golden Light Sutra (Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra) the King of Sutras* (གསལ་འོད་དམ་པ་མདོ་སྐྱེའི་དབང་པོའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་)¹⁴:

“The Blessed One said: “Powerful Devas, whichever son of a noble family or daughter of a noble family wishes to fully strive for unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment, even if they wish to meditate on the path of the Hearers, the Solitary Buddhas, or the Great Vehicle, that person should, during the six periods of the day and night, with the same conduct as before, keep their mind focused and mindful, and say this:

“Those Buddhas, the Blessed Ones, in the ten directions who have attained unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment, but have not yet turned the unsurpassed Wheel of Dharma, and who, having abandoned their manifested bodies, intend to pass into complete nirvana, to all of them, I, with heartfelt devotion, bow down and prostrate, wishing to liberate all sentient beings and bring them happiness, and to attain unsurpassed bliss as previously shown, I beseech them to fully turn the great Wheel of Dharma, to send down the great rain of Dharma, to light up the great lamp of Dharma, and to clearly reveal the meaning of reality. Having given unobstructed generosity, I urge and

Adele Tomlin/Dakini Publications (2025). Copyright.

supplicate that you do not pass into complete nirvana but remain in the world for a long time.”

Thus, he emphatically advised them to engage in the turning of the Dharma wheel and to supplicate without passing away beyond suffering [nirvana], six times per day and night.

The benefits of supplicating in this way are also mentioned in that same Sutra:

“When I practiced that conduct of enlightenment in the past, I supplicated that the Tathagatas would remain in the world for a long time and not pass into complete nirvana. Based on the roots of that virtue, I attained the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, the four kinds of perfect knowledge, great love, great compassion, and countless unmixed (མ་འདྲེས་པའི་ཚོས་གངས་མེད་པ་) dharmas. Even though I will pass into nirvana without remainder, my true dharma will remain in the world for a long time.”

Our teacher attained the state of perfect Buddhahood, and in particular, even though the teacher passed into Parinirvana, the sacred Dharma remained for a long time, is the result of your supplications that the Thus-Gone Ones remain in the world for a long time and do not pass beyond suffering [nirvana] in the past, during the stage of learning the path. In sum, it seems that all the long-life prayers of Sutra and Tantra ultimately depend on supplications not to pass away beyond suffering [nirvana]. It is said that this is the result of praying that the deceased remain in this world for a long time and not pass away from sorrow [into nirvana]. In brief, it seems that all the long-life aspirations in the Sutras and Tantra finally originate from supplications not to pass into nirvana/beyond suffering.

Not only in the Perfection Vehicle/Paramitayana (མར་ཕྱིན་ཐེག་པ་), but also in most of the secret mantra Vajrayāna tantras and commentaries, the method of supplicating not to pass away into nirvana (beyond sorrow) appears. In the *Tantra of Excellence* (ལེགས་སྐྱབས་གྲི་རྒྱུད་), the seven branches appear in accordance with the Sutra aspect. Yet in *The Well-known Dome/Tent of Continuous Confession* (གྲུང་གྲི་རྒྱུན་བཤགས་སུ་གྲགས་པ་), it is said that the supplication not to pass away from sorrow is not taught. From the *Tent*:

སླ་མ་རྗེ་རྗེ་ཅན་མཚོ་ཅིང་།།

བདུན་པོ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པར་བྱ།།

Offer to the Vajra Master,

Purify the seven completely.”

This commentary on these above words, called *Expansive Suchness Itself* (དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་རྒྱས་པ་), was written by the great master Lha'i rik Lodro (ལྷ་རི་རིགས་ལྷོ་གྲོས་ཚེན་པོ་)

“Purifying of the seven branches means: confessing negative actions, rejoicing in merit, dedicating merit, taking refuge in the three jewels, requesting, supplicating, and following the path. “

This is clearly stated. Some Tibetan scholars have said that both the invocation and supplication are done by the Nirmanakaya (tulku). In the absence of that, it is done by the Sambhogakaya.” It is taught.”

In Tibet, most of the well-known Ten-Zhug/longevity rituals seem to be mainly of the Ancient Translation Secret Mantra tradition. In the Sarma/New tradition, offering a Ten-Zhug long-life ceremony to the lama, or supplicating with a long-life ceremony accomplishes the purpose.

As the quote from the Tent Tantra cited previously says, the guru is also made into a field of merit and one should perform the seven-fold purification to him. In the Chakrasamvara Precious Jewel on the Crown sadhana (བདེ་མཚོག་གི་རྒྱུབ་ཐབས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གཙུག་གི་འོར་བུ་), composed by the great accomplished one, Lavapa (ལུབ་ཚེན་ལྷ་བ་པ་), it says,

“Having clearly visualized that in front of the Master of the Eastern Cemetery, upon a precious lion throne adorned with various ornaments, sits Vajrasattva, resplendently adorned like a golden lotus in full bloom.” “Then, in their presence, one should perform confession of negativities, etc., as follows:

“I supplicate that those who wish to pass into nirvana may remain for as many kalpas as there are atoms in the universes, for the benefit and happiness of all beings.”

And so on, in detail, and in the context of the assembly field, the lama and the mandala. because the non-duality of the main deities and the invocation of the lineage holders are mentioned in many supreme tantras and sadhanas.

The term “Ten-zhug “and the supports used for it in Vajrayāna Tantra

The actual term Tenzhug is clearly stated in the consecration rituals (རབ་གནས་ rab-ne) of the New Translation tradition Tantras¹⁵. In the actual consecration ritual, the primordial awareness wisdom samaya beings are invoked and dissolved into the painted and sculpted supports.

After the four empowerments have been conferred, a general request is made for the beings to remain without passing beyond suffering [nirvana], and a specific request is made for the wisdom beings to remain steadfast/stable in the supports of body, speech, and mind until destroyed by the elements, and to bestow upon oneself and all sentient beings the supreme and common siddhis. Thus, one makes general and specific supplications.

Thus, I think that there is no difference in supplicating the primordial awareness wisdom beings to remain stable in painted and sculpted supports, and supplicating that great and holy beings remain stable through devotion, inseparable from wisdom deities such as Amitayus, in terms of fulfilling the meaning of steadfastness/stability. The only difference is in the supports.

In particular, due to the power of skilful means of secret mantra, there are many rituals for arranging the outer, inner, and secret connections to prolong life, not just supplicating as in the Sutra system.

For ordinary people, when life, merit, and karma are exhausted, and to avert sudden death, they should first save and protect the lives of others, repair dilapidated stupas, and so on, which are all meritorious deeds. Secondly, accumulate great merit by offering to the Three Jewels when merit is exhausted. Thirdly, to make strong confessions and vows for the exhaustion of karma. Fourthly, to be mindful of food and behaviour in order to avert sudden death, to abandon all kinds of terrible places. It is said that even astrologers, Bonpos, and doctors can be of benefit only with this last one.

It is said that performing life-sustaining/prolonging practices with profound tantric rituals on top of those white/pure causes is as precious as all four. Like a poor person who cannot pay off debts being protected by a strong relative and given wealth.

If a great being (སྐྱེས་ཆེན་དམ་པ་) has control over birth and death, then, as mentioned above, there is a blessing of long-life in order to fulfil the hopes of those to be trained. Even individuals such as various gurus can eliminate obstacles to life by invoking the grace of the Three Jewels, and by relying on the power of deities, mantras, samadhi, and the force of true words. In particular, Amitayus, Namgyalma (Tsuktornamgyalma), and White Tara, Wish Fulfilling Wheel (Drolkar Yizhin Khorlo) , are popularly known as the three longevity deities and are highly praised for prolonging life.

Colophon/Conclusion: History and reasons for composition

When we were in our homeland of Tibet, we heard from the elders that in the past, on the first day of Losar at Tsurphu Monastery, there was a tradition of offering a Ten-Zhug of the *Three Roots Unified* in the Zhelrey Lhakhang. After arriving in India, we received the great empowerment of Rinchen Terdzö from Drung Goshri Rinpoche, which included the empowerment and rituals of the Karma Kagyu Three Roots Unified, but it did not come to mind.

Shortly after that, we gradually obtained the supplementary commentary of the Three Roots Unified composed by the Fourth Gyaltsab from Tibet, as well as the teachings of the Ninth Je Karmapa. Since there seemed to be a tradition of this at Tsurphu Monastery in the past, we searched for handbooks on this subject at Rumtek, the seat-in-exile located in the hidden land of Sikkim. We found that there was a practice of Chöling Three Roots Unified, but it seemed that few people even knew the name of the Karma Kagyu.

If [the First] Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche had not introduced the transmission of these empowerments and transmissions into the Rinchen Terdzö, I would have realized that this Dharma was on the verge of disappearing into the invisible realm. With the guise of sincerely taking on the responsibility of restoring the lineage of such a profound Dharma, in the Fire Monkey year, I newly composed the *Castle of the Indestructible Vajra Life-Force: Three Roots Unified Long-Life ritual* when the auspicious occasion arose to celebrate the grand Losar

longevity ceremony at the sacred site of Bodh Gaya, with thousands of monks gathered together through the means of this very ritual.

Furthermore, in this Wood Dragon Year, for the sake of the long lives of both the compassionate protector Tai Situ Rinpoche and the secret master Vajradhara Gyaltsab Goshir Rinpoche, who have both reached the complete age of seventy, this is being performed in a manner that is complete and perfect, with some revisions and additions made to the previous composition. In the future, it will also be a way to offer longevity to the lamas of our tradition.

In particular, as mentioned earlier, offering the New Year's enthronement ceremony through this ritual brings auspiciousness and special blessings. Therefore, please keep this in mind. This was written with the weighty name of Pal Karmapa, called Orgyen Trinley Dorje, consulting the Trulshik of the Three Root practices composed by the eighth and ninth Drungpas, the fourth Regent, Chakme Rinpoche, and Kongtrul Rinpoche; the Three Roots Unified Immortality practices by Chöje Lingpa Dzamling Dorje; and various enthronement ceremonies. Furthermore, I have carefully examined various enthronement ceremonies composed by past lamas of both the old and new traditions.

This was completed on the auspicious occasion of the meeting of two fires on the twenty-second day of the first month of the Wood Male Dragon year, according to the Tsurphu calendar (December 22, 2024), with the hope that through this merit, the lotus feet of all the great beings who uphold the victorious teachings, especially the glorious and holy lamas, may remain steadfast for vast kalpas, wherever they may reside.

May your activities be like the sun and moon, and may we, your students, have temporary longevity, health, happiness, and prosperity. May we perfect the qualities of the path and ground, and easily attain the state of the incomparable Vajra Saraswati, the Protector Amitayus. May it be virtuous! May it be virtuous!

Compiled and translated by Adele Tomlin, 17th July 2025.

Text Three

ECSTATIC MUSIC OF THE BLISS DAKINI

*An easy to perform offering to repel "untimely death" summons
according to the tradition of Dakini Drowa Zangmo*

Introduction by the 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje

མཁའ་འགོའི་བསུན་རྫོག་འབུལ་ཚུལ་འཁྱེར་བདེ་བ་ཏུ་གི་དགེས་པའི་རོལ་མོ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ། །



ཙུ་གསུམ་དེལ་སྐབ་ཀྱི་བསུན་རྫོག་།

Translated, written and edited by Adele Tomlin

Adele Tomlin/Dakini Publications (2025). Copyright.

“It is said that when the mantra yogis pass away, the heros and heroines lead them to the realm of the dakinis/space-movers. It is also very common in the biographies of the Sarma tradition siddhas that this happens. The reason why it is possible to avert/repel such “untimely summons” is this ritual of Drowa Zangmo that accomplishes it.” –17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje from *Ecstatic Music of the Bliss Dakinis: Repelling Summons* (2025)

Translator’s Introduction

As the final, third section of the *Three Roots Unified* trilogy of texts by the 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, here is a translation of the introduction and colophon of a text, which the 17th Karmapa calls “*Ecstatic Music of the Bliss Dakini: An easy to perform offering to repel “unwelcome summons” of dakinis according to the tradition of Dakini Drowa Zangmo*” (མཁའ་འགྲོའི་བསུན་ལྗོན་འབུལ་ཚུལ་འཕྲེར་བདེ་བ་ལྟེན་གྱི་དབྱེས་པའི་རོལ་མོ་)¹⁶.

For translations of the Introductions of the other two texts in the 17th Karmapa’s *Three Roots* trilogy, see here:

- 1) [Three Roots Unified/Abandoning Falsehoods](#) and
- 2) [Castle of Indestructible Life-Force Method for Long-Life Offering \(Ten-Zhug\)](#)

These three translations are also compiled into one e-book, available for free download from the website. In this third text, the 17th Karmapa gives the biographical background of the woman/dakini called Drowa Zangmo whom he describes as the female secret wisdom consort of [Gyalwa Gotsangpa](#) (1189-1258)¹⁷, and who then reincarnated as the consort of Rechungpa (according to [Ogyenpa Rinchen Pel](#) (1229-1309)). The 17th Karmapa ponders as to whether this means that Drowa Zangmo (Dor-Zang) was the first female tulku in Tibet.

Wisdom woman Drowa Zangmo “Excellent Mover”: Gotsangpa’s secret wisdom woman

Drowa Zangmo (which literally means “Excellent Mover (or Go-er)¹⁸”, is said to be the origin of this particular method for repelling obstacles (or what he calls “untimely dakini invites”. And was said to have given the long-life ceremony to Gotsangpa (and also possibly his disciple, Ogyenpa).

As with his previous text on the Original Buddhist sources that support the practice of Long-Life Offering (Ten-Zhug) in Tibet, the 17th Karmapa provides original research on the history of this tradition and the female wisdom woman, Drowa Zangmo. By doing so, the Karmapa also mentions, and (indirectly) challenges, the claim that the second [back-dated] Dalai Lama, Gedun Gyatso's mother was her incarnation, stating that there are no historical sources to support it, but that her incarnation seems certain to have been Kunden Rema of the Kagyu Rechungpa lineage, according to Ogyenpa Rinchen Pel and other historical sources.

One of the sources cited by the 17th Karmapa in this text is the *Lho-rong History* (Lho-rong Cho-Jung) fifteenth century (written before the Gelug-Mongol invasion and takeover of Tibet), a historical text about the Kagyu lineages in particular, by Taglung Kagyu master, Tatshag Tshewanggyel (rta tshag tshe dbang rgyal)¹⁹. Other root source texts cited include biographies of Ogyenpa Rinchen Pel and Gyalwa Gotsangpa himself.

The 17th Karmapa shares interesting anecdotal stories from those sources of Drowa Zangmo's pith instructions to Ogyenpa about practising one taste/equanimity while he was meditating within a toilet pit with maggots, and the faulty concept of a "meditation environment". Her life-story (as with many other female teachers and consorts of male siddha yogis) provides an example of a female teacher of great accomplished Tibetan masters, directly and truthfully poking holes into their clinging, attachment and desire for comfort and sensory pleasure²⁰.

The 17th Karmapa also details how Drowa Zangmo deliberately passed away, and why this tradition of offering long life and repelling untimely death summons is easy to carry out and beneficial. In particular, how the well-known Gelugpa Dakini Long-Life ritual, is actually the one passed down from the Drugpa Kagyu that came from the Drowa Zangmo tradition. One can only wonder if that was taken over by Gelugas before they violently suppressed and chased the Drugpa Kagyu out of Tibet and Ladakh with the Mongolian army, or afterwards.

The first female tulku of Tibet?

The 17th Karmapa concludes that it is clear that Drowa Zangmo was the close student-consort of Gotsangpa and teacher to Ogyenpa. Her incarnation as a Rechung lineage holder, Kunden Rema, suggests she could be the first female tulku in Tibet, according to the 17th Karmapa.

Interestingly, there is no mention at all of this dakini/wisdom woman, Drowa Zangmo in the biography of Gotsangpa by Dr. Alex Gardner (Director of Treasury of Lives) on the TOL website. In fact, the

biography is very short and brief for such an important and influential figure in Tibetan Buddhism. Also, there are no references to original Tibetan textual sources, which considering that I was told is essential by Gardner when my two biographies for the TOL were peer-reviewed. Perhaps some kind of double standards for me as a female scholar-translator? The TOL biography of Ogyenpa, contains a very brief reference to her in relation to her incarnation as [Kunden Rema](#), the consort of Rechungpa. However, even that biography (by Joe McLellan) does not contain any biographical information about Drowa Zangmo either.

So, the 17th Karmapa's new textually sourced research and life-story of Drowa Zangmo, consort of Gotsangpa, as well as Ogyenpa's teacher, is valuable in fleshing those biographies out with women's voices and life-stories. Something both Gardner and McLellan have been accused of ignoring (and worse distorting their voices/characters), and I have sent this new translation and research to Gardner and McLellan for inclusion/updating.

Drugpa and Karma Kagyu roots: Challenging Gelug "ownership" of the *Khandro Long-Life Offering*

Also, in this new text, although it is not explicitly presented that way, the claim that the 2nd Dalai Lama's mother was this wisdom woman is also challenged by the 17th Karmapa with scriptural and spiritual authority. This subtle and understated research can thus also be viewed as a "re-writing" of the dominating Gelug sectarian textual and intellectual narratives prevalent since the 17th Century onward. Such re-writing can easily be read between the lines in the intellectual and research activities of the 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley.

Other examples of this, can be seen in how the 17th Karmapa explained in detail how the Mind Only/Yogacara Madhyamika teachings in Tibet have been unwisely and unfairly dismissed by Tibetans themselves. As we all know, the Gelug sectarians insisted for centuries (with the support of their mass censorship of other texts and violent Mongolian army invasion) that the Prasangika Madhyamika (Rang-tong) view is the only ultimate view of the nature of reality. The 17th Karmapa also recently provided alternative, older non-Gelug sources than the well-known one of Je Tsongkhapa for the important Indian text, the *Fifty Verses on a Guru*, on how to serve a Vajrayana guru²¹.

Conclusion

In those respects, this final text in the trilogy, is remarkable and extremely valuable as it is not only the work of the supreme head of the Karma Kagyu, 17th Karmapa, which revives an important tradition

in the *Three Roots Unified* Long-Life tradition of the Karma Kagyu lineage, but also brings to life, the example and inspiration of a female wisdom woman lineage holder and teacher, Drowa Zangmo.

A woman who established the main abode of Gyalwa Gotsangpa and gave important philosophical and meditation teachings to both him and his siddha student Ogyenpa on the nature of mind, emptiness and “one taste” equanimity. A woman who is also said to have incarnated as Kunden Rema, in the lineage of Rechungpa, a student of Milarepa. Making her perhaps (as the 17th Karmapa suggested) the first public example of a female tulku in Tibet. As such female biographies are rare indeed, in particular those translated by female translators²², I hope that this translation also is a way to support and welcome such an addition to not only Karma Kagyu, but also the Tibetan Buddhist intellectual and spiritual history and legacy.

Translated, written, and edited by Adele Tomlin. 3rd August 2025.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

མཁའ་འགྲོའི་བསུན་རྫོག་འབྲུལ་ཚུལ་འབྱེད་བདེ་བ་ཏུ་གེ་དགུས་པའི་རོལ་མོ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ། །

Blissful Dakini's Delightful Music: The easy to perform²³ dakini offering to repel obstacles

ན་མོ་གུ་ཅུ་དེ་བ་ཏུ་གེ་ནི་ཡེ།

Namo Guru Deva Dakiniye.

སྙོང་ཆེན་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་གར། །

The dance of the great emptiness of the primordial awareness (yeshe) mudra,

སྲིད་ཞི་ཀུན་གྱི་བྱབ་བདག་ཆེ། །

The great sovereign of all existence and peace,

ཐཱ་མ་དྲོ་རྗེའི་བཅུན་མ་ལ། །

To the Vajra Guru Lady,

བདུད་ནས་དགུས་པའི་རོལ་མོ་འཁྲོལ། །

Bowing and playing delightful music.

Here, there are two sections to the explanation of the sadhana of inviting and repelling according to the tradition of the Wisdom Dakini (Yeshe Khandro)²⁴, Drowa Zangmo (the Excellent Mover)²⁵. The first is an account of the liberation-story of Drowa Zangmo, and the second is an actual explanation of the method of repelling negativity.

Although the method of repelling obstacles according to this Wisdom Dakini's tradition is widespread in other schools, it seems that there is no extensive biographical written account of it. According to the *Lhorong Religious History* (ལྷོ་རོང་ཆོས་འབྱུང་)²⁶:

“The great yogini who came from the land of Oddiyana, came to Tibet to accomplish the work of Gyalwa Gotsangpa and his descendants (རྒྱལ་བ་གོ་སྒྲོན་ཚང་པ།). After the passing of the Lord, she returned to Gangbu Le (གངས་བུ་ལེ།). Ugyenpa said that she passed away

because she did not receive enough aspiration prayers. Later, Ugyenpa said that the Kunden Rema (ཀུན་ལྡན་རས་མ་ All-Endowed Cotton-clad lady (consort)) of Rechungpa was her reincarnation.”

Based merely on this summary, and supplemented by the source of the teachings of Upper Druk (ལྷོ་དང་འབྲུག) the biographies of Gyalwa Gotsangpa Gonpo Dorje, and his spiritual son Ugyenpa Rinchen Pal (ལྷུ་རྒྱན་པ་རིན་ཆེན་དཔལ་), this is an estimated liberation-story of her based on my own understanding.

Birthplace as Oddiyana, and her connection to Tibet

Although the time of her birth is unclear, the place of her birth, according to the *Lhorong History*, is said to be Oddiyana. Furthermore, in the Omniscient One, Gedun Gyatso [2nd Dalai Lama]'s (ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ་དགེ་འདུན་རྒྱ་མཚོ) Liberation Story *Wish-fulfilling Tree* (dpag-bsam ljon-shing དཔག་བསམ་ལྡོན་ཤིང)²⁷ composed by Yangpa Choje Chogyalwa (G.yang-pa Chos-rje Phyogs-rgyal-ba གཡང་པ་ཚེས་རྗེ་ཕྱོགས་རྒྱལ་པ), it says:

“His mother was named Machig Kunga Palmo (མ་གཅིག་ཀུན་དགའ་དཔལ་མོ), who was the reincarnation of Khandro Drowa Sangmo (མཁའ་འགྲོ་མ་འགྲོ་བ་བཟང་མོ), who used to be in the presence of Gyalwa Gotsangpa. When she was young, she would say: “I, the girl of Upper Yurpo Castle, Drowa Zangmo” (ཡུར་པོ་མཁའ་རྫོད་ཀྱི་སུ་མོ་འགྲོ་བ་བཟང་མོ་ང་།” It seems that there was a song and dance she sang.”

Based on this, one might wonder if she was a Tibetan woman. However, Götsangpa met this dakini when he went to India and she said that after twelve years, she would meet him in Tibet. If we consider she was born in Tibet, the problem is she would have been too young. Therefore, I think it seems she came to Tibet during her lifetime.

Meeting Gyalwa Gotsangpa

The circumstances of her first meeting with Gyalwa Gotsangpa were as follows. Gyalwa Gotsangpa was born in the Earth-Bird year of the third Rabjung cycle (1189). From the age of nineteen, he attended upon Chöje Tsangpa Gyare (ཚོས་རྗེ་གཙམ་པ་རྒྱ་རས་) for three years.

At the age of twenty-five, he travelled to places such as Tise ཏི་སེ and Jalandhara ཇོ་ལ་རྣ་ར་, where he practiced for four years. When he arrived in Jalandhara, there was a large temple called Jwalamukhi ཇོ་ལ་ལྷ་མེ་, where many women were gathered. When he asked what they were doing, they said that they were holding a feast that night.

Gotsangpa and three of his companions went to the feast. The other two could not enter through the gate, but Gotsangpa entered without hesitation. All the gatekeepers were amazed and let him in. In that temple, a princess named Khandroma Drowa Zangmo was residing, where countless gatherings of dakinis are taking place. She also gave a Dharma teaching and told him furthermore, that “you and I will meet in Tibet in twelve years and that you will have a great purpose in Tibet”. She also gave a prophecy that thousands of retinue will come there.

Then, at the age of twenty-nine, he came down from Jalandhara and spent three years in Lha Khab Do ལྷ་ཁབ་གྱི་དོ in retreat. At thirty-two, he went to Tsari ལྷ་རི and stayed in retreat for three years. From the age of thirty-five, he went to Lato Gyalgyi Gompa and other places, gathered a following, and began to turn the wheel of Dharma.

This master had two earlier groups associated with Jowo and Jomo. Later, there were Drowa Zangmo, Yeshe Dron ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣོན་, and Rinchen Gyen རིན་ཆེན་རྒྱན་. As she previously stated that she would meet him after twelve years, it seems the Dakini came to Tibet and met Götsangpa when he was around forty years old, as those occasions coincide in time. Dro Zang is simply an abbreviation of Drowa Zangmo.

Although it is not known how much historical support there is for the statement by the Fifth Dalai Lama that this Dakini (Khandroma) was the secret consort of Gotsangpa, according to the biography of the Dharma Lord, Götsangpa, he himself acknowledged that she was the

actual Primordial Awareness Dakini (Yeshe Khandroma). Moreover, she was seen as someone who pleased him with her service and was always in his presence.

Drowa Zangmo most pleasing student of Gotsangpa and non-attachment to giving and purification

Also, in the biography of Götsangpa, there was a time when Götsangpa became ill. Everyone made offerings, focusing on rituals for his health. Drowa Zangmo offered a clay pot, a meditation belt, a leather cushion, a small pillow, and whatever else she had, which pleased him greatly. The attendant Mönkharwa offered a bag, flour sacks, and whatever else he had, but this did not please Götsangpa as much. He said:

“You need to be like Drowa Zangmo who is not so “close”/attached to²⁸ purification and giving/abandoning things. You seem to have an attachment to this. Otherwise, there is no absence of attachment to these things. The elements have become stained again²⁹. “Rely on one’s ground in one’s own ground/place”³⁰. There is one difficulty with giving up the world. If you give up this life without mental burden, there is no greater service/ceremony³¹ for going to immediate happiness, that is difficult, isn’t it?”

The “place-opening” of Gotsangpa’s main residence, Bar-drog Dorje Ling

In particular, when Götsangpa was sixty-eight years old, he went to Bar-drog བར་འདྲོག་ and said:

“I stayed here for three years after establishing the monastery, and as you are the Yeshe Khandro/ Wisdom Dakini please “open the place.”

The place-opening was done by Dro-wa Zangmo.

As for Dorje Ling, in the biography of Gotsangpa, Dorje Ling is described as “like the city of Tsachog (Tsa-mchog ལྷ་མཚོག་)”, which is a sacred place. Also, in the biography of Lotsawa Sonam Gyatso (འཇམ་མཁའ་ལོ་ལྷ་བ་བསོད་ནམས་བླ་མཚོ་), written by 4th Zhamarpa (Zhwa-dmar IV) Chen-nga Chodrag (མཚན་ལྷ་ཚོས་གྲགས་) it says:

“Then, they gradually arrived at Bar-drog Dorje Ling. They offered prayers and made supplications at the Kudung (reliquary) and statue of Gyalwa Gotsangpa. They later said they had a great experience of devotion. Later, they said this was the main residence of Götsangpa, so it seems it was great sign of blessings.”

According to the source, thus it is undeniable that there was a special connection between the master and disciple, as Drowa Zangmo had performed the “place-opening” of the main seat of the Gotsangpa.

Accounts of Drowa Zangmo in biography of Orgyenpa Rinchen Pel

In the biography of Orgyenpa Rinchen Pal (1230-1369), a student of Götsangpa and equal to him in the “unconventional conduct” (tul-zhug འཇུག་ལྟགས་), there are many scattered accounts of Drowa Zangmo's life.

It is said that during Orgyenpa's second meeting with Götsangpa, Machig Drowa Zangmo prophesied to Orgyenpa:

“Being guided by the master Jo-tsun, realization will dawn day and night, and all purposes for oneself and others will be accomplished.”

This prophecy was given.

One day, the great yogini Drowa Zangmo came with a handful of green garlic. She stared at Orgyenpa who was doing a “four-sided” square accumulation offering, and asked: “Will this garlic bring accomplishments?” Ugyenpa replied that he did not want the garlic and did not accept it.

Then Drowa Zangmo offered a handful of garlic to Dharma Lord Godtsangpa and said, “Will accomplishment come if I eat it?”. Dharma Lord Rinpoche said, “That is what the father takes. The auspicious interconnection of enjoyment is slightly disturbed. If that is taken, it will be like the prosperity of Drikung Thelpa. (འབྲི་ཁྱུང་ཐེལ་པ་)” he said.

Practising Equanimity/One Taste in a toilet

One day, while many maggots were wriggling in a toilet pit, and Orgyenpa felt a slight sense of nausea/disgust. He focused on it intently, he entered the toilet pit, remaining there in meditation. Then, the dakini Drowa Zangmo appeared and said:

“Did you say you were practicing equipoise/one equal taste རྟོགས་ལྷན་པོ།, Jo-tsun? There, I am certain that all appearances are not separate from one's own mind. The impure pit is not nauseating/disgusting. One's own mind is nauseating. Likewise, the earth is not hard and dense. One's own mind is hard and dense. Water is not wet. One's own mind is wet. Fire is not hot. One's own mind is hot. The wind is not moving. One's own mind is moving. Consider the nature of mind to be emptiness.

It appears as earth because of the solid and dense common mind of sentient beings. Similarly, it appears as water because of the liquid/wet common mind of sentient beings. It appears as fire because of heat. It appears as wind because of movement. It is said that one should realize and be certain that the empty nature of one's own mind appears as the element of space. Within that all appearances naturally are one's own mind, and the ordinary consciousness of the empty mind becomes freely exhausted. All appearances become like illusions, dreams, or mirages, indistinct and blurred, without memory holding onto objects, without a subject grasping, and without afflictions or antidotes.”³².

Teachings by Drowa Zangmo to Ogyenpa on the environment and Tsog offering

Another time, the Dakini Drowa Zangmo asked him:

“Jetsun, do you not have a meditation environment (gom-khor-yug)?”³³ He thought that there was no such environment within his mind. Then again, one day, the dakini Drowa Zangmo said: “If there is one thing to recognize, it is that it is not a non-environment.”

Then Ogyenpa thought, “What is this demon saying?” and went to report it to the Dharma Lord, Gotsangpa. Lord Gotsangpa said:

“What will happen if you expect too much now? It will come later.” Chöje Rinpoche said, “Son, you will be someone who does good for others. Do not do good for others for twelve years. After that, a realization without equal will arise. After that, do

whatever you like. Whatever you do will go on the path. My activity is only one aspect of pacification. You will become the master of all activities.”

Then one day, the dakini Drowa Zangmo said:

“The master Jotsun said that Shangpa Ringmo would offer us a Tsog ritual today. Does Orgyenpa have the appearance of Shangpa Ringmo's accumulation in his heart? Thinking that it would be good to do a tsok offering for Drowa Zangmo, leaving a Dharma Lord Rinpoche aside like that, immediately Drowa Zangmo became delirious and trembled, and said “my heart went to the peak of the mountain”. The master Jotsun said that it was because she had explained the Tsog to an unsuitable vessel. Then Orgyenpa went to confess to the Dharma Lord, Gotsangpa, who told him that he should repent and confess to Drowa Zangmo herself. Then immediately two daughters of the Dakini Drowa Zangmo came and said: “The master Jo-btsun should confess to the mother.”

When he went there to confess, the dakini Drowa Zangmo was trembling violently. As soon as he put his palms together there, the two daughters of the dakini Drowa Zangmo also came and said that the master Jo-tsun should confess to the mother. When he went there to confess, the dakini Drowa Zangmo was trembling violently. As soon as he joined his palms together and made three general confessions, she said: “Immediately, include/draw in my heart”. While saying “immediately, include/draw in my heart”, her body was shaking. The area above Dechen was moving, and all the mountains and trees were trembling and shaking. It was said that the heart of the Dakini was being held in Damtshik (Samaya)³⁴.

One day, he became disillusioned and depressed with the corrupt and wrong practices of his fellow Dharma friends. Even though such lusty attachment and aversion/anger were present near the Dharma Lord, he thought of taking birth in a pure realm, and had the intention to practice transference. So, he made the aspiration and sat down to make prayers. Then the Lord Götsangpa knew about it and said to those who were sitting near him: “Where did you say Lopon Jotsun went?” The dakini Drowa Zangmo said:

“Choje Rinpoche, disciple Jo Tsun Khamlog is here.” When asked to make aspirations, Choje Gotsangpa said: “You want to go quickly, then come here”. So, Ogyenpa went to Gotsangpa’s presence, prostrated, and requested to take birth in a pure realm. The Dharma Lord, Götsangpa said: “Son, don't say that. Bodhisattvas take birth in impure and harsh realms. To wish to be born in pure realms and to teach only the Mahayana is a fault of bodhisattvas. Don't say that.” he said.

Many wonderful stories are told about Je Gotsangpa's aspirations and powerful pronouncements, and how his aspirations were fulfilled. In particular, in the biography of the great scholar Ogyenpa, regarding the time during the blessing empowerment, when the Lord himself went to Oddiyana, he said:

“At that time, in the city of Oddiyana Dhumatala, there were four well-known great yoginis: Soni, Ghorī, Matangi, and Tapaswini. The great yogini Soni was said to be as virtuous as Drowa Zangmo, who stayed with the precious Dharma Lord, Götsangpa. It was said that her conduct was similar to that of Drowa Zangmo. Previously, my realization was no lower than that of Drowa Zangmo. She was not under my control, and I was not under her control either. But ever since I ate the blessed “food”³⁵ given by that Dakini, my realization has become higher, and I can now control Drowa Sangmo and do whatever I want.”

So it is said that when Je himself went to the country of Oddiyana, he met a yogini named Soni, who he said was Dro Zang who was living with Gotsangpa in Tibet. Later, he said that there was someone similar to that, as if it was not the real Dro Zang. So, I wonder whether those two are actually the same person or different.

In the Historical text *The Sun that Expands the Dharma Teachings* (Chos 'byung bstan pa'i padmo rgyas pa'i nyin byed_ composed by the omniscient, Padma Karpo (ཀུན་མཁྱེན་པལ་དཀར་པོ་), it says:

“All the female attendants of this Dharma Lord (Gotsangpa), regardless of those who falsely say they are ordinary people, are dakinis. My meditator women with robes listen to

Dharma during the day. At night, they circumambulate the outer Stupa of Naropa, Tashi Gomang, and go to Oddiyana for the Tsokhorlo.”

The outer Stupa of Naropa that was mentioned is the Stupa of Ralung. Likewise, when the truthful Siddha Orgyenpa was in charge of leading the Dharma Lord's teachings, he separated the meditator women and the great accomplished ones when listening to the Dharma. The monks were placed at the top, and the nuns were placed at the bottom of the courtyard. Some who insisted on pushing to the top were beaten. In Oddiyana, those women appeared in the same attire and rained down stones, causing damage. And the winds were revived again. It was said.

It is clear that not only did Je Gotsangpa say that many ordinary-seeming women around him were actually dakinis. But that also Orgyenpa had consistently clear visions with that.

From the biography of Orgyenpa, *The Stream of Blessings* (བྱིན་ལྷན་ལྷ་ལྷན་):

“There is a triangular piece of land called Mulasai Krota (མུ་ལ་སའི་རྫོང་). There, a naturally formed sandalwood image of Mangala Devi resides with the noblewoman there. When the Hor army came, she built a small temple in Dhuma Thala and stayed there. Many women gathered before the venerable lady and made many offerings, and the sounds of *Kili* and *Tsili* resounded. She said that she would subdue/tame (སྐྱ་བོད་བར་བྱེད་) those who are not capable and would take care of those who are fortunate. Among those yoginis, there were some Tibetan women wearing Zhambu (ཤམ་བུ་) and some nuns wearing le-thul (སླེ་བུ་). They said we came this morning because you said when you were coming, and that the sacred substances were being distributed to the Tibetan women.

Again, in the same biography,

“In the gate of Oddiyana, there is a great temple built by King Indrabodhi. After staying there for a few nights, the dakinis of the three places gathered in the sky like a mass of clouds, and from the invisible sound of bells and various musical

Adele Tomlin/Dakini Publications (2025). Copyright.

That night, Gotsangpa appeared in a blaze of clear-luminosity (o-sel) and said to the woman with reverence: “In the Year of the Bird run to Bodh Gaya. Virtue and effort would increase.”

Then one night the Dharma Lord, Gotsangpa came with immeasurable glory and blessings and said, “Drowa Zangmo is dying, so I will go to meet her once in Mochhen.” He went there immediately. At that time, Drowa Zangmo, a dakini, was staying at the neck of Gang Bu Lei with the female practitioners Kalzang and Jangkyong, and Drowa Zangmo’s own daughters. Drowa Zangmo said:

“Look! Guru Ogyenpa is coming with three eyes, four fangs, adorned with six bone ornaments, and an immeasurable host of Ugyen dakinis!” After a while, Ogyenpa and Zhaptokpa Tashi Pal came and met.

Drowa Zangmo said:

“Please remember that the master Jo-tsun has arrived. Although the Dharma Lord Rinpoche has passed away, you, the great siblings, have the ability to do immeasurable good for others. Your life and work are in my hands, so please ask me not to go, and offer your requests to me.”

Then Ogyenpa said, “I will not make any requests. Please pass away whenever you are ready to pass away.” Then the Dakini Drowa Zangmo said: “Please ask the master Jo-tsun not to say that, but to stay.” “Again, I will not make any requests. Please pass away whenever you are ready to pass away” he said. Immediately after that, she nodded her head and passed away without any illness.

Then Ogyenpa was surprised and went to her side and saw that she had already passed away. Then he folded his hands and said, “Please do not pass away, sacred woman. Please stay for the benefit of sentient beings.” he said again and again with heartfelt devotion. She opened her eyes wide and looked and said, “It is too late now. I have already taken my body”. The healthy good colour and complexion of her body before was gone and had turned pale yellow.

Incarnation as Kunden Rema, of the Rechungpa whispered lineage

Also, according to the *Lhorong History*:

“Later, Kunden Rema of Rechung was said by Orgyenpa to be her reincarnation.”

Kunden Rema, or another name, Rema Zhikmo, is the Rechung Nyengyu lineage, which is like a wish-fulfilling jewel. For a detailed account of her life, please refer to the biography of the kind Rema Zhikmo (རས་མ་ཞིག་མོ་), written by Gelong Ziji Gyaltzen (དགེ་སློང་གཟི་བརྗིད་རྒྱལ་མཚན་) when Machig was eighty years old, as told by Rema Zhikmo herself and as she commonly appeared to all her students.

According to the same biography:

“When Guru Siddha Orgyenpa went to China, Drinchenma (དྲིན་ཅན་མ) came to see him during the trading season. Orgyenpa said to Drinchenma, 'Are you thirty-five years old?' She said she was, and he said “that was it”. Then, to one of Drinchenma's students, he [Orgyenpa] said, 'Your teacher is a reincarnation of Drowa Zangmo, a student of the Dharma Lord Gotsangpa. Now she is affected by a stain, if that stain is removed, she will be of great benefit.’”

From the same biography: “When Lama Drubchen Orgyanpa went to China, Drinchen Ma came to meet him at the market”. Ogyanpa clearly stated that Drinchenma was the reincarnation of Kunden Rema, Khadroma Drowa Zangmo. So, it is also possible to consider this as the first instance of a woman [tulku] recognized as a reincarnation in Tibet.

Otherwise, as mentioned earlier, it is said the mother of the Second Dalai Lama, Gyalwa Gendun Gyatso, Machig Kunga Palmo, was also a reincarnation of Drowa Zangmo. This Drowa Zangmo and the Drowa Zangmo renowned in Ache Lhamo's *Eight Treatises* are the same name but different individuals. There seem to have been some yoginis with the name Drowa Zangmo in India as well, so do not confuse them as one.”

The Long-Life Offering of Drowa Zangmo given to Gotsangpa and Ogyenpa

Although it is not clear in the biographies of the ascendants and descendants of Gotsangpa how Drowa Zangmo offered this Long-Life (Tenzhug), it is a well-known oral tradition that it was offered to Gotsangpa.

It is not clear in the biographies of Gotsangpa father and son how Drowa Zangmo offered this Long-Life (Tenzhug), but it is a well-known oral tradition that it was offered to Gotsangpa. It is uncertain whether Khalka Drakri Damtsik Dorje's statement that it was offered to Orgyenpa has any basis, but the instructions for dispelling darkness given to Orgyenpa by this Dakini, and the notes on the root winds requested by Drowa Zangmo while Orgyenpa was in Dechen, etc., indicate that there was definitely a guru-disciple relationship between the two.

Therefore, it seems difficult to say for sure whether this Long-Life ceremony was offered only to Gotsangpa, or to both Gotsangpa and Orgyenpa, father and son disciple.

Colophon

དུས་མིན་མཁའ་འགྲོའི་བསུ་མ་བརྒྱུ་བའི་ཐབས། །

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ཞུ་བའི་ལྷ་སྐྱོད་མ་ཡལ་བ། །

མདོར་བསྐྱུས་ཡི་གེར་བཀོད་བའི་དགེ་བ་ཡིས། །

རང་གཞན་ཚེ་སློག་དོ་རྩི་ལྷ་ར་བརྟན་ཤོག།

The method to repel untimely dakini summons/invites,

Before the Wisdom Dakini's Breath/Face Dissipates

By the virtue of writing this concise text

May my and others' life force be stable like a vajra!

Moreover, this repelling ritual from Machig Drowa Zangmo's tradition is widely prevalent in the glorious Drukpa [Kagyü] school. It seems there is a tradition of reciting various forms of prayers for the long life of the Taglung lineage holders, primarily based on the Drowa Zangmo tradition.

In the biography of Taglung Tangpa Chenpo, Tashi Pal (ལྷག་ལུང་ཐང་པ་ཚེན་པོ་བཟླ་ཤིས་དཔལ་ 1142-1210)³⁷, composed by Taglung Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal (ལྷག་ལུང་ཞབས་རྒྱུང་ངག་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་):

“Once, when he was staying in Sewa Lung (སེ་བ་ལུང་), he suddenly became very ill, and his speech became unclear. Since there was no attendant nearby, he tapped on the pillow with his hand as a signal. Gom Drak and his close attendant Gompa quickly went before him. Again, he gestured with his hand to urge them to perform the bird-vase ritual. Gompa went to find a stone. In the meantime, Gom Drak kicked and broke the bird-vase, and immediately his speech became unimpeded. Then, he took out a handful of silk from the folds of his robe, cut it into five pieces, and threw them in the four directions and the centre, and thus clearing and purifying his body and mind/elements.”

This is from the longevity prayer said to have been composed by Je Gotsangpa:

“Please invite the Lama to sit on the high and wide throne. Arrange stupas in the four directions and the centre, and display white, yellow, red, green, and blue scarves. Make offerings, praises, and tormas offerings to the five classes of wisdom, karma, and worldly dakinis.

“May the glorious Lama's life be long.

May you be the companions of Dharma practitioners.

The central flag is gathered into the expanse.

དཔལ་ལྷན་ལྷ་མའི་སྐྱེ་ཆོ་བཞིངས། །

ཚོས་མཛད་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཚོང་གོགས་ཀྱིས། །

དབུས་ཀྱི་དར་ཐག་དབྱིངས་སུ་བསྐྱུས། །

It seems similar to what is often seen, with the gradual recitation of these and other verses, and the practice of gathering the flags.

“In the four directions and the centre, the fifth,

With corresponding harmonious colours,

Extensive auspicious connections are made.

Averting the fear of death.”

It also appears in the practice manual for offering a long life to the precious Lama, composed by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal (1594-1651) [the Drugpa Kagyu founder/unifier of Bhutan], called *Expanding Excellent Virtue Geleg Rabgye* (ལྷ་མ་རིན་པོ་ཆེར་བརྟན་བརླགས་འབྱུང་བའི་ལག་ལེན་གྱི་ཡི་གེ་དག་ལེགས་རབ་རྒྱས་). It seems that the so-called *Dakini Long Life Puja (Khandro Ten-Zhug)*, which later became popular in the Gelug tradition, is mainly based on this tradition of Drowa Zangmo.

From Khalka Drakri Damtsik Dorje (ཁལ་ཁ་བྲག་རི་དམ་ཚིག་རྡོ་རྗེ)'s *Repelling Dakini Summons's Oral Transmission*:

“The Dakini Long Life Puja is said to have been given to the accomplished Orgyenpa by the Dakini Drowa Zangmo in the past. Later, some of our venerable superiors were blessed with the auspicious coincidence of having their lives prolonged by the Dakinis with the melody of this word, and so on, making it a particularly blessed transmission.”

As mentioned earlier, Drowa Zangmo was a Dakini from Oddiyana who came to Tibet to carry out the work of the Gyalwa Gotsangpa, father and son lineage. After Jetsun Milarepa passed away, it was very rare for accomplished masters like Lotsawa Go to come to Tibet who were worthy of respect by all. If her being named as qualified is not considered worthy, then it seems difficult to find another example of a qualified person.

Especially, Kunga Palmo (Kun-dga' dpal-mo), the mother of the omniscient [2nd Dalai lama] Geden Gyatso, probably did not forget that she herself, when she was young, acknowledged that she was an incarnation of Drowa Zangmo.

In general, this, known as *Repelling Summons* (Sun-dog, bsun-zlog), is very popular in the Old Secret Mantra tradition, and includes Rashag Terton (Ra-shag gter-ston), Guru Chowang (Guru chos-dbang), Ratna Lingpa (Ratna gling-pa), Drimey Kunga (Dri-med kun-dga)', Lhatsun Kunzang Namgyal (Lha-btsun kun-bzang rnam-gyal) and so on.

Among the many treasures, there are those known as the Dakini's Stable Residence and Hero's enthronement. However, it seems that most of the summoning and repelling rituals, except for the treasures revealed by Tulku Rashak Chenpo, appeared after the rise of the Drowa Zangmo tradition. Therefore, it still needs to be investigated whether it is a characteristic of the new or old tantras.

Especially from the root tantra of Chakrasamvara:

“At the time of yogis passing away,
Blood-drinking/wrathful yoginis and others,
Holding various flowers in their hands,
With various victory banners and flags,
And various sounds of music,
With offerings of various songs,
Lead them away from this concept “death”,
To the realm of the dakinis (Kha-cho/space-movers).”³⁸

Thus, it is said that when the mantra yogis pass away, the heros and heroines lead them to the realm of the dakinis/space-movers. It is also very common in the biographies of the Sarma siddhas that this happens. The reason why it is possible to avert/repel such “untimely summons” is this ritual of Drowa Zangmo that accomplishes it.

In particular, the repelling untimely invites rituals that come from the treasure texts are very extensive in terms of preparation and so on, and the words/command (bka') is also known to be powerful. As the scholar Karma Chakme says in his *Supplication repelling the summons of dakas/heros* (བསུན་སྐྱོག་དཔའ་བོ་གདན་བཞུགས་ཀྱི་གསོལ་འདེབས་).

“It is difficult to find someone who performs actions such as *Subduing the Stable and Stainless Hero of the Steadfast Abode* (འདྲི་མེད་དང་བརྟན་མའི་བསུན་སྐྱོག་དཔའ་བོ་གདན་བཞུགས་) who is in accordance with the scriptures in terms of the performer and the equipment. Even if only a symbolic representation is made that is inconsistent with the scriptures, it is difficult for benefits to arise. Although one can repel the Eight Classes (མཛེ་བརྒྱད་བསུན་སྐྱོག་) oneself, it seems that it is necessary to do it repeatedly

because the repelling is small. The supplication and subduing/repelling (གསོལ་འདྲེབས་བསུན་ལྷོག་) is famous in the Drugpa tradition, and the untimely death subduing of the Karma Kagyu tradition also seems to be essentially the same.”

As mentioned, the practice of Drowa Zangmo tradition is thus highly beneficial, as it is easy to implement, and so forth.

Reason for composition

Since it seems necessary as part of the practice of the *Three Roots Unified* of the Karma Kagyu tradition, this concise ritual of repelling and averting according to the tradition of Drowa Zangmo the wisdom Dakini, was compiled by comparing the practices of the Dagpo Kagyu and other lineages, making it non-contradictory, essential, and easy to carry out.

It was composed by the one whose head is touched by the dust of the name of the glorious Karmapa, called Orgyen Trinley, on the tenth day of the first month of the Tsurphu tradition calendar, (December 10, 2024), the Dakini gathering day of the Wood Male Dragon Year.

Any faults, errors, or shortcomings are confessed to the assembly of Gurus and Dakinis. May any pure virtue be dedicated to the stability of the lotus feet of the glorious and sacred Gurus, the flourishing of their activities throughout space, and the effortless accomplishment of all their intentions. May auspiciousness and glory blaze as an ornament of the world! Mangalam! Svasti bhavantu!

¹ This translation was also published online here: <https://dakinitranslations.com/2025/06/26/the-three-roots-unified-abandoning-lies-new-texts-by-17th-karmapa-translations/>

² I think this is referring to Longsal Nyingpo (Tib. ལྷོང་གསལ་སྡོང་པོ་, Wyl. klong gsal snying po) (1625-1692), also known as Longsal Dorje Nyingpo was a tertön whose terma teachings are known by his name. He was a disciple of Rigdzin Düddul Dorje. He was one of those responsible for restoring Katok Monastery, which, after four and a half centuries, had fallen into disrepair.

³ This is referring to Pema Ledreltsal (Tib. པདྨ་ལེད་རེལ་སྐུ་ལ་, Wyl. pad+ma las 'brel rtsal) (1248 or 1231/2-1307?)— said to be the immediate reincarnation of Princess Pema Sel to whom Guru Rinpoche had entrusted the transmission of the Khandro Nyingtik in the eighth century. Pema Ledreltsal withdrew the terma of Khandro Nyingtik from its place of concealment at the Daklha Tramo Drak rock in the province of Dakpo, but only partially decoded it during his life. He then transmitted these teachings to his main disciple Gyalsé Lekden and was also said to have transmitted them to the 3rd Karmapa as well. Pema Lédrel Tsal was reincarnated as the Omniscient Longchenpa, who received the whole cycle of Khandro Nyingtik from Gyalsé Lekden, and by so

doing, ensured that the authentic lineage was kept alive. See the Treasury of Lives biography here: <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Pema-Ledrel-Tsel/10301>

⁴ Tibetan text: “བསྐྱེད་ཆོས་ལ་ཉེ་བའི་ཆོས་སྐུ་ལྷན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་བརྒྱུད་པ་ནི། ཚོས་སྐུ་ལྷན་པ་མཐའ་ཡས། ལོངས་སྐུ་ལྷན་པ་ཆེ་ཆོན་པོ། ལྷུ་ལ་སྐུ་བསྐྱེད་ལཱ་ལྷན་པ། མཐའ་འགྲོ་ཡེ་ཤེས་འཚོ་རྒྱལ། སེམས་དཔའ་རང་བྱུང་དོན་རྗེ། མཉམ་མེད་རྟོགས་ལྷན་སྐོ་གོས། དྲིན་ཆེན་རི་པ་ཀུན་དགའ། རིག་འཛིན་ཤུག་གཤམ་པ། མཐའ་ཆེན་ཀུན་དགའ་རྒྱལ་མཚན། མཐའ་སྐྱབ་བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱ་མཚོ། དེས་སོ། །” ཞེས་དང་། “སྐུ་གསུམ་དྲི་ལ་སྐུ་བ་ཉེ་བའི་ཁྱིམ་རྒྱུས་པར་ལོངས་སྐུ་ལྷན་པ་ནི། ཚོས་སྐུ་ལྷན་པ་མཐའ་ཡས། ལོངས་སྐུ་ལྷན་པ་ཆེ་ཆོན་པོ། ལྷུ་ལ་སྐུ་བསྐྱེད་ལཱ་ལྷན་པ། མཐའ་འགྲོ་ཡེ་ཤེས་འཚོ་རྒྱལ། སེམས་དཔའ་རང་བྱུང་དོན་རྗེ། མཐའ་བཟུན་བསོད་ནམས་གཤམ་པ། རྟོགས་ལྷན་སྐོ་གོས་མཚན་ཅན། དྲིན་ཆེན་རི་པ་ཀུན་དགའ། མཐའ་ཆེན་ཤུག་གཤམ་པ། མཐའ་ཆེན་ཀུན་དགའ་རྒྱལ་མཚན། ལོ་ཆེན་བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་སྤེལ་དེས་བདག་ལའོ། །” ཞེས་དང་།

⁵ This text by 9th Karmapa and Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye can be read in a published edition of the Rinchen Terdzo. See: Karma pa 09 pa dbang phyug rdo rje, and 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas. “Kar lugs rtsa gsum dril sgrub kyi phrin las dbang chog dang bcas pa 'chi med bdud rtsi'i chu gter (kar lugs rtsa gsum dril sgrub phrin dbang).” Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo, edited by 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas, vol. 4, Shechen Publications, 2007–2008, pp. 497–522. Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC).

⁶ This text is also contained in the Rinchen Terdzo of Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas. “Kar lugs tshe dpag med rtsa gsum dril sgrub kyi bskyed rdzogs dmigs rim gsal bar bkod pa dngos grub dpal 'bar (kar lugs rtsa gsum dril sgrub dmigs rim).” Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo, edited by 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas, vol. 4, Shechen Publications, 2007–2008, pp. 523–36. Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC), purl.bdrc.io/resource/MW1KG14_E9B80D. [BDRC bdr:MW1KG14_E9B80D]

Endnotes

- ⁷ The text (in Tibetan only) can be freely downloaded online from Dharma-E-Books website.
- ⁸ The Tibetan word མཐའ་ here can be translated as fortress, stronghold, or tower too.
- ⁹ Video clip of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje speaking about the deep meaning of the Buddha’s Parinirvana/passing away: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUHvgn7m54E>
- ¹⁰ See my article about the alleged misuse of mass Vajrayana empowerments by the Gelugpas in Tibet and China here: <https://dakinitranslations.com/2024/06/16/mass-empowerments-accordance-buddhist-tantras/>
- ¹¹ The Tibetan of this reads: “མི་རྒྱལ་ལ་འཛིན་གཅེས་ཏེ། ཀུན་དགའ་པོ། གང་སྐུ་ལ་ཡང་རུང་རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྒྱུ་པ་བཞི་ལ་བསྐྱེད་བསྐྱོམས་མང་དུ་བྱས་ཏེ་འདོད་ན་བསྐྱུ་པའམ། བསྐྱུ་པ་ལས་སྐྱུ་གི་བར་དུ་ཡང་འདུག་གོ། ཀུན་དགའ་པོ། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པས་ཀྱང་རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྒྱུ་པ་བཞི་ལ་བསྐྱེད་བསྐྱོམས་མང་དུ་བྱས་པ་ན། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཡང་བཞེད་ན་བསྐྱུ་པའམ། བསྐྱུ་པ་ལས་སྐྱུ་གི་བར་དུ་ཡང་བཞེགས་སོ། །”
- ¹² The Sthavira nikāya was one of the early Buddhist schools. The Sthavira nikāya was separated from the majority Mahāsāṃghikas during the Second Buddhist council resulting in the first schism in the Sangha.
- ¹³ In Kashmir, An.giraja. one of the འཕགས་པའི་གནས་བརྟན་བཅུ་དྲུག་ the sixteen [staviras] / [arhats]
- ¹⁴ The *Golden Light Sutra* or *Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra* is a Buddhist text of the Mahayāna branch of Buddhism. In Sanskrit, the full title is *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtrendrarājaḥ* "The King of Sutras on the Sublime Golden Radiance".

Adele Tomlin/Dakini Publications (2025). Copyright.

¹⁵ Sarma (གསར་མ་, *gsar ma*) means the New Schools of Tibetan Buddhism which followed the later/previous translations. From the time of the great translator Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) onwards, i.e. Kagyu, Sakya, Kadampa and Gelug.

¹⁶ For translations of the Introductions of the other two texts in the trilogy, see here: 1) Three Roots Unified/Abandoning Falsehoods: <https://dakinitranslations.com/2025/06/26/the-three-roots-unified-abandoning-lies-new-texts-by-17th-karmapa-translations/> and 2) Castle of Indestructible Life-Force Method for Offering TenZhug: <https://dakinitranslations.com/2025/07/20/castle-of-indestructible-vajra-life-force-method-for-offering-ten-zhug-17th-karmapa-ogyen-trinley/>. All these three texts have also been compiled as an e-book offering in one, and uploaded online on academia.edu and dakinitranslations.com websites.

¹⁷ See the Treasury of Lives biography of Gotsangpa here:

<https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Gotsangpa-Gonpo-Dorje/3759>

¹⁸ I have translated the Tibetan word Dro-wa as “mover” because “go-er” in English has both positive and slightly sexual undertones to it, depending on the context and tone in which it is used!

¹⁹ It is said the work was written between 1446 and 1447 on the estate of Tatshag Gang (rTa-tshag sgang) in Lhorong (lHo-rong) , corrected in 1451, and a copy dates from 1460.

²⁰ For example, I wrote about the overlooked female teachers and the great Indian Mahasiddha, Tilopa here, who declared “Dakini is Truth!”: <https://dakinitranslations.com/2021/10/31/dakini-is-truthtilopas-female-teachers-and-entering-unconventional-conduct-tulzhug/>

²¹ Also, in the 17th Karmapa’s recent teachings on the important Vajrayana *Fifty Verses on the Guru* root Indian text, of which Je Tsongkhapa’s commentary (up until recently) has been considered the only/main one. However, the 17th Karmapa brings out other textual sources and commentaries that came prior to Je Tsongkhapa that have never been brought to the forefront and that are seemingly sometimes identical in content.

²² *The Treasury of Lives* recently launched a funded project to re-dress the major imbalance of female biographies on their website. However, it is noticeable how many of those biographies were translated by men (particularly white men), as opposed to qualified, able and willing female translators, such as myself! In fact, one of the biographies incorporated sexist, ageist patriarchal tropes about women, not only hijacking the woman’s story with male narratives but promoting them (see my article about that here). This was also done by the scholar, Michael Sheehy’s treatment of the biography of Kunga Trinley Zangmo, said to have been the secret consort of Je Taranatha, and Zhentong lineage holder. Wangmo was also said to be the mother of the 5th Dalai Lama himself, according to a leading scholar on Taranatha, Dr. David Templeman.

²³ The Tibetan here means “easy to carry” which could mean easily portable or easy to perform. Here it means the latter.

²⁴ The Tibetan word Khandro is often translated as “dakini” but it literally means “mover in space”. For my short reel and explanation of the meaning of this Tibetan term, see here: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/3PxCYCtYRrM>

²⁵ The Tibetan is འཇོ་བ་བཟང་མོ་ which literally means “Excellent Mover/Goer”.

²⁶ *The Religious History of Lhorong* (lho rong chos 'byung) or Lhorong Chöchung is an older work of Tibetan political and religious historiography from the perspective of a member of the Taglung Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, with a focus on eastern Tibet. It was written by Tatshag Tshewanggyel (rta tshag tshe dbang rgyal) in the mid- 15th century . The work was written between 1446 and 1447 on the estate of Tatshag Gang (rTa-tshag sngang) in Lhorong (lHo-rong) , corrected in 1451, and a copy dates from 1460.

It contains biographies of important representatives of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism – search as Marpa and Milarepa – as well as other persons from the Kagyu tradition, with detailed introductions to teacher-student transmissions of the Barom , Karma , Phagdru , Drung and Daying schools , especially from branch Tibet. The work extensively quotes material from one author, Chengawa , as well as from other relevant materials. This edition of the Tibetan book series gangs can rig mdzod is divided into three parts: The first part is dedicated to Shakyamuni , the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha and Arhats (Buddha's disciples). The second part, the main part of the work, deals with over three hundred masters of the Kagyu school, from the Indian teacher Tilopa , the founder of the Kagyu school, Marpa , up to Khenpo Phugpa . The almost four hundred year history of the Kagyu school, as well as politics, economics, culture and religion from various phases in Tibet are dealt with. The third part provides supplementary information from the periods of the Earlier and Later Dissemination of the Teachings of Tibetan history.

²⁷ This Tibetan biography is called *Wish-fulfilling Tree* (dpag-bsam ljon-shing དཔག་བསམ་ལྗོན་ཤིང་)

²⁸ Here the Tibetan term འཕྲིས་ has more the sense of being “close” to something.

²⁹ The Tibetan here is ཁམས་སྐྱར་ཉྱལ་སོང་ which has a sense of the elements (of a person) having become impure.

³⁰ རང་ས་རང་སར་ད་ལྟ་རང་སྐྱོལ

³¹ This Tibetan term means service, ceremony, ritual རིམ་གྲོ་.

³² Here is the Tibetan of this deep and profound pith instruction: རྩོ་བཙུན་རོ་སྒྲོམས་མཛད་ཀྱིན་བདོག་གམ་གསུངས། དེར་སྤང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་གི་སེམས་ལས་དོན་ལོགས་ན་མེད་པར་ཐག་ཚད། མི་གཙང་བའི་དོང་སྐྱུག་ཐོ་བར་མི་འདུག །རང་གི་སེམས་སྐྱུག་ཐོ་བར་འདུག །དེ་བཞིན་ས་སྤོང་འཐམས་པར་མི་འདུག །རང་གི་སེམས་སྤོང་འཐམས་པར་འདུག །རྒྱ་གཤེར་བ་མི་འདུག །རང་གི་སེམས་གཤེར་བར་འདུག །མི་ཚ་བར་མི་འདུག །རང་གི་སེམས་ཚ་བར་འདུག །རྒྱུང་གཡོ་བར་མི་འདུག །རང་གི་སེམས་གཡོ་བར་འདུག །སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་སྣོད་པར་དགོངས། སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་མཐུན་གྱི་སེམས་སྤོང་འཐམས་པ་ལས་སར་སྤང་འཛིན་། དེ་བཞིན་དུ་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་མཐུན་གྱི་སེམས་གཤེར་བ་ལས་རྒྱུར་སྤང་། ཚ་བ་ལ་མེར་སྤང་། གཡོ་བ་ལ་རྒྱུང་དུ་སྤང་། རང་སེམས་སྣོད་པ་ཉེད་ལ་ནམ་མཁའི་ཁམས་སྤང་བར་དགོངས་ཤིང་ཐག་ཚད་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས། དེར་སྤང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་གི་སེམས་སྤོང་སོང་གྱི་སེམས་སྣོད་པ་ཐ་མལ་གྱི་ཤེས་པ་རང་དགར་ཁྲིམ་སོང་ནས། དུན་པས་གཟུང་རྒྱ་དང་འཛིན་བྱེད་དང་། ཉེན་མོངས་དང་གཉེན་པོ་གང་ཡང་མེད་པར་སྤང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱུ་མའམ་མི་ལམ་སྐྱེག་རྒྱ་ལྟ་བུར་ཟེ་བཞི་བཞི་བཞི་བཞི་བཞི་སོང་འདུག།

³³ Here the Tibetan term for “meditation environment” is སྒྲོམ་ཁོར་ཡུག , སྒོ་བ་དཔོན་རྩོ་བཙུན་གྱི་ལ་སྒྲོམ་ཁོར་ཡུག་མ་ཡོད་ཅུང་.

³⁴ The Tibetan for this phrase is མཁའ་འགོ་མའི་སྤྱིང་དམ་ཚོག་ཏུ་ཡོད་པ་.

³⁵ The Tibetan here is: བྱིན་པའི་ཟས་ཟོས་པན་ཚད་ which means like blessed “edibles”/food.

³⁶ The Tibetan here is: ལ་ཅུ་སེབ་སེབ་འོང་གིན་འདུག་ which has a sense of “chucking it down like rain” in English.

³⁷ Taglung Thangpa Tashi Pel was the founder of Taglung Monastery (1180), central Tibet - north of Lhasa, the head monastery for the Taglungpa sub-lineage of the Kagyu School.

³⁸ The Tibetan of this verse is:

རྣལ་འབྱོར་བ་རྣམས་འཕོ་བའི་ཚེ།།

ལྷག་འཐུང་དབལ་སོགས་རྣལ་འབྱོར་མ།།

ལག་ན་མེ་ཏྲོག་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཐོགས།།

རྒྱལ་མཚན་བ་དན་སྣ་ཚོགས་དང་།།

རོལ་མའི་སླ་ནི་སྣ་ཚོགས་དང་།།

སྣ་ཚོགས་སླ་ཡི་མཚན་བ་ཡིས།།

འཆི་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་རྣམ་ཏྲོག་འདི།།

མཁའ་སློང་གནས་སུ་ཁྲིད་པར་བྱེད།།