

༄༅། །བསྟོད་ཡུལ་དམ་པ་རྣམས་ལ་གསོལ་འདེབས་ཡན་ལག་
བདུན་པ་སྟོན་ལམ་དང་བཅས་པ་ཀུན་བཟང་སྟོད་པའི་ཐེམ་སྐྱེས།

**Stairway of Excellent Conduct:
A Supplication, Seven-Branch Practice, and
Aspiration Prayer Addressed to Sublime
Beings Worthy of Praise**

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

bstod yul dam pa rnams la gsol 'debs yan lag bdun pa smon lam dang bcas pa kun bzang spyod pa'i them skas

B90

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Khyentse Vision Project: Translating the Works of
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

This prayer invokes the blessings of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo along with four other illustrious masters present during his lifetime. These figures were connected to him and each other as guru, disciple, or both. In order of mention, they are the Fourteenth Karmapa Tegchok Dorje, Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, Chokgyur Dechen Zhigpo Lingpa, and the seventh Palyul throne holder, Gyatrul Pema Do Ngak Tenzin.

Khyentse Wangpo, Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, and Chokgyur Lingpa were all extremely close, becoming known as *khyen kong chok sum*—the trinity of Khyentse, Kongtrul, and Chokling. They would often, for example, work together to reveal, decode, arrange, and provide commentary on termas. All three of these masters were also especially close to the Fourteenth Karmapa, who was a guru of Khyentse Wangpo and appointed Kongtrul Lodrö Taye as his Dharma heir. He was present on multiple occasions during Chokgyur Lingpa's terma revelations and incorporated rituals from the Chokling Tersar into the Tsurpu calendar. In turn, Chokgyur Lingpa is known for his prophetic visionary experience of twenty-one Karmapas. The Fifteenth Karmapa Khakhyab Dorje, following Khyentse Wangpo and Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, would become a major lineage holder of the Chokling Tersar. Pema Do Ngak Tenzin received teachings from both Khyentse Wangpo and Chokgyur Lingpa and the vows of a fully ordained monk from the Ninth Situ and Kongtrul Lodrö Taye. He also had the woodblocks of the Nyingma Kama carved at Khyentse Wangpo's behest.

The initial five verses of *Stairway of Excellent Conduct*, each referencing one of the figures mentioned above, are written in a style common in Tibetan prayers that plays on the rich meaning present in Tibetan Buddhist names. Italics indicate a direct translation of the meaning of the individual's name. There is also an abbreviated version of *Stairway of Excellent Conduct*, called *Essence of Amṛta*,¹ which follows it in the Khyentse Kabum.

ཀུན་བཟང་སྤྱོད་པའི་ཐེམ་སྐས།

Stairway of Excellent Conduct

*Namo gurubhyaḥ.*²

རྒྱལ་ཀུན་ཐིན་ལས་གཅིག་བསྐྱེས་ཀྱིས་པ།

gyal kün triné chik dü karmapa

Karmapa, *you of awakened deeds*, in whom the activity of all victors is united,

དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་ཁྱབ་བདག་ཐུགས་རྗེའི་དབང་།

kyilkhor gyatsö khyabdak tugjé wang

All-pervading sovereign of an ocean of maṇḍalas,

ཐེག་པ་མཚོག་གི་རྩི་རྩིས་དཔོན་ཚུལ།

tegpa chok gi dorjé lopön tsül

Tegchok Dorje, compassionate lord who takes the form of a *vajra* master of the
supreme vehicle—

འཇིགས་མེད་སྤྱུ་བའི་སངས་གྲུ་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།

jigmé mawé senger sölwa deb

O Jigme Mawe Senge, *fearless lion of speech*, to you I pray.

དག་གི་དབང་ཕུག་ཡོན་ཏན་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་གཏེར།

ngakgi wangchuk yönten gyatsö ter

Ngakgi Wangchuk Yönten Gyatso, *lord of eloquence* and treasury of an *ocean of qualities*,

རྒྱལ་བས་ལུང་བསྟན་སྒོ་གྲོམ་མཐའ་ཡས་ཞབས།།

gyalwé lungten lodrö tayé zhab

Lodrö Taye, honored one of *limitless insight* prophesied by the Victor,

རིགས་ཀུན་བདག་པོ་དུང་གར་གྱི་དབང་།།

rik kün dagpo pema gar gyi wang

Pema Garwang, *lotus lord of the dance*, sovereign over all buddha families—

འཛམ་གླིང་ཤིང་རྩ་ཆེན་པོར་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།།

dzamling shingta chenpor sölwa deb

O great charioteer of Jambudvīpa, to you I pray. [291]

སྤྱུལ་པའི་གཏོར་འབྱིན་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་མཆོག་ཏུ་གྱུར།།

trülpé terjin yong kyi chok tu gyur

Chokgyur Dechen Zhigpo Lingpa, *supreme* among all emanated treasure revealers,

བདེ་ཆེན་ས་བརྟེས་གཟུང་འཛིན་འབྲུལ་པ་ཞིག།

dechen sa nyé zung dzin trülpa zhik

Who discovered the state of *great bliss* and in whom the delusion of perceiver and perceived has *collapsed*,

མཁས་སྤྱབ་དབང་པོ་ཐར་གླིང་སྣང་མཛད་པ།།

khedrub wangpo tar ling nang dzepa

You who are the lord of the learned and accomplished, *one who* illuminates the *continent*³ of liberation—

མཚོ་སྐྱེས་རྒྱལ་བ་གཉིས་པར་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།།

tsokyé gyalwa nyipar sölwa deb

O Lake-Born Second Victor, to you I pray.

ཚུལ་གནས་གསལ་བསམ་སྒོམ་པའི་དུང་གྱུར།།

tsülne sen sam gompé pema gyé

Pema Do Ngak Tenzin, blossoming *lotus* of discipline, learning, reflection, and meditation,

སྤྱ་འབྱུར་མདོ་སྟག་ཏུ་བསྟན་པའི་ཉི་མ་ཆེ།།

ngagyur do ngak tenpé nyima ché

Great sun of the Early Translation *teachings of sūtra and mantra*,

རིག་འཛིན་བྱེ་བའི་གཙུག་གི་རྒྱན་གཅིག་ཡུ།

rigdzin jewé tsuk gi gyen chigpu

And sole crown adornment of ten million knowledge *holders*—

ནམ་འབྲེན་སྤྲ་བའི་ལྷ་བར་གསལ་བ་འདེབས།

namdren mawé dawar sölwa deb

O guide, moon of speech, to you I pray.

འཇམ་པའི་དབྱངས་དངོས་མཁྱེན་བཟྱའི་དབང་པོ་ཆེ།

jampeyang ngö khyentsé wangpo ché

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, *Mañjughoṣa* in person, great *lord of wisdom and love*,

མཁས་ཀྱི་དགའ་མཛད་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་འཛིན།

khé kün ga dzé tenpé gyaltzen dzin

Kunga Tenpe Gyaltzen, *delight of all* scholars, who upholds the *victory banner of the teachings*,

པདྨ་ཆེས་བཟུང་འདྲེ་གསལ་མདྲོ་སྤྲུགས་སྤྱིང་།

pemé jezung ösal do ngak ling

Pema Ösal Do Ngak Lingpa, cared for by Padma, *whose domain is the luminous continent of sūtra and mantra*—

མཚུངས་མེད་བཤེས་གཉེན་མཚེག་ལ་གསལ་བ་འདེབས།

tsungmé shenyen chok la sölwa deb

O supreme and unequalled virtuous companion, to you I pray.

དངོས་དང་བརྒྱད་པའི་དཔལ་ལྷན་སྤྲ་མ་དང་།

ngö dang gyüpe palden lama dang

Host of glorious direct and lineage gurus;

ཡི་དམ་ཞི་ཁྲོ་རྒྱལ་བ་སྤྲུག་དང་བཅས།

yidam zhitro gyalwa sé dang ché

Yidams of the peaceful and wrathful victors and their heirs;

མཁའ་འཁྱོལ་སྤྱོད་ལྷ་འོ་ཚྭ་སྤྲུགས་སྤྱིངས་ལ།

khandro chökyong norlhé tsok nam la

Ḍākinīs, Dharma protectors, and wealth deities—

སྒོ་གསུམ་གྱི་པ་ཆེན་པོས་ཕྱག་འཆའ་ལོ།།

go sum güpa chenpö chagtsal lo

With the deepest reverence, I prostrate to you with my three doors.

ལུས་དང་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་དངོས་འབྱེར་ཡིད་སྣུལ་གྱི།།

lü dang longchö ngö jor yi trül gyi

I offer my body and material enjoyments,

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་མཆོད་སྤྲིན་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་མཆོས་མཆོད།།

küntuzangpö chötrin gyatsö chö

Along with ocean-like Samantabhadra offering clouds of enjoyments invoked by the mind.

ཐོག་མེད་དུས་ནས་བསགས་པའི་སྤྲིག་ལྷུང་ཀུན།།

togmé dü né sagpé dik tung kün

All misdeeds and downfalls accrued throughout time without beginning

སྟོབས་བཞི་ཆང་བའི་སྒོ་ནས་བཤགས་པར་བགྱི།།

tob zhi tsangwé go né shagpar gyi

I confess with all four powers complete.

འཁོར་འདས་ཀུན་གྱིས་བསྐྱབས་པའི་དགེ་ཚོགས་ལ།།

khordé kün gyi drubpé gé tsok la

With the greatest joy, I rejoice in the accumulated virtue

མཆོག་ཏུ་དགའ་བས་རྗེས་སུ་ཡི་རང་ངོ།།

chok tu gawé jé su yirang ngo

Accomplished throughout all of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa,

ཕྱགས་བཅུ་ཉི་ལྔ་མ་རྒྱལ་བ་སྤྲས་དང་བཅས།།

chok chü lama gyalwa sé dang ché

And I beseech you, O gurus, O victors and your heirs residing in the ten directions,

ལྟ་རན་མི་འདའ་ཉྒྱག་པར་བཞུགས་གསོལ་འདེབས།།

nya ngen mida tagpar zhuk söldeb

Do not pass beyond sorrow, but remain with us always.

འགྲོ་བ་མ་རིག་གཏུང་བས་ནོན་པ་ལ།

drowa ma rik dungwé nönpa la

I urge you to let fall a great rain of the profound and vast Dharma

ཟབ་རྒྱས་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཆར་ཆེན་འབབས་པར་བསྐྱལ།

zab gyé chö kyi char chen bebpär kü

Upon all wandering beings overwhelmed by the torment of ignorance, [292]

དུས་གསུམ་བསགས་པའི་ལེགས་བྱས་ཇི་སྟེན་རྣམས།

dü sum sagpé legjé jinyé nam

While every good deed gathered throughout the three times

བྱང་ཆུབ་སྤྱིང་པོར་ཡོངས་སུ་བསྡོར་བར་བགྱི།

jangchub nyingpor yong su ngowar gyi

I dedicate to the heart of awakening.

བསོད་ནམས་འདི་ཡིས་བདག་གཞན་ཡིད་ཅན་ཀུན།

sönam di yi dak zhen yichen kün

By this merit, may I and all other beings

ཚོགས་གཉིས་ཇོགས་ཤིང་སྤྱིབ་གཉིས་ཡོངས་སུ་བྱང་།

tsok nyi dzok shing drib nyi yong su jang

Complete the two accumulations and fully purify the two obscurations,

ལམ་ལྔ་ས་བཅུའི་ཐེམ་སྐས་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས།

lam nga sa chü temké la ten né

And ascending the stairway of the five paths and ten grounds,

ཐམས་ཅད་གཟིགས་པའི་གོ་འཕང་ཟུར་ཐོབ་ཤོག།

tamché zigpé gopang nyur tob shok

May we swiftly attain the level of omniscience.

དེ་མ་ཐོབ་པའི་ཆོ་རབས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ།

dé ma tobpé tserab tamché du

Throughout all our lives until this is achieved,

དལ་འབྱོར་རྟེན་ཐོབ་ནས་འཆི་ངེས་མེད་པར།།

dal jor ten tob namchi ngemé dren

May we obtain a support endowed with the freedoms and riches, remaining ever
mindful of death's uncertain hour,

ཐེག་མཆོག་དགེ་བའི་བཤེས་གྲིས་རྗེས་བཟུང་ནས།།

tek chok gewé shé kyi jezung né

And may we be cared for by virtuous companions of the supreme vehicle,

བསམས་དང་སྦྱོར་བས་རྒྱལ་བཞིན་བསྟེན་པར་ཤོག།

sam dang jorwé tsülzhin tenpar shok

Properly serving them in both thought and deed.

ཁམས་གསུམ་རིགས་བླ་མ་ཐོད་མཁན་གར་སྦྱིས་ཀྱང་།།

kham sum rik druk to men gar kyé kyang

High or low, wherever we may be born among the three realms and six classes of
beings,

སྤྱག་བསྐྱལ་གསུམ་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་ཉིད་མཐོང་ནས།།

dugngal sum gyi rangzhin nyi tong né

Seeing that such births by their very nature consist of the three sufferings,

ངེས་འབྱུང་བྲག་པོ་གཏིང་ནས་སྦྱེ་བ་དང་།།

ngejung dragpo ting né kyewa dang

May fierce renunciation arise from the depths of our being,

ལས་འབྲས་སྤང་དོར་ཇི་བཞིན་བསྟོན་པར་ཤོག།

lé dré lang dor jizhin tsönpar shok

And may we strive to adopt or refrain from actions in accordance with karmic cause
and effect.

སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡ་མ་བྲིན་ཅན་ཕྱིར།།

semchen tamché pa ma drinchen chir

Since all beings have been our kind parents,

རང་གི་བདེ་དགེ་གཞན་ལ་བཏང་བ་དང་།།

rang gi dé gé zhen la tangwa dang

May we relinquish our happiness and virtue to others,

མཁའ་བྱམ་འགྲོ་བའི་སྤྲལ་བསྡུ་རྒྱ་དང་བཅས།

khakhyab drowé dugngal gyu dang ché

And may we be able to take upon ourselves alone

བདག་ཉིད་ཁོ་ནས་དྲུ་ལེན་ནུས་ཤོག།

dagnyi kho né dang du len nü shok

The sorrow and causes of sorrow of all beings throughout space.

བྱམས་དང་སྤྲིང་རྩེའི་ཤུགས་ཀྱིས་དངས་པ་ཡིས།

jam dang nyingjé shuk kyi drangpa yi

Compelled by intense love and compassion,

སློན་འཇུག་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་གཉིས་ལེགས་བཟུང་སྟེ།

mön juk jangchub sem nyi lek zung té

May we embrace both the aspiring and applied resolve for awakening

ཕར་བྱིན་རྒྱག་དང་བསྐྱུ་དངོས་བཞི་ལ་སོགས།

parchin druk dang du ngö zhi la sok

And enter the ocean of conduct upheld by the heirs of the victors,

རྒྱལ་སྤྲལ་སྦྱོད་པ་རྒྱ་མཚོར་འཇུག་པར་ཤོག།

gyalsé chöpa gyatsor jugpar shok

Such as the six pāramitās and the four means of magnetizing.

བྱད་པར་ཞི་གནས་ཉིང་འཛིན་རྩེ་གཅིག་པས།

khyepar zhiné tingdzin tse chigpé

In particular, through the one-pointed samādhi of tranquility,

ལུས་སེམས་ཤིན་མུངས་བདེ་བ་གྲུབ་པ་དང་།

lū sem shin jang dewa drubpa dang

May we achieve the blissful pliancy of body and mind, [293]

ལྷག་མཐོང་སོ་སོར་རྟོག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱིས།

lhagtong sosor togpé yeshé kyi

And through the discerning wisdom of special insight,

དོན་དམ་བྱང་རྩལ་སེམས་མཆོག་མདོན་གྱུར་ཤོག།
döndam jangchub sem chok ngön gyur shok
May the ultimate supreme bodhicitta be revealed.

དེ་ལྟར་བྱམ་མོང་ཐེག་པ་སློ་སྦྱངས་ནས།།
detar tünmong tegpé lo jang né
Having thus trained our minds through the common vehicles,

གཞན་དོན་གྱུར་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཐོབ་བྱའི་ཕྱིར།།
zhendön nyur du sangyé tob jé chir
To swiftly attain buddhahood for the sake of others,

གསང་ཆེན་རྡོ་རྗེ་ཐེག་པའི་སློར་ཁྱེགས་ཏེ།།
sang chen dorjé tegpé gor zhuk té
May we enter the gateway of the great secret, the Vajra Vehicle,

ཟབ་མོ་དབང་བཞིའི་བདུད་རྩིས་སྤྲོས་པར་ཤོག།
zabmo wang zhi dütsi minpar shok
And be ripened by the nectar of the profound four empowerments.

དབང་དུས་ཐོབ་པའི་དམ་ཆོག་སྡོམ་པའི་ཆོགས།།
wang dü tobpé damtsik dompé tsok
May we always guard the collective samayas and vows received during empowerment,

རྟག་དུ་སློག་ལས་གཅེས་པར་བསྐྱུང་བ་དང་།།
tak tu sok lé chepar sungwa dang
Holding them dearer than our very lives,

དྲུང་འདོད་ཡིད་ཆེས་དད་པས་གསོལ་བཏབ་མཐུས།།
dang dö yiché depé söltab tü
And by the power of supplications made with inspired, longing, and certain faith,

སླ་མའི་བྱིན་རྒྱབས་སྤྲིང་ལ་འཕྱག་པར་ཤོག།
lamé jinlab nying la jugpar shok
May the blessings of the guru penetrate our hearts.

གཞི་རྒྱུད་བདེན་གཉིས་དབྱེར་མེད་ལྷ་བ་རྟོགས།།

zhi gyü den nyi yermé tawa tok

May we realize the view of the ground tantra, the inseparability of the two truths;

ལམ་རྒྱུད་ཐབས་གོལ་བསྐྱོམ་པའི་ཏིང་འཛིན་གྲུབ།།

lam gyü tab dröl gompé tingdzin drub

May we accomplish the path tantra, the samādhi born from meditation on the paths of means and liberation;

རིག་འཛིན་རྣམ་བཞིའི་སྟོན་པས་འབྲས་རྒྱུད་མཆོག།

rigdzin nam zhi chöpe dré gyü chok

And through the conduct of the four levels of vidyādhara,

སྐྱེ་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐོན་ལས་དབང་འབྱོར་ཤོག།

ku dang yeshé triné wang jor shok

May we reach the supreme fruition tantra, gaining mastery over the kāyas, wisdoms, and awakened activities.

གཞན་ཡང་དམ་ཆོས་སྐྱབ་པའི་མི་མཐུན་གོགས།།

zhenyang damchö drubpé mitün gek

May hindrances contrary to practicing the sacred Dharma be pacified

ཕྱི་ནང་གསང་བའི་བར་ཆད་ཞི་བ་དང་།།

chi nang sangwé barché zhiwa dang

Along with outer, inner, and secret obstacles.

ཆོས་མཐུན་བསམ་སྟོན་མ་ལུས་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ།།

chö tün sam jor ma lü lhün gyi drub

May every intention and deed in harmony with the Dharma be spontaneously achieved,

རྒྱལ་བ་དགྱེས་པའི་དག་མཚན་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་ཤོག།

gyalwa gyepé gé tsen yong dzok shok

And may the virtuous signs pleasing to the victors be fully accomplished.

བསྟན་འཛིན་མཆོག་རྣམས་ཞབས་པད་བསྐྱལ་བརྒྱུར་བརྟན།།

tendzin chok nam zhab pé kal gyar ten

May the lotus feet of the supreme holders of the teachings remain firm for a hundred eons;

བཤད་སྒྲུབ་ལས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པས་ས་གསུམ་བྱེད།།

shé drub lé kyi tenpé sa sum khyab

May the teachings of exposition, practice, and activity pervade the three planes;

བསྟན་པའི་སྤྱིན་བདག་ཚོས་ལྷན་མངའ་ཐང་རྒྱས།།

tenpé jindak chöden ngatang gyé

May the Dharma-following patrons of the teachings grow in power;

འགྲོ་ཀུན་ཕན་བདེ་འཕེལ་བའི་བྲག་ཤིས་ཤོག།

dro kün pendé pelwé tashi shok

And may all be auspicious for every being to enjoy increasing benefit and happiness.

The śramaṇa Karma Legden Wangpo, master of the science of the magical printing press, offered a maṇḍala of an auspicious silken scarf, gifts of silver,⁴ and three volumes of Śrī Hevajra sādhanas, [294] whereupon he made a request, citing the need for a work such as this. Thus, the servant who delights Guru Mañjughoṣa, Khyentse Wangpo, wrote this in response. O gurus, O victors and your heirs, grant your blessings so that these aspirations may be fulfilled exactly as written.

NOTES

1. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, *Essence of Amṛta* (KVP B91).
2. “Homage to the gurus!”
3. The play on words employed by the text here is difficult to fully represent in English. The Tibetan word *lingpa* (*gling pa*), an honorific often appended to the names of treasure revealers, can be broken down into two parts: *gling*, meaning “continent,” or “island,” and *pa*, a nominalizing particle (in this case indicating an individual). Tibetans commonly append nominalizing particles to places so as to indicate “the one from X” (Tsongkhapa, “the one from Tsongkha,” being a famous example); thus, *gling pa* could be taken to mean “one who is from the continent.” Indeed, according to Thinley Norbu’s (*Sole Panacea*, 74) gloss of the name of the renowned treasure revealer Dudjom Lingpa (1835–1904), “*Lingpa* means the manifestation of Orgyen Rinpoche from the continent of Cāmara,” while Ngayab Lingpa (*rnga yab gling pa*), “the one from the continent of Cāmara,” is also an epithet for Guru Rinpoche. The nominalizing particle can, however, also be appended to any verb to indicate its agent; hence, the text has *thar gling* (“**continent** of liberation”) *snang mdzad pa* (“**one who** illuminates”). A similar approach is also extended to the name Zhigpo (*zhig po*), with the text reading *gzung ’dzin ’kbrul pa zbig* (“the delusion of perceiver and perceived has **collapsed**”) and *mkhas grub dbang po* (“**You who** are the lord of the learned and accomplished”). In this case, the nominalizing particle *po* has been separated from *zhig*, to become part of the nominal compound *dbang po* (“lord”), meaning “one who (*po*) wields power (*dbang*).”
4. Literally, “flowers of silver.” As noted by Khenpo Sonam Tsewang, however, the word “flower” (*me tog*) can simply mean an offering. For example, among the six distinct qualities of the Ngagyur Nyingmapas one finds *zhu rten me tog gi che ba* (meaning the extraordinary quality of the offering made to receive teachings from the Indian paṇḍitas), and here the use of *me tog* should be understood as offering rather than flower.

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GLOSSARY

Chokgyur Dechen Zhigpo Lingpa; Chokgyur Lingpa

མཚོག་གྱུར་བདེ་ཆེན་ཞིག་པོ་གླིང་པ། མཚོག་གྱུར་གླིང་པ། • *mchog gyur bde chen zbig po gling pa; mchog gyur gling pa*

Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa (1829–1870) was the primary treasure revealer of the Chokling Tersar, the New Treasures of Chokgyur Lingpa. He was said to be the last of the hundred major tertöns and, like Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, was a holder of the seven transmissions. He also shared an extremely close, mutual guru-disciple relationship with Khyentse Wangpo and is considered the rebirth of prince Murub Tsenpo (mu rub btsan po), the second son of the Dharma king Trisong Deutsen (khri strong lde'u btsan), the latter of whom is held to be a previous incarnation of Khyentse Wangpo. Along with Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Taye (1813–1899), they formed what became known as *khyen kong chok sum*—the trinity of Khyentse, Kongtrul, and Chokling—with Chokgyur Lingpa often revealing termas in collaboration with the other two masters.

Early Translation

སྔ་འགྱུར། • *snga 'gyur*

Another name for the Nyingma tradition, referring to the works translated prior to the great translator Rinchen Zangpo (958–1055) and the onset of the New Translation tradition.

five paths

ལམ་རྒྱ། • *lam nga* • pañcamārga

The paths of accumulation, joining, seeing, cultivation, and beyond training.

four levels of vidyādhara

རིག་འཛིན་རྣམ་པ་བཞི། • *rig 'dzin rnam pa bzhi*

In the Nyingma tradition, the four levels of vidyādhara include the (1) matured vidyādhara, (2) vidyādhara with power over life, (3) mahāmudrā vidyādhara, and (4) vidyādhara of spontaneous presence.

four means of magnetizing

བསྐྱ་དངོས་བཞི། • *bsdu dngos bzhi*

The four means of magnetizing are (1) providing sentient beings with material gifts; (2) using pleasant words to lead beings gradually to a point where they are receptive, and then teaching them the meaning of the six pāramitās; (3) directing them to practice that meaning; and (4) acting in accordance with that meaning oneself.

four powers

སྒྲོབས་བཞི། • *stobs bzhi*

The power of the support (for example, Vajrasattva), the power of regretting negative actions, the power of resolving not to repeat them, and the power of positive actions as an antidote.

Fourteenth Karmapa Tegchok Dorje

ཀཾ་པ་ཐེག་མཚོག་རྡོ་རྗེ། • *karma pa theg mchog rdo rje*

Karmapa Tegchok Dorje (1798–1868) was an important guru of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who was also close to Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Taye (1813–1899) and Chokgyur Dechen Zhigpo Lingpa (1829–1870).

Gyatrul Pema Do Ngak Tenzin

བྱུ་སྐྱུ་པ་དྲུ་མ་དོ་སྒྲུག་པ་བསྟན་འཛིན། • *rgya sprul pad+ma mdo sngags bstan 'dzin*

Pema Do Ngak Tenzin (1830–1891) was the seventh throne holder of Palyul Monastery and regarded as the reincarnation of the first throne holder, Kunzang Sherab (kun bzang shes rab, 1636–1699).

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Taye

འཇམ་མགོན་ཀོང་སྐྱུ་བློ་བློ་མཐའ་ཡས། • *'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas*

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Taye (1813–1899) was an extraordinary nonsectarian (Rimé) master renowned for compiling the Five Great Treasuries. He was considered the rebirth of the great translator Vairocana. Along with Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Chokgyur Lingpa, with whom he shared extremely close mutual guru-disciple relationships, he formed part of the *khyen kong chok sum*—the trinity of Khyentse, Kongtrul, and Chokling.

Karmapa

ཀཾ་པ། • *karma pa*

The title ascribed to the succession of incarnations, beginning with the First Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa (karma pa 01 dus gsum mkhyen pa, 1110–1193), who acted as the head of the Karma Kagyu lineage. The Tibetan phenomenon of the tulku system is said to have originated with the recognition of the Second Karmapa, Karma Pakši (karma pak+Shi, 1204–1283), as the rebirth of Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa, based on instructions written by the latter before passing away. The Karmapas are also considered to be emanations of Avalokiteśvara.

Lake-Born Second Victor

མཚོ་སྐྱུ་བྱུ་པ་གཉིས་པ། • *mtsho skyes rgyal ba gnyis pa*

An epithet of Guru Rinpoche.

Nyingma Kama

རྟིང་མ་བཀའ་མ། • *nying ma bka' ma*

The oral transmission teachings of the Nyingma tradition, passed down in an unbroken lineage after being brought to Tibet by Indian adepts like Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra.

seven-branch practice

ཡན་ལག་བདུན་པ། • *yan lag bdun pa*

The seven-branch practice consists of prostrations, offerings, confession, rejoicing, the request to turn the wheel of Dharma, the supplication to not pass beyond sorrow (i.e., to not enter nirvāṇa), and the dedication of virtue to complete awakening.

six classes of beings

རིགས་དྲུག ། • *rigs drug*

The six classes of beings are gods, demigods (*asuras*), humans, animals, starving spirits (*pretas*), and hell beings.

six pāramitās

ཕར་ཕྱིན་དྲུག ། • *phar phyin drug*

Generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and wisdom.

special insight

ལྷག་མཐོང་། • *lhag mthong* • vipaśyanā

One of the two fundamental forms of Buddhist meditation, along with tranquility (*śamatha*). Through the cultivation of special insight one develops an insight into the true nature of reality, which, unlike the attainment of tranquility, is able to completely uproot the afflictions. However, the practice of special insight must be paired with tranquility in order to function as a liberating method.

śramaṇa

དགེ་སྦྱོང་། • *dge sbyong*

A general term for a monk or nun, whether novice or fully ordained. More broadly, a śramaṇa refers to an ascetic or renunciant, and the term can also be applied to non-Buddhist spiritual practitioners.

ten grounds

ས་བརྒྱ ། • *sa bcu* • daśabhūmi

The ten stages traversed by a noble bodhisattva from the point of attaining a direct realization of emptiness to the level of buddhahood.

three planes

ས་གསུམ། • *sa gsum*

The three planes are the subterranean, terrestrial, and celestial planes. The subterranean is the domain of *nāgas*, the terrestrial is the domain of humans, and the celestial is the domain of gods.

three realms

ཁམས་གསུམ། • *khamṣ gsum*

The three realms of saṃsāra: the desire realm, form realm, and formless realm.

three sufferings

སྤུག་བསྐྱེད་གསུམ། • *sdug bsngal gsum*

The suffering of pain, the suffering of change, and the all-pervasive suffering of conditioned existence.

tranquility

ཞི་གནས། • *zhi gnas* • śamatha

One of the two fundamental forms of Buddhist meditation, along with special insight (*vipaśyanā*). Tranquility, often referred to as “calm abiding,” is *zhiné* in Tibetan. Of its two words, *zhi* means “pacified” or “calm” and *né* means “settled” or “abiding.” Thus, it can be described as a state in which distraction has been pacified and the mind remains continuously settled upon its object of focus. While the attainment of tranquility leads to a blissful workability or pliancy of body and mind, and suppresses the manifestation of afflictions, it is insufficient to actually and permanently uproot them; for that, special insight is required.

Tsurpu

མཚུར་ཕུ། • *mtshur phu*

The historic seat of the Karmapas and the Karma Kagyu lineage about forty miles northwest of Lhasa, Tibet. It was founded in 1189 by the First Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa (karma pa 01 dus gsum mkhyen pa, 1110–1193).