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The Grove of Wondrous Lotus Flowers:
A Brief Account of the Lineage Holders
of the Old and New Schools of the Secret
Mantrayāna Teachings in the Snowy Land
of Tibet

The Sakya Tradition: An Excerpt

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

*gangs can bod kyi yul du byon pa'i gsang sngags gsar rnying gi
gdan rabs mdor bsdus ngo mtshar padmo'i dga' tshal*

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Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

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INTRODUCTION

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo's main work on the history of the Dharma is conceived as a comprehensive summary of the lineal succession of each of the schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Although styled as a *denrab*, it is perhaps the only one of its kind, as works in this genre are typically dedicated to recording the history and abbatial or lineal succession of one particular monastery or institution. As such, it exemplifies the Rimé outlook of cherishing all schools and traditions as equally valid paths to liberation. However, it is an early work, written around the time that Khyentse Wangpo returned to Derge from his studies and travels in central Tibet (1851), when he was thirty-two. No date is given, but internal evidence suggests that it was composed before 1853.¹ In one instance—the list of the Ganden throneholders—names have been added by an unknown hand, updating the list to the early 1880s.

The structure of the work is the same one used in the section on the history of Tibetan Buddhism in his *Essence Distilled for the Ears of the Fortunate*, an address delivered to an assembly at Ngor Monastery in 1843, but extrapolated here at much greater length. There are sections on the Nyingma, Kadampa, Sakyapa, Kagyupa, and Gelugpa traditions, and a final section on “minor schools,” listed as three pairs, plus the Vinaya transmission. This is a somewhat naïve precursor of the classification of Tibet's Vajrayāna tradition into Eight Great Chariots enunciated in the mature works of Khyentse Wangpo and Jamgön Kongtrul.

In each section, the seats of the tradition concerned and their successive lineage holders are listed, with short biographies of the most important figures; the distinctive features and approaches of that tradition are described, and the corpus of its teachings enumerated at some length; the literature on the history of the tradition and lives of the masters is cited, specifically criticisms by others and their refutations; and finally the origin of the name of the tradition is explained.

The coverage given to each is not perfectly even: the Sakya tradition is accorded the lengthiest and most detailed treatment, especially the Tsarpa branch to which Khyentse Wangpo was heir, followed by the Gelugpa tradition. The history of the royal monastery of Derge Göñchen and the Situ lineage of Palpung, in his own homeland, are given particular attention. Among the “minor” traditions, most space is given to Butön Rinchen Drub and his classification of the tantras.

Many passages can be identified as borrowings from the various literary sources consulted, a common practice in Tibetan historiography. The most readily identifiable of these are Guru Tashi’s history of the Nyingma tradition, Gö Lotsāwa’s *Blue Annals*, Tu’ukan Chökyi Dorje’s *Crystal Mirror* history of doctrinal systems, the writings of Jamyang Khyentse Wangchuk and Jamgön Amé Zhab on the history of the Sakya tradition, and Situ Pañchen’s *Moonwater Crystal* history of the Karma Kagyu tradition.

The text is 104 folia in length, and was included with Khyentse Wangpo’s other historical writings in the eleventh volume of the collected works.

རྡོ་མཆོར་པོ་རྒྱུ་འཁོར་ལྷན་པུ་ལྷན་པུ་

THE GROVE OF WONDROUS LOTUS FLOWERS

The Sakya Tradition *An Excerpt*

One hundred yojanas to the north of the Indian Vajrāsana is the Vajrāsana of the Tibetan Land of Snows at Drompa Sakya in Tsang Latö.² [The Sakyapa tradition] was founded by Khön Könchok Gyalpo in a Water Ox year (1073) when he was aged forty and maintained by his son Sa Chen Kunga Nyingpo and so on in an unbroken family lineage that continues to the present. In between, during the Lhasa Dzongpa period,³ it suffered serious decline, but since the restoration by the great Ngagchang Kunga Rinchen, it prospered, for which the later Sakya tradition is solely indebted to him.

Following the exhortations of the wise that recounting the careers of the [373] much-respected family lineages of the noble land of India and of the Khön Sakya lineage of the Land of Snows is a gateway to limitless merit, at least their names will be mentioned here. Of the three divine abhāsvaradeva⁴ brothers who came down to the high and pure land of upper Ngari, or the snows of Sheltsa Gyalmo of the north,⁵ through the merit of the cool land of Tibet, the seven Masang brothers were born from the union of the middle brother (1) Yuring and Muza Dembu. The six

elder brothers returned with their father to the divine realm. The son of the seventh brother (2) Masang Chije, and [mother] Tokcham Urmi was Pawo Tak, and his son was (3) Tagpo Öchen. They took suprahuman form and dwelled in the sky, and up to the latter's son (4) Yapang Kye, they were renowned as belonging to the abhāsvaradeva. He killed the [rākṣasa] Sinpo Tragnikma⁶ and took his wife Yadrak Silima for himself. During the conflict between gods and demons, a son was born to them and named Khön Bar Kye (“born amid conflict”), and thus Khön became the name of the family line.

His son was Khön Palpoche. His elder son was Nāgendarakṣita,⁷ or Luwang Sungwa, the heart disciple of Ācārya Padmasambhava [374] and one of the “seven men on trial” ordained by Khenchen Śāntarakṣita, and the younger son was Dorje Rinchen, who mastered vidyāmantra. Dorje Rinchen's seven sons generated several family lineages. The sixth, Sherab Yönten, had three sons, one of whom was Tsultrim Gyalpo. He had three sons, one of whom was Tsugtor Sherab, who had seven sons. The eldest, Getong, had a son named Belpo. His son was Śākya Lodrö. His sons were [Rok] Sherab Tsultrim and the unrivaled master Könchok Gyalpo.

Sherab Tsultrim was the successor to an unbroken line of vidyādharas of the Early Translation tantras who attained the two siddhis⁸ through the practice of Kīlaya and bound protectors such as Karmo Nyida and Duki Gyalpo, sister and brother, to their command.

Through previous aspiration and activity, Könchok Gyalpo practiced the New Translations, and after founding the great monastery of Pal Sakya, he became known as Khön Sakyapa. In this way, the pure renown of the Sakya descendants of the divine Khön, a lineage with three excellent titles,⁹ spread throughout [375] Jambudvīpa.

His son Pal Tsewa Chenpo Sa Chen Kunga Nyingpo was Avalokiteśvara in person. As a child, he resumed the noble bearing of previous lives, and at the age of eleven he was graced by Ārya Mañjuśrī and saw all the key points of the path of the transcendent perfections¹⁰ at once. The mahāsiddha Virūpa appeared to him in person to grant instruction in the great secret treasury of the ocean of tantras. He studied the sūtra teachings with Drangti Darma Nyingpo. He received the Secret Mantra teachings in general from his father, from Lama Bari Lotsāwa, Mal Lotsāwa, and others, and received the nectar of the precious Sungngak (Lamdre) teachings from Zhangtön Chöbar. He became like a freshly blossomed lotus of realization. He attained the vajra state of inexhaustible miraculous play; for instance, at the time of death, he projected himself in four forms, each proceeding to a different pure realm. His learned and accomplished disciples, such as the three with supreme accomplishment, the seven who perfected patience, and so on, were as limitless as the sky. His

sons were Kunga Bar, Sönam Tsemo, Dragpa Gyaltsen, and Palchen Öpo, the first of whom passed away in India.

Lopön Rinpoche Sönam Tsemo's learning was renowned as far as the banks of the Gaṅgā river in Āryāvarta.¹¹ [376] The wisdom ḍākinīs affixed words praising this emanation of Durjayacandra as a mahāpaṇḍita of the five sciences above the gate of the Vajrāsana temple. Through inconceivable activity in teaching and meditation, he attained the level of vajra rainbow body.

Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen, through the grace of Ārya Mañjuśrī, opened the treasury of mastery in the Tripiṭaka and four classes of Tantra. [His father] Jetsun Sakyapa in the state of luminosity bestowed upon him the direct transmission of the Lamdre teachings, and he ascended to a high level of realization. The qualities of his learning, purity, and attainment were so inconceivable that even Śākyaśrībhadrā, the paṇḍita of Kashmir and third future Buddha, strummed the sārangī of praise for him as a vajradhara in the maṇḍala of Guhyasamāja, dissolved his own pride, bowed to his lotus feet, and imbibed the nectar of his instruction, gaining certainty in him as the crown ornament of the millions of vajradharas of India and Tibet. He also gave him a blessing to extend his life span, making the vast and profound teachings shine like the risen sun.

His younger brother, the vidyādhara Palchen Öpo, had two sons, Sakya Paṇḍita and [377] Zangtsa Sönam Gyaltsen. As the great Sakya Paṇḍita, Mañjuśrī in person, had been a kalyāṇamitra turning the wheel of the noble Dharma in twenty-five successive previous lives, in this life too he could master any body of outer or inner knowledge just by hearing it, or even a part of it, only once. In particular, through the blessing of the gurus of the Lamdre lineage, he perceived Jetsun Rinpoche Drakpa Gyaltsen as indivisible from Mañjuśrī, thus securing all the outer, inner, and secret auspices for accomplishing the teachings. Overflowing with the qualities of learning and attainment and with activity benefiting others, his renown reached from the noble land of India all the way to China. He was extremely learned in all branches of knowledge, could take siddhis even from worldly deities, and defeated six non-Buddhist masters, including Hārinanda, with the powers of scriptural authority and reasoning, and the favor of the tutelary deity, compelling them to become Buddhist. Finally, having been invited by King Godan of China, he passed away at the Trulpe Dé temple of the north,¹² in a display of inconceivably wonderful signs.

Zangtsa Sönam Gyaltsen's sons were the Chögyal Pagpa and [378] master of accomplishment Drogön Chagna. Chögyal Pagpa Rinpoche Lodrö Gyaltsen, being the deliberate incarnation of a bodhisattva dwelling on the stages,¹³ had most exceptional intelligence, loving kindness, bodhisattva conduct, and so on from the start, blossoming into the title Pagpa (ārya, "sublime") and opening an inexhaustible trea-

sure of fortitude in awareness and liberation. Such was the perfection of his deeds of body, speech, and mind and performance of miracles, such as dismembering his body with a sharp sword and displaying the severed head and limbs as the assembly of the five sambhogakāya buddhas, that he inspired the undivided faith of even the cruel Mongol emperor,¹⁴ upon whom he conferred [the Hevajra] empowerment three times. On the first occasion, he was rewarded with the thirteen myriarchies of central Tibet, on the second, with the three regions of greater Tibet, and on the last, with the great land of Liyul (Khotan) in China, a supreme endowment. According to a prophecy in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*:¹⁵

A noble monk known by the letter “dhīḥ” (dhīḥ stands for Lodrö and thus the first element of his name) will make the Buddha’s teaching known.

And just so, taking the form of a king among monastics, upholding the doctrine without fear or favor, [379] he made the teaching and practice of the entire path and the well-being of the Land of Snows shine like the sun. He performed deeds beyond imagining, such as inspiring involuntary faith in the learned scholar of Nartang, Chomden Rigpe Reldri,¹⁶ through the strength of his accomplishment, and the missives praising him as dharmarāja of the triple world resounded throughout the three realms.

Then Drogön Chagna’s son Dharmapālarakṣita held the throne for several years, after which, Dagnyi Chenpo Zangpo Pal, the son of Zangtsa’s son Lopön Yeshe Jungne, came to the throne. Of his fifteen children born to seven different queens, Tishri Kunga Lodrö divided power between four labrang—Zhitok, Rinchengang, Lhakhang, and Duchö—shared between his younger brothers.

Zhitok Labrang had many learned and accomplished throne holders, from Khetsun Namkha Legpa to Dagchen Lodrö Wangchuk.

For Labrang Rinchengang, of the three brothers Kunga Nyima, Jamyang Dönyö Gyaltzen, and Palden Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltzen, [380] the latter became an important turner of the wheel of learning and accomplishment.¹⁷ He inherited an ocean of spoken transmissions, attended on most of the learned teachers of the Land of Snows, and had an unimaginably great series of close disciples, including the two great mantradhara regents, eight holders of his secret teachings, eleven famed scholars, and so on. The survival until today of the Sakyapa [Lamdre] Exposition for the Assembly and Exposition for the Disciples spoken transmissions is solely due to this master’s activity.

Jamyang Dönyö Gyaltzen’s son was La Chen Kunga Gyaltzen. His son was Jamyang Namkha Gyaltzen. His sons were Gyagarpa Sherab Gyaltzen and Dagchen Lodrö Gyaltzen, all matchless upholders of the teachings known as the “inner trans-

mission of the heads,”¹⁸ such as the uncommon instructions on the greater and lesser forms of Mahākāla and so on.

Lhakang Labrang was held by Ngawang Kunga Lekpe Jungne and his brother Kunga Gyaltsen, and up to the time of Chökyi Gyaltsen and Kunga Lekpa there were throne holders with the qualities of learning, purity, and attainment.

For Duchö Labrang, [381] the origin of the current family lineage was also Zangpo Pal’s three sons, Dagchen Kunga Lekjung along with his brothers, his son Drakpa Gyaltsen, his son Namse Gyaltsen, his son Namkha Lekpa, and his son Namkha Gyaltsen. His sons were Sa Lo Jampe Dorje and his four brothers, Kunga Sönam, Ngagi Wangchuk, Jampal Drakpa, and Sangye Tseten. The latter had two sons, Dagchen Kunga Samdrub and his younger brother Ngagchang Kunga Rinchen. The former resided at Tsedong, and the Tsedong family lineage continued there up to the time of Ngawang Norbu Gyen.¹⁹

The supreme incarnation and great mantradhara [Kunga Rinchen], emanation of Lo Chen Vairocana and Jetsun Drakpa, came to Sakya. Studying with Sa Lo Chenpo, [Ngor Chen] Kunga Lhundrub, and others, he mastered the ocean of the qualities of scripture and realization. Unable to bear the damage done to the mother monastery, he pressed the vajra dharmapālas into his service and annihilated the opponents in all but name. Performing the activity of the three spheres, building an outer temple, furnishing it inside with the supports of the Three Jewels, and [382] establishing in between a monastic community, a curriculum for the study of philosophy, the ritual practice of Mantrayāna, and the absorption of the essence in meditation, he infused the glorious Sakya teachings and community with his kindness.²⁰

He had two sons, Jamyang Sönam Wangpo and Ngagchang Drakpa Lodrö.²¹ From their time, instruction in the oral transmission, which had been in decline, started to flourish again. The latter’s son, Jamgön Amé Zhab Kunga Sönam, studied with many noble masters such as [his uncle] Sönam Wangpo, Mu Chen Sangye Gyaltsen, the vajradhara Wangchuk Rabten, and Khenchen Ngawang Chödrak, receiving an ocean of instructions from the sūtras, tantras, and oral transmissions. His teaching activity and writings, such as his histories and explanations of the *Cakrasaṃvara*, *Guhyasamāja*, *Yamāntaka*, and *Hevajra* tantras, Kīlaya, and so on, were manifold.

His son Jamyang Sönam Wangchuk studied with his father, Shalu Khenchen, and others and was active in religious and political affairs. His son Ngawang Kunga Tashi studied with [383] his father and grandfather, as well as Jampa Ngawang Namgyal, Lhundrub Palden, Jampa Ngawang Lhundrub, Zangpo Gyaltsen, the Minling Lo Chen and others, imbibing the nectar of their speech. His son Jamgön Sönam Rinchen studied with his father and many teachers, such as Chobgyepa Khyentse

Rabten, Trolungpa Sönam Chöpal, Ngor Chen Sönam Zangpo, and Tartse Namkha Samdrup. His sons were Jamgön Ngagi Wangpo Kunga Lodrö—the illuminator of the teachings in the kaliyuga—and his brother.

Jamgön Kunga Lodrö was born a successor to the master of immortality Jetāri (“the conqueror”) in India and masters such as Tsechen [Sa Chen] Kunga Nyingpo and Dagchen Dorje Chang Lodrö Gyaltzen in the Land of Snows, in the emanational play of the illusory web of Ārya Avalokiteśvara’s wisdom, and opened the lotus of wisdom in this life with ten million repetitions of the Arapacana (Mañjuśrī mantra) and so on. He extended the cool shade of his mercy and mastered all the qualities treasured by the wise. From numerous teachers, including his father, [384] Jetsun Khachö Wangmo, Tartse Namkha Samdrup, Draktsapa Losal Tenzin, and Ngor Chen Sangye Yeshe, he received an unimaginable multitude of empowerments, transmissions, and oral instructions from all traditions, mainly his own. In particular, he received the entirety of oral transmissions, including the Lamdre Lobshe and the Kangyur, from Nesarpa Ngawang Kunga Legpe Jungne, like a vast and deep ocean of instruction. Constantly engaged in the concentrated practice of visualization and recitation of some thirty deities, such as the three stages of meditation on the glorious Hevajra, he was in communication with many of them. The vajra dharmapālas vowed to accomplish his activity, the oath-bound Putra brothers and sister and the Kardu Kilaya protectors²² worked at his command. He was so skilled that whatever empowerment or instruction he was teaching arose spontaneously in his mind. Once when he was to give the outer Virūpa protection part of the Lamdre Lobshe, the astrologers were expecting a solar eclipse and plotted it on a chart according to the Jedrub [Pugluk] system, but this master assumed the form of the *yogeśvara* [Virūpa] and, [385] by not allowing the prāṇa in the right channel to enter the central channel, his power prevented the eclipse, and in such ways the signs of his attainment were infinite.

He commissioned many sacred images over time, his teaching activity was continuous, and his writings amount to twelve large volumes; such was his kindness as a reviver of the teachings. His main disciples included many noble exponents of the teachings—the brothers in the Sakya family lineage, Tartse Dorje Chang Namkha Chimé, Nesar Chogtrul Namkha Legpa, the Chobgye Trichen brothers, Zimok Tulku Tenzin Trinle, Rinchen Gyaltzen the adjunct teacher at Sakya, the master of five sciences Kunga Tashi, Rikhu Tulku Kunga Khedrub Wangpo, and others—and the unimpaired endurance of the teaching tradition to this day, the empowerments, transmissions, oral instructions, practice manuals, and so on of the Jetsun Sakyapa are solely due to this kindness.

His sons Jamgön Wangdu Nyingpo and Kunga Pende Gyatso received an ocean-like multitude of instructions from many noble teachers, chiefly their father, and through their teaching and meditation activity multiplied benefit for the teachings and living beings. The former's sons [386]—Trichen Padma Dudul Wangchuk or Kunga Tashi, Ngagchang Kunga Rinchen, Jamgön Kunga Gyaltsen, and Gönpö Ngödrub Palbar—listened, reflected on, meditated on, and taught the instructions, chiefly of their own tradition, from their father and the paṇḍita of the five sciences Kunga Tashi.

The Trichen's son Trichen Tashi Rinchen received teaching from his father and from Tartse Dorje Chang Jampa Kunga Tenzin. Ngagchang Kunga Rinchen's son Jamgön Dorje Rinchen²³ received an ocean-like multitude of vast and profound instructions from his father Jamgön Kunga Gyaltsen, Yongdzin Lodrö Gyatso and others. At a very young age, recovering the noble bearing of previous lives, he demonstrated amazing behavior beyond imagining. His continuous teaching activity as a crown jewel of learning and attainment firmly endures.²⁴

The “lower seat” at Tsedong in Tsang²⁵ was maintained by Dagchen Kunga Samdrub and the other holders of the Duchö Labrang family lineage, in which many noble upholders of the teachings appeared, such as Trichen Sönam Lhundrub. [387] Later, the family lineage came to an end, but there was a series of incarnate successors who are now recognized by the main monastery.

The seats of some other famous holders of the Sakya tradition include Ngor Ewam Chöden, which was, as foreseen in the pristine jewel mirror of Sakya Mahāpaṇḍita's wisdom-vision, founded by [Ngor Chen] Dorje Chang Kunga Zangpo in a Bird year (1429), when he was forty-eight. Concerning this vajradhara, the *Sūtra on Upholding the Roots of Virtue*²⁶ says,

At that time, an incarnation of Lokeśvara will appear.
At that time his reincarnation will be the bhikṣu Kunga Zangpo,
Outstanding in moral discipline as in his vast learning,
Outstanding for having crossed to the far shore.

And in the *White Lotus of the Noble Dharma*,²⁷

Kunga Zangpo, an exponent of my teachings,
Will worship sixty times ten million sūgatas
And attain buddhahood in a future life.

So lauded in vajra prophecies, he was born into the luminous Khön lineage. From Sharchen Yeshe Gyaltsen, Drubchen Buddhaśrī, Sazang [Mati Paṇchen], [Rendawa] Zhonu Lodrö, and others, he received an ocean-like multitude of vast and profound

instructions. [388] Through study and reflection on the sūtras and tantras as well as the mundane sciences, he cut away all doubt, and after putting them into practice in meditation, he ascended to a high level of attainment. In visions of luminous clarity, he was graced by the Jetsun Sakyapa [Sa Chen], the father and his sons, and his teaching activity was that of a second buddha. His writings, mainly on tantra, fill four volumes. Most of all, having spread the maturation and liberation instructions of the four classes of tantra throughout space, his incomparable kindness to the Vajrayāna was such that his pure renown as “the vajradhara of the age of conflict” was inscribed on the earrings of the sky maidens.²⁸ He had an unimaginable multitude of close disciples who attained proficiency in the teachings and siddhis, and from upper west Tibet to the borders of China they established greater and lesser monasteries beyond count, for the perpetuation of his teaching activity.

After the vajradhara passed away at the age of seventy-five (1456), having established²⁹ a new school of teaching, Mu Chen Sempa Chenpo Könchok Gyaltsen, who was Cakrasaṃvara incarnate as a saffron-robed monk, took the throne. He was born into the Zhang family³⁰ at Tagmo Lingkyā. [389] After studying with some forty teachers, including Rongtön and the vajradhara [Ngor Chen], he reached the far shore of listening, reflection, and meditation on the teachings. After the vajradhara’s death he took the throne for three years and sustained his affairs and teaching activity (there is one volume of his collected writings). Among his close disciples there were the lineal successors of the [Lamdre] Exposition for the Assembly, such as the omniscient [Gorampa] Sönam Senge, and of the Exposition for the Disciples, such as Dagchen Dorje Chang [Lodrö Gyaltsen], for this master himself was the source of both. Later, he remained in meditation at Mu Samten Puk³¹ and ascended to the level of attainment. He left his body behind at the age of eighty-three. He was succeeded by:

3. Gartön Jamyang Sherab Gyatso of Tsang Chumik (he was in visionary contact with Jamyang Sa Paṇ and many of his writings are extant);
4. Ngor Chen’s nephew³² and emanation of the mahāsiddha Virūpa, the noble regent Kunga Wangchuk (he had one volume of collected writings);
5. The upholder of the teachings of the glorious Sakya skilled in both Sūtra and Tantra, the omniscient Gowō Rabjampa Sönam Senge (he had four volumes of writings on Mantrayāna and a great many on Sūtrayāna);

All up to then were the vajradhara’s close disciples.

6. Yongzin Könchok Pelwa, [390] in Ngor Chen’s nephew lineage (in his time the teachings were greatly spread, in accord with a prophecy that “the light of the teachings of the lord vajradhara will pervade”);³³

7. Mu Chen's nephew, the greatly learned and accomplished Sangye Rinchen (he had one volume of writings such as Lamdre instruction manuals);
8. Gyalwa Lhachok Senge (Ngor Chen's nephew lineage), who was in visionary contact with Lopön Sönam Tsemo;
9. The manifestly omniscient Jamyang [Ngor Chen] Könchok Lhundrub (he was a maternal cousin of Yongzin Rinpoche);³⁴
10. The emanation of Pagpa Rinpoche and all-round exponent of Sūtra and Mantra Jamyang Sangye Senge (he was of Ngor Chen's nephew lineage);
11. The incomparable Könchok Palden, who attained mastery and siddhis (he was of Könchok Lhundrub's nephew lineage and some of his writings are extant);
12. The mahāpaṇḍita of the five sciences born into the scholarly Drangti family Tartse Namkha Palzang³⁵ (he had three volumes of compositions on the *Vajrāvalī* and so on);
13. Jampa Kunga Tashi, who was born into the Kuzhang family of Dagchen Sharpa;³⁶
14. The Tsedong throne holder Jamyang Kunga Sönam Lhundrub;
15. The master of learning and attainment Drubkhangpa Palden Döndrub (he was born into the family of Sakya Pönchen Özer Senge³⁷ and there is one volume of his extensive writings); [391]
16. The master of attainment Drangti Khenchen Namkha Sangye;
17. Sharchen Sherab Jungne, emanation of Atiśa, boundless in learning and activity;
18. Drangti Khenchen Namkha Rinchen;
19. Dagpo Gyaltsewa Jangpa Ngawang Sönam Gyaltzen³⁸ (he was the holder of both Ngorpa and Tsarpa traditions);
20. Khangsar Khenchen Sönam Gyatso of Nartang Paljor Ling;
21. Khenchen Jamyang Palchok Gyaltzen, nephew of Drubkhangpa (the first throne holder to visit Derge);
22. Drenchok Namkha Palzang, born into the Mongol imperial family (he served as regent for the Tartse throne);
23. Jamgön Lhundrub Palden, the luminary of Shar Minyak;
24. Khenchen Jampeyang Sangye Puntsok of lower Ngari, Dharma sun of the degenerate age;
25. The bodhisattva mahāsattva Sangye Tenzin, born into Dagchen Sharpa's lineage;
26. Khenchen Jampa Sheja Zangpo of Dzilung in Shabtö (he was a maternal cousin of Tartse);
27. Jampa Tsultrim Palzang of Shar Minyak Gang, emanation of Mañjuśrī;

28. The incomparable Sönam Palden of Chukzhung Palkya in Tsang [392] (he traveled to Derge as the attendant of Khenchen Sangye Puntsok);
29. The master yogi Jamgön Jampa Sönam Zangpo of Khangsar;
30. Khenchen Tashi Lhundrub of Domkhar in Tsang, an emanation of Śrī Dīpaṃkara;
31. Jampa Tsultrim Lhundrub, master of boundless learning (he was born in Dart-sedo to the east);
32. Drangti Khenchen Namkha Samdrub, master of attainment;
33. Khenchen Dorje Chang Palden Chökyong, emanation of the yogeśvara [Virūpa] (he was born at Ngor Paldrong);
34. The incomparably learned and realized Jamgön Sangye Palzang;
35. Khenchen Jampa Sönam Lhundrub of Khangsar;
36. The bodhisattva Sharchen Rinchen Mingyur Gyaltsen;
37. Jamyang Chökyi Lama Sangye Yeshe, nephew of Khenchen Tashi Lhundrub;
38. Jamyang Chöje Könchok Drakpa;
39. Ngagwang Chökyong Zangpo of Khangsar;
40. The learned and accomplished Sangye Drakpa;
41. The incomparable Puntsok Döndrub;
42. The greatly learned and accomplished Jampa Kunga Sönam; [393]
43. The omniscient Drangti Khenchen Jampa Namkha Chimé;
44. The comprehensively learned Khedrub Ngawang Damchö;
45. The lord of speech Khenchen Sönam Paljor;
46. Drangti Khenchen Dorje Chang Jampa Kunga Tenzin;
47. Ngawang Lodrö Zangpo of Khangsar;
48. The thoroughly learned master of speech Yongzin Paṇḍita Palden Chökyi Gyaltsen;
49. Jampa Palden Zangpo, emanation of Palden Chökyong's nephew Rinchen Chogdrub;
50. Drangti Khenchen Naljor Jampal Zangpo, overlord of the hundred classes of bodhisattvas;
51. And up to the incomparable Khangsar Khenchen Ngawang Lodrö Tenzin.³⁹

Of these, the paṇḍitas expounded, the lotsāwas translated, and the siddhas meditated on the sūtras, tantras, and commentaries, known as “the measure of the wise,” exactly as specified by the Jetsun Sakyapa, the father and sons, and by the great Vajradhara Ngor Chen. For maintaining the exposition of scripture and reasoning, experiential accomplishment in meditation, and the ritual practices down to the smallest detail,

unmixed with those of other traditions, they became an object of undivided praise by those of sound judgement in whom the lotus of intelligence has blossomed.

NOTES

1. On folio 80r (p. 481), it is mentioned that the Seventh Pañchen Tenpé Nyima (pañ chen bstan pa'i nyi ma) was still alive.
2. The Drompa (grom pa) area, on the east bank of the Tsangpo (gtsang po) river, was considered part of Tsang Rulak (gtsang ru lag) rather than Tsang Latö (gtsang la stod), which starts from the west bank. The spelling *gram pa* of the text is one of several misspellings induced by the pronunciation of “-a” as “-o” in Kham dialects.
3. The Lhasa Dzongpa (lha sa rdzong pa) were local governors who assumed authority in the area during the fifteenth century following the defeat of the Sakya by the Pagmodrupa (phag mo gru pa). They were driven out, and the Sakya principality reestablished, under the leadership of Ngagchang Kunga Rinchen (sngags 'chang kun dga' rin chen, 1517–1584) in the 1550s. See Akester, *Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo's Guide to Central Tibet*, 580.
4. “Celestial Clarity,” which refers to a divine realm and the divine beings of that realm.
5. On the location of Sheltsa Gyalmo (shel tsha rgyal mo) in the Shentsa (shan rtsa) region of western Jangtang (byang thang), see Bellezza, *The Liturgies and Oracular Utterances of the Spirit-mediums of Upper Tibet*, 14.
6. Usually Kyareng Tragme (skya reng khrag med). On this figure, see Ramble, “Fearless Dawn, Bloodless Demon,” 409–30.
7. Emended *Nāgandrarakṣita (2014) to Nāgendrarakṣita.
8. Common and supreme.
9. “Endowed with three titles” (*mtshan mchog gsum ldan*) is a common eulogism for the Sakya (*sa skya*) family lineage. The three titles are “divine ancestors” (*lha rigs*), “bone lineage” (*'khon gdung*), and “grey earth” (*sa skya pa*). See Jamgön Amé Zhab (*'jam mgon A mes zhabs*), *'khon lugs phur pa'i rnam bshad 'phrin las kyi padmo rab tu rgyas*.
10. Pāramitāmārga, the Mahāyāna system of five paths and ten grounds.
11. “The noble land” (*'phags yul*) is a common eulogism for India.
12. Godan Khan (1206–1251?), grandson of Genghis Khan, had charge of the Mongol Empire's territories in China, and had launched an invasion of Tibet in 1240. “Trulpa Dé Lhakhang (sprul pa sde'i lha khang) of the north” refers to the Baita Si, or “White

Stūpa temple” in Godan’s capital, Liangzhou (modern Wuwei) in western Gansu, formerly part of the Tangut Empire. Sakya Paṇḍita passed away there in 1251.

13. Chögyal Pagpa (chos rgyal ’phags pa) was considered the immediate reincarnation of a master known only as Setön Ripa (se ston ri pa). According to Jamyang Khyentse Wangchuk’s history of the Lamdre lineage: “Phakpa’s father Sangtsa Sonam Gyaltsen, had focused his practice on the deity Gaṇapati, who knew that the master Setön Ripa of Langri Tang in Ngari had the ability to take control of the threefold universe. When Gaṇapati supplicated him, Setön Ripa purposely took rebirth as Phakpa Rinpoche ...” See Stearns, *Taking the Result as Path*, 239.
14. I.e., Kublai Khan, known to Tibetans as Sechen Gyalpo (se chen rgyal po, r. 1260–1294), although this incident supposedly occurred at the time of Pagpa’s appointment in 1253, before Kublai seized the throne of the eastern Mongol empire. A story is told that Kublai expressed disappointment with the young lama after hearing of the miracles performed by Karma Pakshi (chos kyi bla ma, 1204–1283). This was conveyed to Pagpa by Queen Chabi, who agreed to please his royal sponsor even though performing miracles for worldly effect was a contravention of Vajrayāna conduct; see Jamgön Amé Zhab, *ngo mtshar rin po che’i bang mdzod*, 158–59.
15. *’phags pa ’jam dpal gyi rtsa ba’i rgyud*.
16. It is said that Chomden Rigpe Reldri (lcom ldan rig pa’i ral gri, 1228–1305) was initially skeptical of Pagpa’s claims to greatness; but, when Pagpa gave public teachings at nearby Chumik (chu mig) in 1277, Chomden Rigpe Reldri went there incognito, and was amazed and humbled by the signs of Pagpa’s attainment. See Jamgön Amé Zhab, *ngo mtshar rin po che’i bang mdzod*, 217–18.
17. dpal ldan bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan, 1312–1375.
18. *zhal ngo nang brgyud*.
19. See Jamgön Amé Zhab, *ngo mtshar rin po che’i bang mdzod*, 247–467.
20. Jamgön Amé Zhab’s *Ocean of Wonders* biography of Ngagchang Kunga Rinchen (204ff.) has been published separately as *srid pa gsum gyi bla ma dpal sa skya pa chen po sngags ’chang ngag gi dbang po kun dga’ rin chen gyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*.
21. Jamgön Amé Zhab, *ngo mtshar rin po che’i bang mdzod*, 470–535.
22. The Putra (*lcam sring gsum*) are powerful attendants of Mahākala in the Sakya tradition. The protectors Karmo Nyida (dkar mo nyi zla) and Dugyal Pawo Tötrengchen (bdud kyi rgyal po dpa’ bo thod ’phreng can) are associated with the Khön Vajrakīlaya transmission. See Akester, *Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo’s Guide to Central Tibet*, 577.
23. Kunga Rinchen (kun dga’ rin chen, 1794–1856) was in 1823 the founder of the Puntso Podrang (phun tshogs pho brang) branch of the family line, which divided in this period. The rival Drolma Podrang (sgrol ma pho brang) was founded by his nephew Tashi Rinchen (bkra shis rin chen, 1824–1865) in 1849. Khyentse Wangpo, who visited Sakya in 1850, was familiar with these events but refrains from mentioning them here. See Akester, *Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo’s Guide to Central Tibet*, 581.
24. The biographies of Jamgön Kunga Lodrö (’jam mgon kun dga’ blo gros) and his successors are in the *ngo mtshar rin chen kun ’phel* supplement to Jamgön Amé Zhab’s *gdung rabs* by Drakshul Trinle Rinchen (drag shul ’phrin las rin chen), 10–622. See also Stearns, *Taking the Result as the Path*, 274–84.

25. Tsedong Chöde Sisum Namgyal (rtse gdong chos sde srid gsum rnam rgyal) is in a minor valley on the north bank of the Tsangpo, a little way east of the mouth of the Shang (shangs) valley. It became known as “Densa Ogma” (gdan sa ’og ma), the “lower seat” of the Sakya order, after the decline of the main monastery during the fifteenth century.
26. *Kuśālamūlasaṃparigrahasūtra* (’phags pa dge ba’i rtsa ba yongs su ’dzin pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo).
27. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* (dam pa’i chos padma dkar po shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo).
28. This is a common image in Tibetanized Kāvya composition, and thus not necessarily a direct quotation. For a survey of the literature, see Heimbels, “Biographical Sources for Researching the Life of Ngor chen Kun dga’ bzang po,” 47–91.
29. It seems probable that *grub mtha’ rnyogs* is a copy error for *tshe mtha’ rdzogs*, and the passage should read “having lived out his full span of years.”
30. Mu Chen (mus chen)’s biographies—for example, the *Rosary of Wonders* by Dagchen Lodrö Gyaltsen (bdag chen blo gros rgyal mtshan) in *gsung ngag lam ’bras slob bshad chen mo*—state that he belonged to the Zhang family, “maternal relatives (*sku zhang*) of the Tibetan kings,” as did the earlier Lamdre lineage holders Zhangtön Chöbar (zhang ston chos ’bar) and Zhang Könchok Pal (zhang dkon mchog dpal). They were considered to be descendants of the imperial minister Zhang Lhazang Lupal (zhang lha bzang klu dpal) of the Tsepong (tshes spong) clan. *rta/stag mo gling skya/kha* is in the upper Mu (mus) valley in western Tsang, where he later founded a monastery. See Akester, *Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo’s Guide to Central Tibet*, 646–48.
31. See Akester, *Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo’s Guide to Central Tibet*, 647.
32. On the nephew lineage, see Heimbels, *Vajradhara in Human Form*, 75–81.
33. This prophecy is attributed to “Kunga Wangchuk and others.” See, for example, Mupo (mu po), *lam ’bras bla ma’i rnam thar kun ’dus me long*, 82. Könchok Pal (dkon mchog ’phel, 1445–1514) was the grandson of Ngor Chen’s step-brother Pöne Sönam Pal (dpon ne bsod nams dpal). See Heimbels, *Vajradhara in Human Form*, 79.
34. Ngor Chen Könchok Lhundrub’s (ngor chen dkon mchog lhun grub, 1497–1557) mother was the niece of Yongzin Könchok Pelwa (yongs ’dzin dkon mchog ’phel).
35. Namkha Palzang (nam mkha’ dpal bzang, 1532–1602) founded the Tärtse Labrang (thar rtse bla brang), the first of Ngor’s four great Labrangs. The abbatial succession was held by members of the Drangti (brang ti) family.
36. “Kuzhang” (*sku zhang*) was a title qualifying families intermarried with the Khön, primarily the four Labrangs of Sakya’s early period (Nub, Shar, Gung, and Khang gsar). The Labrang Shar founded by Sa Paṇ’s disciple Sherab Jungne (shes rab ’byung gnas, 1198–1261) gave its name to his august family, whose origins go back to the foundation of Sakya and which produced numerous masters of the tradition, such as Ngor Chen’s teacher Sharchen Yeshe Gyaltsen (shar chen ye shes rgyal mtshan, 1359–1406).
37. “Pönchen” (*dpon chen*) was the office of governor instituted in the 1260s, when Sakya assumed power over central Tibet under Mongol authority. Özer Senge (’od zer seng ge), who came from the ruling Lhodak (lho bdag) family of Latö Lho (la stod lho), held office in 1309–1316 and again in 1325–1328. See Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols*, chapter 4.

38. The title “Gyaltsewa Jangpa” (rgyal rtse ba byang pa) signifies that the father of Ngawang Sönam Gyaltzen (ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, 1598–1674) came from the Gyaltse (rgyal rtse) nobility and his mother came from the Latö Jang (la stod byang) nobility.
39. The Khangsar Khenpo Ngawang Lodrö Tenzin (khang gsar mkhan chen ngag dbang blo gros bstan ’dzin) served in office 1843–1848.

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