

FIVE-FOLD MAHAMUDRA



DRIKUNG KAGYÜ LINEAGE



DEWACHEN
WORLD PEACE SANCTUARY

Introduction

Following the request of Drupön Lama Dorje, this material has been compiled as an introduction to the Drikung Kagyü lineage.

Lama Dorje shares the following message:

“I’m going to talk a little about the importance of lineages. From the lineage come all the enlightened words and teachings; that’s why it’s super important for us. We can trust a lineage—this is like a source of water we can drink from because we know where it comes from, whether it’s clean or not clean. If the water is clean, it’s like an uninterrupted lineage. That’s why it’s very important in Tibetan Buddhism.

The lineage is the foundation, because all the masters have lived these teachings and experiences. Their own wisdom and experience come from the lineage orally. So, all this wisdom and experience is contained within the lineage.

That’s why it’s important that we read the history of the Buddha. The pure teachings of the Buddha don’t come from a person with an ordinary story.

The pure teachings of the masters come from extraordinary lives: how they walked, how they transformed challenges, how they emerged from problems, confusion, and suffering. All of this is shown in their biographies. That’s why in Tibetan they’re called *nam thar*, which means ‘liberation through biography.’

For this reason, my recommendation is to read these life stories. We’re offering this wonderful course, and it’s necessary to know where these teachings come from, where these techniques and methods arise. This is important to understand.

First, we should read the history of the historical Buddha, Buddha Śākyamuni. He is the Buddha who manifested for the benefit of our earth. Then there's Vajradhāra, who is like the same Buddha Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha, but in the form of the Dharmakāya or in the form of the Saṃbhogakāya, with different colors. This is from the Vajrayāna perspective. It's important to read about the meaning of Vajradhāra.

After that comes the master Tilopa, who received the direct transmission from Vajradhāra. Then this lineage continues with Nāropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, and Jigten Sumgön.

From Jigten Sumgön begins our Drikung Kagyü lineage. Within the Kagyü lineage, there are several branches, and one of them is the Drikung Kagyü, which is the lineage that I, Lama Dorje, practice.

The Drikung Kagyü lineage comes from a long lineage, reaching up to our two Holinesses, Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang and Drikung Kyabgön Chungtsang, both of whom are alive and represent the sun and the moon. And especially, I have received teachings from His Eminence Garchen Rinpoche. All these teachings I've received, I'm sharing with you; that's why it's a good reason to read about the lineage.

All the methods I'm giving you aren't an invention of Lama Dorje—I didn't create them. They come only from enlightened beings, and these teachings have been passed from master to disciple in a process called oral transmission of experience. That's why this is a lineage of experience, not just theoretical.

So my recommendation, super important, is that you read this material. This will give us a bit of confidence, real confidence in the path, and it will help us value it.

Nowadays, if you look for different philosophies in the world, you'll find many. Some don't have a lineage, others do. But for us Buddhists, the

lineage is fundamental. That's why the Buddha's Dharma is still alive. We can keep nourishing ourselves from this lineage after 2,500 years, and it's still very fresh, very new—this wonderful method still works.

In comparison, in our world, we change methods when they don't work. For example, we often have to update our smartphones with new systems so they keep functioning.

But the Buddha's Dharma hasn't needed an update. It stays fresh despite being over 2,500 years old. This Dharma will work for infinite years because the cause of problems is always the same, it always repeats, and the solution is a single medicine. Enlightened beings already know this perfectly: a medicine that works forever. That's why we're so privileged to receive these teachings.

So, we're sharing the Drikung Kagyü lineage with you briefly so you can read it. If later you want to read about this lineage in full, you can investigate it on your own.

This is my recommendation as Lama Dorje: the importance of reading the biographies and lineages of the masters before starting this course.”

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The different texts and teachings included in this compilation contain excerpts from *The Great Kagyü Masters: The Golden Lineage Treasury*, by Khenchen Könchok Gyaltzen Rinpoche; *The Life of the Buddha & the Four Noble Truths*, by Thrangu Rinpoche; *Praise of the Twelve Deeds*, by Ārya Nāgārjuna, in which the first and last verses are attributed to Jigten Sumgön; and *The Essence of Buddhist Practice*, by Kyabgön Chetsang Rinpoche.

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1 Buddha Śākyamuni

By Khenchen Könchok Gyaltzen Rinpoche



No one is insincere in his own regard, but ignorance and confusion cause most beings to create their own suffering. For this reason the Buddha, who began as an ordinary being, determined throughout three limitless eons to sacrifice his own comfort, and with great effort and loving motivation to accumulate merit and wisdom and purify all obscurations.

In Bodhgayā he completely annihilated the mountain of ego and fully developed pervading compassion and Primordial Consciousness; thereafter he turned the wheel of Dharma three times not out of the intention to establish a religion, but rather to free all beings. He taught for forty-five years.

By the strength of his boundless compassion, the Buddha's authentic and precious teachings travelled generally throughout all of Asia, and particularly in Tibet, producing scholars and realized beings as numerous as stars in the sky.

One way in which these teachings were perpetuated was through the system of lineages in which the instructions were transmitted from one lineage member to the next, from guru to disciple, in an unbroken succession. This method maintains the continuity of blessing and experiences.

1.1 Brief Meaning of the Term Buddha

By Kyabgön Chetsang Rinpoche

The essence of Buddhism is explained by the Tibetan word name of Buddha. Buddha is translated as Buddha Śākyamuni, but in Tibetan, Buddha means much deeper. It explains the whole essence of practice.

In Tibetan, Buddha is Sang-gye, Sang means clear and bright, something like a sky and is covered by clouds. When the clouds are cleared away, then the sky is clear and the sun is shining and bright.

Gye means developed. When the clouds are cleared, the sun can radiate and fully develop its nature.

Sangye means to purify all the negative things and at the same time develop our nature.

1.2 Twelve Deeds of the Buddha

Buddha Śākyamuni's life is structured around twelve deeds, each one deliberately performed to represent a teaching and to show the path to liberation and its attainability.

In The Praise of the Twelve Deeds, Ārya Nāgārjuna says:

With skilful means and compassion, you were born in the
Śākya clan,
unconquerable by others, you vanquished Māra's hordes,
your physical form resplendent, like a mountain of gold.
to you, the King of the Śākyas, I pay homage!

You I shall praise, who first awakened the mind of
enlightenment,
then completed the accumulations of merit and wisdom,
and now in this age, through the vast sway of your actions,
have become the lord and protector of living beings.

Homage to you, who, having taught the gods,
knew the time had come to tame the human world, and
descending from the god realm like a great elephant,
foresaw the family of your birth and entered the womb of
Māyādevī.

Homage to you, prince of the Śākyas, born after ten months
in the auspicious Lumbinī grove, where
Brahmā and Indra revered you, your supreme marks
proving you were destined to be enlightened.

Homage to you, lion among men, in all your youthful vigour,
displaying your prowess in the games at Aṅga-Magadha,
where you triumphed over the proud contestants,
so that not one could stand as your rival.

Homage to you, who, to comply with worldly convention,
and avoid all misdeeds, took on a queen and courtiers
and by acting with such skilful means,
so you ruled the kingdom.

Homage to you, who saw that saṃsāra is wholly futile,
renounced the life of a householder,
and, travelling through the sky,
ordained yourself before the Viśuddha Stūpa.

Homage to you, who, intent on persevering till enlightened,
for six years practised austerities on the banks of the
Nairāñjanā,
and taking diligence to its ultimate perfection,
attained the supreme samādhi.

Homage to you, who, seeking to make meaningful
all your efforts, made throughout beginningless time, sat
unmoving in the vajra posture beneath the bodhi-tree in
Magadha
and awakened into true buddhahood, attaining perfect
enlightenment.

Homage to you, who, in your compassion,
gazed at once upon living beings, then
turned the wheel of Dharma in sacred places like Vārāṇasī,
and established disciples in the three vehicles.

Homage to you, who destroyed evil-minded opponents,
by defeating the six teachers of the tīrthikas, Devadatta and the
rest,
as well as the māras in Vārāṇasī;
you were the mighty sage, victorious in battle.

Homage to you, who performed great miracles in Śrāvastī,
unmatched in their splendour in all the three realms,
and through the offerings made by gods, humans and other
beings,
caused the teachings to prosper and increase.

Homage to you, who, to spur the lazy on to the Dharma,
left your body, though immortal and like a vajra,
and passed into parinirvāṇa
in the pure abode of Kuśinagara.

Homage to you, who, to show that you had not in reality
perished,
and so that beings of the future could gain merit,
emanated a wealth of relics, and caused
your remains to be divided into eight portions.

Through the merit of briefly praising in this way,
the great acts of the lord who is master of the teachings,
may the actions of all living beings
come to equal those of the Sugata himself.

O Tathāgata, may I and others have a form,
an entourage, a life-span, a pure realm
and sublime marks of perfection
exactly like you.

Through the power of our praising you and this supplication,
in whatever lands we dwell, may
illness, negativity, poverty, and conflict be quelled,
and Dharma and auspiciousness increase and spread.

1.3 Explanation of the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha

By Thrangu Rinpoche

1.3.1 First Deed

The first of these twelve deeds was when the Buddha was teaching in the paradise of Tuṣita which is in the god realm. 1 While the Buddha was teaching there, the sound of his previous motivation reminded him that it was necessary to take birth in Jambudvīpa and teach the Dharma. He then considered five things:

1. The land where he ought to be born (kapila),
2. The caste he should be born into (royal),
3. The family in which he should be born (the Shayka clan),
4. Who his mother was to be (Māyādevī), and
5. The time that was right for him to be born (when the five degenerations were on the increase).

After having made these determinations, he decided to leave this Tuṣita paradise and take birth in our world. This particular deed of leaving Tuṣita to be born had a special significance. It was intended to teach us that somebody who has achieved enlightenment is not any more a slave of his own karma and has control over anything he or she does. So the Buddha chose to take birth in our world because the time was right and he wanted to show us that someone who is enlightened has control over anything he or she does.

1.3.2 Second Deed

The second of the twelve great deeds of the Buddha was his birth into the womb of his mother, Māyādevī. So first he entered the womb of his mother and was born in the normal way from his mother's womb.

One may wonder why he took such a birth. If he had complete control over everything, then why wasn't he born miraculously from a lotus flower as was Padmasambhava or why didn't he simply descend from the sky. But he didn't do this because he had a special reason for being born in the normal way. If he had been born miraculously from a lotus, for example, it would have been very impressive and attracted many people.

However, the Buddha was thinking in the long-term of his future disciples who would have felt that it was all right for someone like the Buddha to practice and to achieve enlightenment because he was a very special person from the beginning.

Had he been born in a lotus they would have thought no ordinary human beings could reach enlightenment because they didn't have these same miraculous powers. So the Buddha took an ordinary birth to show that even ordinary human beings can achieve the highest realization. He did this to instill conviction and confidence in his future disciples.

1.3.3 Third Deed

The third special deed of the Buddha was his birth in the garden in Lumbini (which is in present day Nepal).

Although the Buddha took an ordinary human birth, there was still something very special in his birth. The Buddha came out of the body of his mother through her right side. Some people might start wondering how this was possible. They might think, “Well, what exactly happened? Did the rib cage crack? One doesn’t need to think in terms of anatomical problems because the Buddha was a miraculous being and he just took birth through his mother’s right side.

At the time of the Buddha’s birth, there were many very special things happening where he was born. All of a sudden, some crops started growing. Trees appeared all over the area of Lumbini and some very special flowers such as the Udumbara flower that had never grown in this area started blooming everywhere.

From that moment onwards he was given his name of Siddhartha in Sanskrit, or Tungye Drup in Tibetan, which means, “The One That Makes Everything Possible.” As a result of interdependent origination, the presence of a high being, especially his or her birth, produces changes in the environment such as flowers blooming.

1.3.4 Fourth Deed

A few years later when the Buddha had grown up a little, he trained in all possible arts and crafts and sciences and thus became very knowledgeable, very scholarly, and very skillful.

This was his fourth deed and this may be a little surprising, because the Buddha was already enlightened or at least a great bodhisattva residing in

the tenth bodhisattva level. It should not have been necessary for him to train in worldly skills because he should have known them naturally.

However, there was again a specific reason for doing this. It was to counteract various misconceptions we might have had. One misunderstanding was to think that the Buddha was someone who was simply a meditator without any academic education.

Another was the idea that he already possessed all this knowledge so he didn't need to learn. This could give rise to doubts that if we humans tried to learn something it would lead to no results. Or again people might think that the Buddha did not have any qualities he had ever had to train.

So to overcome these misconceptions the Buddha worked at becoming the scholar and became very skilled in all different arts. It also shows that it is necessary to receive full education in the culture in which we are appearing. We must be fully at one with various positive aspects of our culture to be able to become a vehicle for transmitting the Dharma.

1.3.5 Fifth Deed

The fifth deed of the Buddha was to marry, have a child, and enjoy the company of his queen Yashodhara and consorts and all the pleasures of royalty.

The Buddha did this so that his future disciples wouldn't think that the Buddha or an enlightened person was unable to enjoy any pleasures or feel the need for enjoyment.

The other reason for the Buddha living such a sensuous life was to show that even though the Buddha had all the finest pleasures, he wasn't satisfied by these pleasures because he had understood that there was a higher form of happiness to be sought.

1.3.6 Sixth Deed

The sixth deed of the Buddha was his renunciation. The palace was enclosed with high walls and four gates facing each of the cardinal points. The Buddha went for a walk outside of the precincts of the palace, each time leaving through one of the different gates and each time he saw something different that gave him a different lesson on life.

The first time he went out through the eastern gate of the palace and saw the suffering of an old man, discovering for the first time that all persons experience the degeneration of body. Another time he left the palace through the southern gate and saw a sick person and discovered the suffering that all persons at one time or another suffer. The next time he went out through the western gate and saw a dead person and discovered the pain of death which all persons must undergo.

All of the sudden, this hit him really hard, because he realized that no matter how rich you are, no matter how powerful you are, no matter how much pleasure and enjoyment you have, there is nothing you can do to run away from the suffering of old age, sickness, and death.

He realized that there was no way you could avoid these; even a king could not buy his way out of this suffering. No one can run away and hide from this suffering. No one can fight and defeat these three kinds of suffering.

1.3.7 Seventh Deed

But then the Buddha realized that maybe there is a way out which is the practice of a spiritual path. The Buddha understood this when he left the palace through the northern gate and saw a monk. And at this point he felt great weariness with the world and renounced the world at the age of 29.

Since the Buddha had these visions, he gave up the kingdom and left this life of a prince behind, which is his seventh deed.

He led a life of austerities for six years by the banks of the Nilajana river in India. These austerities did not lead to his enlightenment. But these years spent doing ascetic practices were not wasted because they had a specific purpose of showing future disciples that the Buddha had put a very great amount of effort and perseverance and diligence to achieve the goal of enlightenment.

This seventh deed was also to show that as long as someone is attached to money, food, clothes, and all the pleasures of life, one couldn't really dedicate him or herself to spiritual practice. But if one gave up attachment, then it was possible to achieve Buddhahood without too much difficulty. So that is why the Buddha engaged in this deed of six years of austerities by a riverside.

1.3.8 Eight Deed

The eighth deed of the Buddha was his giving up of the austerities, by accepting a bowl of yogurt and going to the bodhi tree and vowing to stay under this tree until reaching final awakening or enlightenment. In contrast to the austerities, the Buddha takes this nutritious food and gives his body a rest. He puts his clothes back on and then he goes to the bodhi tree.

The Buddha gave up the austerities to show his future followers that the main object of Buddhist practice is working with one's mind. We have to eliminate the negativity in our mind and have to develop the positive qualities of knowledge and understanding.

This is far more important than what goes on outside of us, so that austerities are not the point in them-selves. What the Buddha wanted to

show us is that the true practice should be in the middle of the two extremes of practicing too many austerities and being too indulgent.

The first extreme is when you starve yourself or you don't allow yourself food and drink. These practices also involve placing yourself in extreme physical conditions such as being too hot or too cold. This is pointless because it has no true significance.

The other extreme is where you just follow any of your desires. This is endless because there is a constant escalation in your desires. If you have ten pleasures, you'll want a hundred. If you have a hundred, you'll want a thousand; so you will never find any satisfaction and you will also never be able to practice the Dharma either.

So the Buddha wanted to show us that we have to avoid the extreme of too much austerity and too much indulgence and that practice lies somewhere in the middle.

1.3.9 Ninth Deed

The ninth deed of the Buddha is called “the subduing of the mara Papiyan” with Papiyan being the leader of the māras. This happened when the Buddha was sitting under the bodhi tree. Māra used forms related to the three afflictions of ignorance, desire, and aggression in order to lure the Buddha away from his pursuit of enlightenment.

The first deception representing ignorance was that the Buddha was asked to abandon his meditation and return immediately to the kingdom because his father, king Shuddhodana had died and the evil Devadatta had taken over the kingdom.

This did not disturb the Buddha's meditation and then Mara tried to create an obstacle using desire by showing him his own beautiful daughters who tried to deceive and seduce him in all possible ways.

When this did not disturb the Buddha's meditation Mara then used hatred by coming towards the Buddha surrounded by millions and millions of horribly frightening warriors who were throwing weapons at the Buddha's body.

But the Buddha wasn't distracted or fooled by these three poisons. He remained immersed in compassion and loving-kindness and therefore triumphed over this display of the three poisons and was able to eventually achieve enlightenment.

1.3.10 Tenth Deed

The tenth deed of the Buddha is his enlightenment which he reached while meditating under the bodhi tree. Because the Buddha had developed all the qualities of meditation to the utmost, he was able to reach enlightenment. He did this again to show us how to understand that we also can reach enlightenment.

As a matter of fact, one of the main points of the whole Buddhist philosophy is to show us that Buddhahood is not something to be found outside of us, but something we can achieve by looking inside ourselves. In the same way as the Buddha Shakyamuni reached enlightenment, we can also achieve enlightenment. And the qualities that we will attain with enlightenment will be no different from the one's the Buddha attained.

Also whatever negative emotions the Buddha managed to eliminate, we also can eliminate. The Buddha started as a bodhisattva and then became someone who achieved enlightenment to show us that we also can do the same.

1.3.11 Eleventh deed

The eleventh deed of the Buddha occurred when he turned the wheel of the Dharma three times, which means when he gave the three great cycles of teachings.

When the Buddha lived in India, the population of India believed that if one made offerings and prayed to a god, then that god would be satisfied and happy and in turn that god would give you liberation and happiness. They also believed that if you didn't make offerings and pray to the god, he would be very angry at you and throw you down to the hells and inflict other states of suffering upon you. This idea of a god isn't really one of a special deity, it is only the embodiment of desire and aggression.

But in Buddhism, we do not expect our happiness or our suffering to come from the Buddha. It is not believed that if we please the Buddha, he will bring us happiness and if we displease the Buddha, he will throw us into saṃsāra or some lower realm. The possibility of happiness or reaching liberation is entirely up to us. So if we practice the path that leads to liberation, we will attain Buddhahood. But if we do not practice it, then we can't expect to reach enlightenment. The choice is entirely ours. It's in our hands whether we want to find happiness or suffering.

But still there is something that comes from the Buddha and this is the path to liberation. To provide us with that means for liberation, the Buddha turned the wheel of the Dharma.

1.3.12 Twelve Deed

The twelfth deed of the Buddha is his passing away which was in the town of Kushingara at the age of 83. He asked his students if they had any final questions and then lying in the "lion's posture" he passed away. His last words were,

Bhikshus, never forget: Decay is inherent in all composite things.

2 The Golden Lineage

By Khenchen Könchok Gyaltsen Rinpoche

2.1 Meaning of the Term Kagyü

The Tibetan word *Ka* signifies oral teachings, or the Buddha's own teachings, while *gyü* means lineage. This noble line has been likened to a golden rosary, for each of the individuals constituting it is as precious and perfect as the finest gold: Each is a repository of extraordinary realization, learning and attainment.

Each confers upon the next the Deep Pointing Out instructions which cause the direct perception of the nature of the mind as Mahāmudrā. To meet these Lamas, even if only through the medium of the written word, is an event of such power that any person making that contact will not be reborn in the lower realms for many lifetimes.

These life stories are therefore more than just history; they are an example which inspires one to follow the path. They become a cause for freeing us from saṃsāra, enabling us to dispel mental obstacles and achieve enlightenment.

2.2 Vajradhāra



The all-pervasive and limitlessly beneficial qualities of Vajradhāra who is also known as the primordial Buddha. Vajradhāra is not to be confused with the historical Buddha Śākyamuni, for while the latter was an emanation, the former represents the ultimate aspect of enlightenment.

Alternatively, it could be said that while Śākyamuni is the *nirmāṇakāya*, or form body aspect of compassion, Vajradhāra is the formless or *dharmakāya* body whose all-permeating qualities, while beyond ordinary conception, are yet inherently at the core of every living being.

Again one may consider that while the historical Buddha represents the heat and light of the sun in terms of the way he is experienced by beings, Vajradhāra is the sun itself, making its presence felt universally and without discrimination.

In reality there is no separation between Śākyamuni and Vajradhāra, for Śākyamuni's wisdom mind is *dharmakāya*, his speech is *saṃbhogakāya*, and his body *nirmāṇakāya*. But this truth is recognized according to the level of realization achieved by the different practitioners.

2.3 Tilopa



Vajradhāra transmitted the sacred teachings directly to the Indian master Tilopa who, because of his extraordinarily high realizations, was able to see the saṃbhogakāya, or subtle form body manifestation of Vajradhāra. In the process Tilopa became the first in the line known as Kagyü.

Tilopa was an emanation being, meaning that he was one who was born in an extraordinary way and continued to live outside the norm. Travelling throughout India, he received teachings from many different masters and extracted their essence, particularly the Buddha's Vajrayāna with its emphasis on commitment until the end of saṃsāra to the welfare of others.

2.4 Nāropa



Tilopa's heart-son was the scholar Nāropa, who became a chancellor of Nālandā University, and whose reputation was such that thousands of lesser paṇḍitas relied on his wisdom. But though Nāropa was perfectly versed in the theoretical aspect of the Buddha's teachings, he realized that his own mind could not remain stable even for a moment.

Thus, he was determined to seek a great teacher who could point him toward the direct nature of the mind. Eventually, he met Tilopa and underwent twelve major and twelve lesser hardships in order to purify his karma and emotion-induced obscurations.

When at last Nāropa's ordeals had ended, his teacher Tilopa pointed toward the sky and said:

Kyeho! This is Primordial Consciousness of Self-Recognition
Beyond words and mental objects.
I, Tilo, have nothing to show.
Just realize the Self-Recognition.

At that moment, through the great magnificent blessings of the Lama and his own complete purification, Nāropa realized harmony of mind and attained the state of Vajradhāra. He received the complete teachings and transmitted them to numberless disciples in many different places, especially Kashmir.

To this day we can see the remains of a great monastery established by Nāropa in that area. Both Tilopa and Nāropa combined peerless scholarship and personal realization, and were among the eighty-four great Mahāsiddhas.

2.5 Marpa



It was the translator Marpa Lotsāwa who, among Nāropa's star-like disciples, became his successor and lineage-holder in Tibet. Marpa was a manifestation of Ḍombi Heruka, and appeared in order to cause the Dharma teachings to flourish. Initially, he attended Drogmi Lotsāwa from whom he received teachings and learned Sanskrit, but this alone did not satisfy him.

After trading his personal possessions for gold to offer to the guru, he made repeated journeys to India and Nepal. Generally, he attended one hundred eight masters, particularly thirteen great Lamas, but among them the most crucial to his path were Nāropa and Maitrīpa. Like Nāropa, he underwent great hardships, even risking his life for the Dharma.

By day he received teachings and by night he practiced, in this way mastering both the theory and realization aspects. It was because of Marpa's mastery that Nāropa appointed him as his successor in Tibet and prophesied that his lineage would continue indefinitely like a flowing stream.

Although Marpa had a wife and children, one cannot compare his to a conventional saṃsāric life, for such were his realizations and motivations that he could move through a householder's routine unstained. He is like a lotus in the mud, free from defilement.

When someone suggested to Marpa's disciple Milarepa that he should marry in emulation of his teacher, Mila replied:

"Marpa is like a lion, and I like a fox. If the fox tries to jump as high as the lion, he only breaks his back."

In Marpa's mind all phenomena were perceived as a Buddhāfield, all sentient beings as enlightened deities, and all sounds as Dharma teachings. Thus, for him saṃsāra constituted an enlightened state, and confusion was recognized as having the nature of pristine wisdom. He fully achieved Buddhahood, the Vajradhāra state, in one lifetime.

Marpa translated many teachings into Tibetan, especially Mahāmudrā and Vajrayāna texts. These he transmitted to a great number of disciples, particularly the four known as the pillar disciples. Among these, Milarepa was to be the most renowned.

2.6 Milarepa



Milarepa's life is recounted in different forms across various texts. These variations do not contradict one another, as great teachers often have multiple life stories shaped by the perceptions of different disciples.

For example, while some of his students saw Mila as walking, others saw him meditating, still others saw him giving teachings, and yet others saw him as ill—all at the same time! Milarepa held the practice lineage and became one of the key inspirations for Dharma followers, regardless of the sect to which they belonged.

Because of his direct perception of saṃsāra, his great renunciation, and his willingness to endure hardship, he achieved the realization of all the great Buddha qualities and became an instrument for perpetuating the Dharma in Tibet by effortlessly composing vajra *dohā* songs.

As he himself predicted, his fame was spread by the *Ḍākinīs*. In our time his life story is available in many languages, and has become a healing force for beings disheartened by saṃsāra. He is perhaps the best-known Buddhist figure after Śākyamuni himself.

2.7 Gampopa



Milarepa transmitted the stainless, nectar-like teachings to numberless disciples. Among them, Gampopa has been likened to the sun, while Rechung Dorje Drakpa was compared to the moon. In the case of Dharma Lord Gampopa, he combined both the Kadampa and Mahāmudrā lineages.

At this point we must switch our attention for a moment to Atiśa, a prominent master at Nālandā University, who brought the Kadampa lineage to Tibet. Born into an upper-class family in Bengal (India), Atiśa was untouched by worldly enjoyment because he saw clearly the nature of the saṃsāric state.

Journeying to Serling (Golden Island) he received the Bodhisattva's vow and teachings from Lama Serlingpa, Dharmakīrti. He also received teachings from Nāgārjuna's lineage (profound view lineage), from the Asaṅga lineage (profound action lineage), and the Nāropa lineage (profound blessing meditation practice lineage).

Because of his strenuous study and practice, combined with the Bodhicitta motivation he so cherished, Atiśa became an ornament of this

world. When the time arrived for Dharma to enter the land of Tibet, Atiśa journeyed there at the request of King Lha, Lama Yeshe Öd, and Jangchub Öd, and for thirteen years gave teachings which produced many disciples, including the great Geshe Drom Tönpa.

In addition, to satisfy the King, he wrote the text known as the Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment. Dharma Lord Gampopa, who was the next holder of the Kagyüpa lineage, received Atiśa's complete Kadampa teachings, including the Lam Rim, from Geshe Chagri Gongkawa, Chyayulwa, Nyukrumpa, Maryulwa Loden Sherab, and others.

Like an ocean which encompasses the waters of many rivers, this great being ceaselessly sought opportunities to study and practice in order to better benefit others. Thus it was that in hearing the name of Milarepa his mind was moved with conviction and the determination to reach the master whatever the sacrifice.

Staying with Milarepa for three years, he studied the major Vajrayāna teachings including the Six Yogas of Nāropa, Cakrasaṃvara, Vajrayoginī, Hevajra, Guhyasamāja and others. He fully accomplished his studies and realizations, and in particular he perfected his mastery of Mahāmudrā and Tummo. Indeed, his mind became inseparable from the Vajradhāra state.

After completing his study, Gampopa went to Dagla Gampo as foretold by Milarepa. There he began giving teachings and meditation instruction to disciples gathering from all directions like geese flocking to a lotus lake. As prophesied by the Buddha in the Samādhi Rāja Sūtra, he attracted many thousands of disciples, as well as no less than five hundred Bodhisattvas.

In this way he made the name of the Dagpo Kagyü renowned in the three worlds. It was with Gampopa that the four branches of the Kagyüpa arose. These are: the Phagdru Kagyü founded by Phagdru Dorje Gyalpo, the Karma Kagyü founded by the First Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa, the

Tselpa Kagyü founded by Shang Tselpa, and the Bahram Kagyü founded by Darma Wangchuk.

Gampopa wrote many important texts according to both the Sūtra and Tantra teachings. These include: the Four Dharmas of Gampopa, the Co-Emergent Primordial Consciousness, the Precious Rosary of the Excellent Path, and the Jewel Ornament of Liberation, this last being the first Lam Rim commentary printed in Tibet.

All these constitute the essence of the Kadampa and Mahāmudrā lineage offered for the benefit of future generations. Gampopa himself said:

"In the future those who wish to see me can study the Jewel Ornament of Liberation and the Precious Rosary of the Excellent Path. It is the same as seeing me directly."

That this is possible is because the complete essence of Gampopa's teachings and advice on compassion and wisdom is contained within these texts. If we study and practice them thoroughly and keep them in our heart, it is the same as meeting with the Buddha or Lord Gampopa himself.

2.8 Phagmo Drupa



After Gampopa's passing, his heart-son Phagmo Drupa continued the lineage. Before meeting with Lord Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, under the guidance of many well-known masters, studied such aspects of knowledge as the sciences of art, logic, medicine, language, and metaphysics.

In particular, under the Jetsün Sakyapa he made a thorough study of the Path and Result teachings, and became renowned for his vast and profound wisdom in these areas. He could also remain for days meditating in the state of bliss, clarity and non-conceptualization.

Due to karmic connections, along with fortuitous causes and conditions, Phagmo Drupa received the opportunity to meet with Dharma Lord Gampopa, the Great Physician. During one of their discussions Phagmo Drupa recounted his achievement in the meditation state.

Lord Gampopa, who at the time was stirring a bowl of tsampa, held out a piece of dough and said, "This dough is more useful than your realization." At that moment all Phagmo Drupa's pride was released. Lord Gampopa then instructed him directly, pointing out the nature of mind.

Within a few days Phagmo Drupa fully actualized the direct realization of Mahāmudrā. The skin of the ordinary state was suddenly peeled away, and at that moment Phagmo Drupa said: "All my other great teachers lacked the one word necessary."

Thereafter, Phagmo Drupa received the complete Lineage teachings and meditation instruction. In accord with Gampopa's intent he emphasized the Five-fold Path of Mahāmudrā which encompasses the complete teachings of the Buddha, both sūtra and tantra.

Phagmo Drupa established a monastery in Central Tibet, fully transforming that area into a saṃbhogakāya Buddhāfield. He gathered many thousands of disciples, among whom were eight great Kagyüpas who established the Drikung, Taklung, Lingre (or Drukpa), Trobu, Martsang, Yerpa and Shukseb Kagyü orders. He also wrote several major texts, including the Phagdru Thadru, and commentaries and explanations of sūtra and tantra teachings. The four major and eight great Kagyü lineages, acting like brothers in one family, benefitted countless sentient beings in different parts of the world.

2.9 Jigten Sumgön



Phagmo Drupa's successor was Lord Jigten Sumgön, who is the embodiment of the Buddhas of the Three Times and a manifestation of Ārya Nāgārjuna. He appeared at an auspicious time and place for acting as an inspiration to those determined to be free of saṃsāra.

Early in his life he met with great masters, received all aspects of the teachings, and eventually encountered Lord Phagmo Drupa, from whom he received the complete lineage teachings. To integrate these within his mind he practiced day and night until he attained Buddhahood in the Echung Cave at the age of thirty-five.

His wisdom enabled him directly to perceive the very subtle levels of cause and effect, and to become renowned as the master of interdependent origination. At the request of humans and non-humans he established a monastery at Drikung, thus becoming the founder of the Drikung Kagyü order.

His teachings there were geared to his hearers' faculties and level of understanding, and he easily cut through cultural differences and dogma,

revealing the universal law of causes and conditions. Though he had hundreds of disciples, he never excluded any beings from his heart, wishing only to dispel their suffering and establish them in freedom from saṃsāra.

The embodiment of wisdom and compassion, he cut the link of their negative propensities. In this way he is:

like a medicine healing all the diseases of suffering,
like unstained nectar transforming the afflicting emotions into wisdom,
like a moon cooling the heat of saṃsāra,
like a sun dispelling the darkness of confusion.

Like a wish-fulfilling gem fulfilling through pure teachings all beings' desire for peace and happiness,

like a warrior conquering the enemies of suffering,
like a bridge leading from saṃsāra to nirvāṇa,
like a ship crossing the ocean of saṃsāra,
like a parent tending his children at sacrifice to himself, and
like a loyal friend upon whom all can rely.

Manifesting in different forms, he benefits beings tirelessly until the end of saṃsāra. If one takes him as a root guru, he promises to bless one and lead one to enlightenment.

Lord Jigten Sumgön wrote many commentaries and explanations, especially the four volumes known as Inner Profound Teachings in which he gives meditation instruction and advice, five volumes of general teachings, and teachings on Tummo.

One of his foremost works, the Gong Chik, contains all the essential aspects of Vinaya discipline, Bodhicitta and Tantra. This text has many commentaries, both detailed and concise, by such masters as Sherab Jungne, who was Lord Jigten Sumgön's own disciple, the Eighth Karmapa, the Fourth Shamarpa, and the Drikung Dharmakīrti.

Lord Jigten Sumgön's disciple, the scholar Ngorje Repa, also wrote *Essence of Mahāyāna*, a complete teaching of the Stages of the Path in both sūtra and tantra. From this great being until the present day there is an unbroken lineage of Drikung Kagyü teachers whose histories are detailed in another Tibetan text.

Lord Jigten Sumgön prophesied among his disciples:

In the future, my teachings will flourish because of two Bodhisattvas, who are like the sun and the moon, through their compassion and wisdom.

Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang Rinpoche is like the sun, the emanation of Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, while Drikung Kyabgön Chungtsang Rinpoche is like the moon, the emanation of Mañjuśrī, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom.

2.10 Drikung Kyabgön Chungtsang

Drikung Kyabgön Chungtsang, Tenzin Chokyi Nangwa, 36th throne holder of the Drikung Kagyü lineage and 8th successive manifestation of Chungtsang Rinpoche, was born in the Water Horse Year of 1942 in Lhokha. He emerged as the youngest of five children in the prominent aristocratic Lhagyar family, one of Tibet's oldest noble houses, descended from the ancient royal dynasty.



The 7th Chungtsang Rinpoche, Tenzin Chökyi Jungne (1909-1940), passed away prematurely. In 1946, the youngest son of the Lhagyari family was recognized as the successive manifestation of Chungtsang Rinpoche and enthroned at Drikung Thil Monastery.

Numerous signs, divinations, and oracle consultations confirmed his identity. Gyabra Tritsab's vision at Lhamo Latso Lake, along with divinations by the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje and Taklung Matrul, supported the recognition.

The Tibetan Government authenticated the successive manifestation. Chungtsang passed the traditional test, identifying religious objects from his previous incarnations.

At the age of eight, he began learning to read and write, memorize texts, and perform rites and rituals. His main spiritual instructor was first Gar Khensur Tsangyang Norbu Rinpoche, from 1955 onward Tritsab Gyabra Rinpoche and Ayang Thubten Rinpoche. He received transmissions, empowerments, and teachings of the Kagyü tradition and particularly of the Drikung Kagyü tradition, from Tritsab Gyabra, Ayang Thubten, Lho Bongtrul Rinpoche, and other eminent Lamas.

In 1959, after the Tibetan Uprising, Chungtsang Rinpoche had to undergo communist indoctrinations and severe struggle sessions at Nyima Changra Shedra, where the Chinese Army established their regional headquarters. He was mistreated and in December 1959 was imprisoned.

Chungtsang Rinpoche remained in prison for 23 years until 1982. Especially during the Cultural Revolution, he had to undergo re-education programs and perform forced labor. At that time, he was transferred to the infamous prison camp in Kongpo Ningtri. There he had to cut down trees in the forest. One day he was hit by a falling tree and was severely injured. It was said that he only survived because he was Kyabgön Rinpoche.

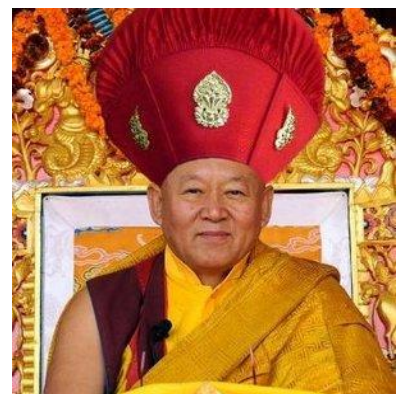
Finally, in the course of China's political liberalization in 1983, he was released from prison and received a position in the Regional People's Congress and subsequently a prominent position in the Department of Religious Affairs of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

In 1985, for the first time, Chungtsang Rinpoche was allowed to travel to India to meet with his siblings who had left the country. He also visited the Drikung monasteries in Ladakh and there met again with Kyabgön Thinle Lhündrup after 26 years.

The second time he was allowed to travel abroad was in 1992. Chungtsang Rinpoche was able to participate in the inauguration of the Jangchubling Monastery of the Drikung Kagyü Institute in Dehradun. As it was a Monkey Year, he gave the Traditional Monkey Year Teachings together with Kyabgön Thinle Lhündrup. For the Drikungpas, the sun and moon had finally joined together again.

2.11 Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang

Könchok Tenzin Kunsang Thrinle Lhündrup,
37th throne holder of the Drikung Kagyü



lineage and 7th successive manifestation of Chetsang Rinpoche, was born on June 4, 1946, into the aristocratic Tsarong family of Lhasa.

Following the passing of the previous Drikung Kyabgön Shiwe Lodro (1886-1943), two search parties traveled across Tibet to find the new emanation of Chetsang Rinpoche.

In 1950, a vision of the Drikung regent, Tritsab Gyabra Rinpoche, at the oracle lake Lhamo Latso, along with numerous divinatory signs, led to the recognition of the Tsarong family's son as the new manifestation.

Numerous prodigious signs and visions accompanied his birth. Thrinle Lhündrup passed many tests, including identifying objects belonging to his previous manifestations. His identity was further confirmed by divinations from the Regent of Tibet, the Eighth Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, and Taklung Matrul.

Just before the first Chinese invasion of Tibet, Thrinle Lhündrup was formally enthroned as the manifestation of Drikung Chetsang in the autumn of 1950 at the seat of the Drikung Thil lineage. The first Chinese invasion of Tibet occurred immediately afterward.

Tritsab Gyabra Rinpoche and Ayang Thubten Rinpoche were his main instructors for his curriculum, which included reading, writing, memorization, astrology, and grammar, as well as empowerments, transmissions, and teachings of the Drikung Kagyü lineage.

During the ceremonies of the Year of the Monkey in 1956, at eleven years old, he gave his first public teaching, a long-life empowerment.

Following the Tibetan uprising of 1959, when his family fled to India, Chetsang Rinpoche remained in Tibet where he completed his secular education, distinguishing himself through his academic and athletic brilliance.

With the onset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, his life took a dramatic turn. He suffered persecution and humiliating "people's tribunals," and in 1969 was assigned to a rural commune where he performed extremely hard physical labor under miserable conditions. He lived in a partially deteriorated hut, infested with vermin, located above a corral. His only possessions were a pot, a cup, and bedding materials.

Despite these adverse circumstances, Rinpoche maintained such remarkable serenity that he was compared by his uncle to Milarepa, as despite living in austere conditions, he preserved his inner calm and maintained a rich inner spiritual life.

The annual work cycle was extremely demanding. In spring and summer, Rinpoche worked arduously in the work unit's fields. In autumn, he had to climb high mountains to cut firewood for the commune and transport heavy loads. During winter, his task consisted of shoveling sewage from Lhasa's cesspools and taking it to the farm. Despite these harsh conditions, he always found moments to help others when he could.

Due to being considered an emanation and his aristocratic origin, Rinpoche had very few possibilities of escaping Tibet; however, after meticulous planning, he found a way to flee in 1975. He undertook the dangerous journey alone and without help to cross the Tibetan border into Nepal, traversing high mountain passes and glaciers, arriving unharmed in Nepal and finally at the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharamsala.

He subsequently traveled to the United States, where he learned English while working in restaurants to support himself. Shortly after, in 1978, he returned to India to assume the leadership of the Drikung Kagyü lineage as its throne holder.

During all these years, Rinpoche had led an apparently secular life, but still strictly maintained his monastic vows. Upon returning to India, he

formally resumed his monastic life and settled at Phyang Monastery in Ladakh. He immediately undertook a traditional three-year retreat at Lamayuru Monastery under the guidance of the rigorous principal retreat master Kyunga Sodpa Gyatso (1911-1980).

The Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang studied with numerous lamas and rinpoches of great trajectory from different traditions, receiving from them valuable teachings and empowerments that enriched his spiritual understanding. Among his main teachers are Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, the Dalai Lama, and the 16th Karmapa, from whom he received part of the teachings, empowerments of Anuttara Yoga Tantra, and the deepest esoteric practices of these different lineages.

In 1987, Chetsang Rinpoche began his main work of expanding the teachings of the Drikung Kagyü Lineage and various social and environmental projects.

2.11.1 Dharma Expansion

Drikung Kagyü Institute (1984): Established in Dehradun, India, incorporating Jangchubling Monastery, where monks mainly from the Himalayan region, such as Tibet, Mongolia, Nepal, Ladakh, and India, live and receive basic monastic education.

Samtenling Nunnery (1992/1997): Initially founded as a retreat center, but later used as a nunnery due to the need to accommodate all the nuns leaving Tibet in 1996.

Songtsen Library (2003): Created near the monastery in Dehradun as a center for the conservation of important and rare texts with principal interest in the Dunhuang manuscripts, for Tibetan and Himalayan studies.

Kagyü College for Higher Buddhist Studies (2005): Built with the need to separate functions such as the practice of liturgies and rituals and

advanced studies from the Drikung Kagyü Institute, it was inaugurated near Songtsen Library, completing the new Drikung Mandala in Dehradun.

Translation Groups (2011): Leads two translation groups - "Ratnashri Translation Group" and "Vikramashila Translation House" - making Buddhist teachings accessible to Western audiences.

Śrāvastī Monastery (2014): Established a non-denominational monastery at this important Buddhist sanctuary in India, particularly important for Buddhism as Buddha taught there for more than 25 years. Its purpose is to unite different Buddhist traditions worldwide and revitalize Śrāvastī's historical significance.

Śrāvastī Meditation: Seeking to expand Buddha's teachings in a non-sectarian, modern way for 21st-century people, Rinpoche condensed the three main traditions of Buddhism, containing all their essential points in "Śrāvastī Meditation," honoring the sacred site where Buddha transmitted most of his Sutras.

Revitalization of Hevajra from the Marpa-Ngok lineage (2017): The motivation of Rinpoche is: 1) establishing Marpa in his proper place within the Kagyü Lineage, thus using the force of history, 2) as well as revitalizing the transmissions passed from Marpa to his pupil Ngog Chöku Dorje, especially with focus on 2 of the Ngok mandalas: the Hevajra (9 deity) and Nairatmya (15 deity).

Retreat and Dharma Centers: With the help of other great masters, Rinpoche has established numerous Dharma centers and retreat centers throughout different countries.

2.11.2 Environmental Projects

"Go Green Go Organic" Initiative: Started approximately 20 years ago with planting Sea Buckthorn in Ladakh, evolving into a large-scale

conservation effort that has facilitated planting approximately 2 million trees over 12 years, contributing to Ladakh's carbon neutrality goals.

Green Himalayas Project: A 25-year environmental conservation initiative launched in Delhi, involving collaborations with organizations like Goldenmile Learning for educational support.

Artificial Glaciers in Ladakh: Led construction of artificial glaciers in Ladakh to address water scarcity in the region.

3 Glossary

Atiśa: An influential Indian Buddhist scholar and master who revitalized Buddhism in Tibet during the 11th century.

Arhat: A fully enlightened being in the Theravāda tradition, who has attained liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

Bodhicitta: The compassionate desire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Brahmā: A prominent deity from Hindu cosmology adopted into Buddhist narratives, often depicted as a creator figure and protector of the Dharma.

Cakrasaṃvara: A yidam deity of the Unsurpassed Union Tantra class.

Devadatta: The Buddha's cousin who became his rival and tried to harm him.

Dharma: The teachings of the Buddha, the path to enlightenment, or the ultimate truth.

Dharmakāya: Dharma Body. The body of an enlightened being for their own benefit.

Ḍākinīs: Female tantric yidam deities or practitioners associated with wisdom and spiritual transformation.

Ḍombi Heruka: A mahasiddha known for his unconventional methods and realization in Vajrayāna Buddhism.

Guhyasamāja: A yidam deity of the Unsurpassed Union Tantra class.

Hevajra: A yidam deity of the Unsurpassed Union Tantra class.

Indra: A key deity from Hindu cosmology integrated into Buddhist stories, known as the king of the gods and a guardian of Buddhist teachings.

Jambudvīpa: The southern continent in Buddhist cosmology where humans reside, significant as the realm where enlightenment is attainable.

Mahāmudrā: Can refer to the set of meditative practices that lead to the direct realization of the nature of the mind or to the realization itself.

Mahāsiddha: Great Accomplished One. A highly realized tantric practitioner or yogin in Vajrayāna Buddhism, known for extraordinary spiritual attainments and often unconventional methods.

Māra: The personification of obstacles that prevent spiritual progress and enlightenment.

Nairāñjanā: The river near Bodh Gaya where the Buddha bathed before his enlightenment.

Nirmāṇakāya: Emanation Body. A physical body through which a Buddha can give teachings to ordinary practitioners.

Nirvāṇa: The state of liberation from suffering and the cycle of uncontrolled rebirth.

Padmasambhava: The master who introduced Vajrayāna Buddhism to Tibet, also known as Guru Rinpoche.

Paṇḍitas: Prominent scholars in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism.

Tuṣita: The Tuṣita heaven, where bodhisattvas reside before their final rebirth.

Parinirvāṇa: The final passing away of an enlightened being.

Vajra Posture: The vajra posture, a meditation position with the legs crossed and the feet resting on the opposite thighs.

Wheel of the Dharma: Refers to the teachings of the Buddha.

Samādhi: A state of deep meditative concentration.

Sam̐bhogakāya: Enjoyment Body. A subtle body through which a Buddha imparts teachings to advanced practitioners.

Sam̐sāra: The uncontrolled cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

Stūpa: A Buddhist monument housing relics, symbolizing the enlightened mind of the Buddha.

Sugata: An epithet of the Buddha meaning "well-gone," referring to his attainment of enlightenment.

Sūtra: A discourse or scripture attributed to the Buddha.

Tantra: Esoteric teachings and practices aimed at rapid enlightenment.

Tīrthikas: Non-Buddhist religious practitioners or philosophers in ancient India.

Tsampa: Roasted barley flour, a staple food in Tibetan culture.

Tummo: A tantric practice involving the generation of inner heat and bliss, used as a support to realize the nature of the mind.

Vajra: A term that can be translated as indestructible or adamant. As a ritual object, it symbolizes the method in the inseparable union of method-wisdom.

Vajrayoginī: A yidam deity of the Unsurpassed Union Tantra class.

Vārāṇasī: The ancient city where the Buddha gave his first sermon.