

Part 1 of 2

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The Illusory Play

The True Story Of An Ordinary Person Who Was Identified As The Incarnation Of The Ganden Tripa¹ Trichen Jangchub Chöpel

The Autobiography of Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang

Three secrets of all Conquerors in the space of vajra essence,
Shining like the sun and moon, my Protector, that kind Lord,
Who is endowed with the two sets of ten qualities,²
May the dust from your feet rest on my crown until the attainment of full enlightenment!

Long in samsara, bound in chains
Of innumerable strands of karma and delusion,
The varied pictures that arise, clothed in every variety
Of anything but happiness are quite frightening!

Yet, like a flash of lightning in the black of night,
This momentary glimpse of Dharma's stainless path
Received through the kindness of the holy beings,
Has transformed samsaric rebirth into something meaningful!

Still, the demons of clinging to permanence and true existence
Fill the heart, making the mind wander constantly.
Distracted to the monkey drama of this life's concerns,
I'll tell this story, ultimate aims carried off by the wind!

I am the ordinary person named Lozang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, who is supposed to be the tulku incarnation of the sixty-ninth throne holder of the Gelugpa, Yongtzin Trichen Jangchub Chöpel, and his incarnation, the eighty-fifth Ganden Tripa, Trichen Lozang Tsültrim Paldän. Yet since my own mind is not hidden from myself, I know that I have nowhere near the realizations to qualify as the incarnation of those holy beings! Still, because of strong previous karma, my fate has been to bear the title of their incarnations. As Je Gungtangpa has said,

If a Tulku comes for the sake of living beings and the teachings,
Their teaching and practice should leave some trace!

When you see the life stories of previous great beings it blows your mind! If you listen to their stories, it causes faith to grow. It has the power to plant imprints for liberation in the minds of trainees. But in the case of someone like me, a mass of confusion and inflicted by the three poisons, one who recognizes nothing but the three occasions³, such benefits are as nonexistent as the fur on a turtle! Although I lack such qualities, since I am supposed to bear the name of a Lama, by studying, contemplating, and practicing so that my life would not be wasted, at least, there will have been some small trace of an impact that I could say I had, in terms of upholding and spreading the teachings. Left unexamined, that might seem to be the case, but if I check closely, my impact

¹ Contrary to popular belief, the Ganden Tripa (and not the Dalai Lama) is the spiritual throne holder of the Gelugpa lineage. This rank is meritocratic – that is, a Ganden Tripa is elected, and they do not reincarnate into their position.

² The two sets of ten qualifications of a Guru mentioned in the *Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion*, one for Sutra, one for Tantra,

³ Eating, sleeping and defecating

cannot stand up to scrutiny. With a nature like the colors of a rainbow, there is nothing to be singled out! Therefore, for me to write about the troubles of this life will be but an imitation of previous great masters, like a bat pretending to be an eagle! It could be somewhat embarrassing to the wise!

Nevertheless, in 1964, in Tibet, in the year of the wood dragon, that leader of humans and gods, the Supreme Protector of Refuge Lord of Conquerors Kyabje Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo⁴ told me that I must write my life-story. I received this injunction respectfully on the crown of my head. After that, a number of faithful disciples such as Sera Je Trehor Geshe Tamdrin Rabtän also strongly urged me to write it. Kazur Kungo Neshar Thubtän Tharpa also urged its composition with offerings of an image of Buddha and a *khatak*⁵. In a letter from the nearby Jarmän region, Dragyab Hotogtu Rinpoche urged me to write it. In addition my long-time neighbor, Paldän, carefully kept a complete record of my situation, early, middle and late, through events that he saw for himself and comments that he overheard. The process of corroborating events with his records seemed to go on forever.

A previous aristocrat of Kyishöd and Tagtse, Zhabdrung Dorje Namgyäl, ministers, Kalön Gazhiwa Doring Tänzün Päljor, Kalön Dokar Zhabdrung Tsering Wangyäl, and other officials and important figures have written books about their own stories so, by my estimation, there doesn't seem to be any major reason not to give a straightforward account of my own situation.

Produced by ignorance and white and black karma, happiness and suffering arise in turn throughout the four seasons, and though I have spent my whole life in the guise of a Dharma practitioner, I have wasted the freedom and opportunity of a precious human life. From qualified Spiritual Masters who were like actual Buddhas, I have received the vast and profound teachings of Sutra and Tantra and, not leaving them as something merely heard about, I have practiced incorporating them into my own being; yet there is not the slightest point about which I can say with confidence that I understand it completely. As the supreme conqueror Kelzang Gyatso, the seventh Dalai Lama, said,

Lacking realized qualities from mixing Dharma with the mind,
Yet pretending to help others by showing them the path to liberation,
Simply exhausts oneself and others
It is sad, the way we enslave ourselves!

Accordingly, like a tape recorder or a parrot repeating MANI mantras, my story will be of but slight benefit to beings. In short, as the Tibetan master Mipham Geleg said,

Although we may feel we have a whole forest of peace in our hearts,
If we rely upon a crooked walking-stick of impure ethical discipline,
We are deceiving ourselves as well as others:
Give the results of such unkind deeds to me!

I will not pollute the story with the eight worldly dharmas⁶ or perpetuate the cycle of virtuous, non-virtuous and mixed karma just to amuse myself and deceive others by pretending certain things didn't happen or that I did things which I did not. Rather, I shall tell the story of my wandering, naked and empty handed, without Dharma, in plain prose, just the bare facts without elaboration.

⁴ Trijang Rinpoche's root guru was His Holiness Kyabje Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo. Upon receiving 24 days of teachings on the *Lamrim*, based on Pabongkha Rinpoche's explanations and commentaries, Trijang Rinpoche authored *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*

⁵ A white ceremonial silk scarf offered by Tibetans as a form of greeting and respect to our Gurus, elders or persons in authority

⁶ These are distractions that hinder or taint our spiritual practice: wanting material gain, avoiding material loss; wanting praise, avoiding blame; wanting to be accepted, avoiding rejection; wanting to be comfortable, avoiding discomfort.

The land of my birth, Tibet, is a land that is under the subduing guidance of the Supreme Arya Avalokiteswara⁷, Holder of the Lotus. I was born in one of its three regions, the central Dharma land of Ü Tsang, in the central of its four districts, called Kyishö Tsäl, Gungtang. A Lama named Shang Yudragpa, Protector of Beings, a path-blazer of the Kagyu teachings, was born there and the monastery that he founded there became a huge training center. Before Protector Manjusri Tsongkhapa⁸ founded the monastic universities of the Gelug, Shang Yudragpa's training center was one of the six great Dharma communities of central Tibet. Called *Tsäl Gungtang*, it was referred to in the phrase, '*Sang De Gung Sum, Ga Kyor Zul Sum.*'

At the time when the Tsälpa throne-holder's⁹ authority had reached its greatest extent, Tsäl included the central region and two colleges known as 'branch monasteries.' *Tsäl Gungtang* had three colleges: Chötri, Zimkang Shar, and Chökor Ling. Thus, spiritually and politically, it was a monastery of quite some importance. Later, however, the Tsälpa Tripön's authority declined. During the year of the fire hare in the ninth sixty-year cycle, 1507 by the western calendar, Gungtang went up in flames. Lost were some very blessed and deeply symbolic objects, the entire central temple, the great Buddha statue, the image of Zhang Rinpoche, the '*Tashi Ö Bar*' relics, the statue of Four-armed Mahakala, and more. With just the two smaller colleges of Chötri and Zimkang Shar, the monastery declined greatly in spiritual and temporal authority. During the time of the great Fifth Dalai Lama, Zurchen Chöying Rangdröl held the throne.

After that, when the fiftieth Ganden Tripa, the Renunciate of Amdo, Gedün Püntso, plated the silver reliquary stupa of Je Tsongkhapa with gold, King Lhazang awarded him with authority over the Gungtang Temple and its images, the two branch colleges, the offerings, and the entire land, houses, people and wealth. Because of this he became known as 'Trichen Gungtangpa.' In his successive incarnations such as Lord Tānpay Drönmay, he was still referred to as Gungtang Tsang, and his name became fully renowned. When some of Trichen Gungtangpa's successive incarnations however, began to reside primarily at Amdo Tashikyil Labrang, he could not administer Gungtang Temple due to the extended distance, and the government took it back.

Later, when the Seventh Dalai Lama Kelsang Gyatso was young, Gungtang pa's incarnation was the Dalai Lama's uncle, Ngagrampa Samten Gyatso, who served as both his loving personal attendant and reading master.

In another lifetime, as the learned Mongolian Darhen abbot Gelong Kelsang of 'Tsa' ancestry, he was so revered as to be awarded the Gungtang Temple and all of its sacred objects in perpetuity.

Tsering Döndrup, was indisputably a member of the great Seventh Dalai Lama's uncle's family line, and part of Gungtang Labrang. The members of this labrang were deeply learned and skilled in figures and very stable in secular dealings, and all in the Tsäl Gungtang Temple region held Tsering Döndrup in high regard. They went to him as a wise man for answers to their questions.

Through Tsering Döndrup, five sons, including Serje Prati Kamlung Tritrul, and two daughters were born into the Langpa household. After their mother died, with a servant woman, he had a son who was identified as the Ganden Pukang Kyenrab Tulku. When the youngest of the previously mentioned five sons reached about twenty years of age, he married my mother, Tsering Drölma, from the 'Nang Gong' family of Gungtang. However, this son later drowned crossing the Kyichu river on the way to Lhasa.

Not abandoning his daughter-in-law, Tsering Döndrup married her. This union saw the birth of their three children, including my younger sister known as Jampäl Chötso, and my brother who was said to be the incarnation of Lelung Tulku. I was their eldest child.

⁷ The Dalai Lama, the temporal and spiritual leader of Tibet, is an emanation of Avalokiteswara (Tibetan: Chenrezig)

⁸ As well as having seen visions of Manjusri, Tsongkhapa is considered to be one with Manjusri, sharing the same mindstream

⁹ The head of Tsäl Gungtang Monastery

At the time I was born, my father Tsering Döndrup was fifty-nine, and my mother Tsering Drölma was twenty-seven. Through the force of previously accumulated good karma, I was born in the morning of a Tuesday in 1901. I emerged from my mother's womb just as the sun broke the horizon in the east.

Gungtang Labrang administrated Gungtang Temple and the two Dharma colleges, so some important people were in attendance during my birth. Amongst them had to be an ordained official representative of the government. Therefore, earlier there had been a feast with people such as the prior lord chamberlain, Jampa Tängyā, present. After that, I myself remember one liaison who was quite famous named Kändrung Gungtangpa Tenzin Wangpo.

My older sister, Kelsang Drölma, went as a bride to Ger Kemepa's son named Rinchen Wangyäl. After the lay government representative was told, he said that the welfare of Keme and Gungtang Labrang should be joined and named it Kegung. Because my two lay and ordained liaisons of the government had to return to their permanent posts in Lhasa, when I was about three or four, some land in Lhasa was assessed and a new house was built for me which came to be called Kunzang Tse.

It was when I was about three that Kändrung Tenzin Wangpo and my parents accepted responsibility, and extensive renovation was done on the upper, middle and lower floors of the Gungtang Temple. Renovation was also done on the Dalai Lama's super upper-story bedroom and the outer courtyard and other buildings.

During this time, the high lama of Sakya Puntsog Podrang named Tzamling Chegu Wangdü was invited to Gungtang to give long life initiation¹⁰ and to pacify hindrances. He gave long-life pills in a silver spoon. When he performed the pacification ritual, fire was lit in a cauldron and people had to carry it back and forth. He placed a tsa-tsa¹¹ on my head and poured bhumpa¹² water over it, giving me a bath. An elder Sakya lady took me in her lap and made a show of fawning over me; I still remember these things.

I was thirty-seven when I went on pilgrimage to the Tsang region. In an inner sanctum of the Sakya Puntsog Podrang, they had presented a bone relic of the high lama who had given the long-life initiation. During his cremation, the spine itself had quite amazingly transformed into the shape of a lotus over a hand span in diameter.

My previous incarnation¹³, Lozang Tsultrim Paldän took rebirth in Wöntön Kyergangpa's family line in 1839, in Tölung Ragkor. In 1896, year of the fire monkey, he ascended to the golden throne as Ganden Tripa and in 1900, year of the iron rat, during his tenure as Ganden Tripa, when the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama traveled to Chökor Gyäl, it was decided that he would take the upper road to Ganden. In accordance with tradition, the Ganden Tripa left earlier to escort the Dalai Lama on his way from Lhasa. Following the tradition he came with a small entourage and the yellow parasol. When the Ganden Tripa arrived near Ganden he went to the willow tree grove at Gungtang Labrang and said that he would rest there for a while. As a small entourage was present he was asked if it would be alright if they went to their own place near the village. He replied, 'What's wrong with staying here for a little while?' and put off his departure for some time. He said, 'When I go to and from Ganden, if we had an acquaintance in this area, it would be a good place to take a break on the journey, wouldn't it?'

Then, after having finished the ceremonies at Ganden, and after having gone to Chökor Gyäl, the Ganden Tripa became ill. He walked the Ganden Ling circumambulation route daily bringing a small throne, serkyem, water offerings and so forth. When he had to be invited in 1901 he came along the route and, at the throne room sat on the throne with a few close entourage. With

¹⁰ To receive an initiation is to receive the full transmission, teachings and empowerment to practice the higher teachings.

¹¹ In a nod to the nomadic traditions of many Tibetans, tsa-tsas are a small portable image of a deity commonly made from baked clay. As one of the five preliminary practices, Tibetans would make 100,000 of these flat-backed images

¹² Bhumpa refers to the long life vase commonly used in Tibetan Buddhist rituals

¹³ Kyabje Trijang Dorjechang says simply 'the previous master' but the meaning is the previous master of whom he is the recognized incarnation so I have translated it this way for clarity.

his attendants present, Lozang Tsultrim Paldän conversed with his *Changtzö*¹⁴ Ngarampa Gyütö Lozang Tendar. He spoke a great deal saying things like, ‘this person (Ngarampa) will search for me.’ Finally, he looked off into the western sky. ‘Ha Ha,’ he laughed, and saying, ‘Ganden, Ganden,’ he suddenly passed away right at that very place.

At that time, Samling Monastery Geshe Nyitso Trinle took responsibility and brought the holy body to the head lama’s quarters for the final clear light meditation. After venerating the holy body for one week it was cremated behind Ganden Gogri mountain. The *mentse* (peak benefit) parasol on top of the crematorium was carried off by the smoke and wind and sailed high into the sky. The parasol and smoke both finally soared away to the west.

When the crematorium was opened a week later, the heart, tongue, and eyes had not been burned and were still there. Although the Chatreng people brought them to the local monastery intending to offer them inside a reliquary stupa being built, fighting occurred between the Chatreng people and the Chinese. At the beginning, the Chatreng people offered a bath to the heart, tongue and eye relics. However, they found that by drinking the bath and remembering the organs, harm from weapons could be averted. Since they were needed for that purpose, foods and so forth were prepared with the water. Because of this, later on, my *Changtzö*, Ngarampa, even criticized the Chatreng people saying ‘They are my lama’s heart eaters!’

Then the holy *Changtzö* Ngarampa and his helper, Chizur Legshä Gyatso, went to where the deceased high lama’s body had been taken and performed the ‘clouds of offering’ services to honor his passing. Tugen Kangshe, who was in charge of beginning the search for the reincarnation, requested the composition of a prayer for the Great Lord of Refuge’s swift return. *Changtzö* Ngarampa immediately composed it as he was sitting before ‘Yabshi Lang’, the house where the previous Lama had been born.

Then, just before the time when I was born, a peach tree in the Gungtang Labrang Trokang’s willow grove bloomed with flowers during the winter. It bore thirty peaches, like crops of ancient times that were harvested without work of plowing. After I was born, from the time before I could walk, I showed great reverence for statues and representations of enlightened body, speech and mind. I showed a liking for offering implements, such as vajra, bell, drums and cymbals and I liked monks’ things. I wanted to join the ranks of the assembly of monks and liked to imitate their recitations.

As such conduct revealed good imprints from previous lives, the venerable Ganden Lhopa Geshe who came often to perform services at Gungtang Labrang said, ‘There is an amazing child at Gungtang Labrang who should be included as a candidate when you identify the tulku you are seeking!’ He said that it would be good to examine him closely.

When Ngarampa and the Chatreng Geshe named Sadül Gedün Dragpa¹⁵ first arrived in Gungtang to examine the child, my nanny happened to be carrying me on her back outside the gates. As we met them I called out loudly, ‘Gedün Dragpa!’

Changtzö Ngarampa asked whether there was anyone named Gedün Dragpa in that area of lower Gungtang Labrang. My nanny said, ‘No, none at all!’

They were amazed but, in addition to that, after they had come inside I went into Gedün Dragpa’s lap, stuck out my feet and commanded, ‘Wash!’ When the previous incarnation was sick, Gedün Dragpa had been the one who bathed his feet with cooling radish juice. This brought back his memories of when the previous incarnation had been alive and, with tears falling from his eyes, he washed the soles of my feet, licking them with his tongue! I still remember it now. Apart from these auspicious indications, however, I have no memories of my prior life at all.

The keeper of the Labrang’s livestock named Tashi Döndrup, and parents of Lhau and Paldän (who were two of the closest senior attendants of the lama’s previous incarnation) were on their way to Lhasa when they heard that there was a tulku in Tsäl Gungtang. Because they had great faith and affection for the previous incarnation of the master, they came to examine me closely and to introduce themselves. They were joining a line of people coming to see me in the

¹⁴ A lama’s chief attendant, who cares for all secular matters of the lama.

¹⁵ Sadül Gedün Dragpa had previously held the parasol for the Ganden Tripa.

small bedroom with many windows at Gungtang Labrang when I ran up to them and gave a silver coin to the herder. The herder didn't think he should accept it so he started to give it back when my father said, 'The boy gave it to you so you can keep it.' I remember him saying that.

The first divination offered regarding the reincarnation of the Great Thirteenth Ganden Tripa said 'In the second month of the water tiger year (1902), look in the southern Lhasa lineage.' At that time my mother happened to have gone to Lhasa to engage in practices such as prostration and circumambulation, and my uncle, Aku Trinle, who was managing a house of the southern lineage of the Lhasa temple, had lent her a room. A divination performed by Yongzin Phurchog Jampa Rinpoche indicated that the supreme emanation would be found not far to the west of Ganden Monastery. The first transmission from the Gadong Dharmapala oracle said, 'Look in the vicinity of the eastern side of the temple for a boy born in the iron ox year (1901) to a mother with a last name of Drölma.'

Kyabje Ling Rinpoche's previous incarnation's divination said, 'Out of five emanations of body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities, the mind emanation will be found in a place not far to the south of Lhasa.' When he performed a second divination with a list of some names of the probable candidates the result was, 'If the boy born to Tsering Drölma of Gungtang in the year of the iron ox is recognized as the reincarnation of the great throne holder, that would be excellent.'

The second transmission of the Gadong Oracle said, 'You may recognize the child born to Tsering Drölma in the year of the iron ox as the holy reincarnation.' When Nechung Oracle was asked for prophecy with a list of names and it came out as the same name on the list: the son of Tsering Drölma born in the year of the iron ox.

When *Changtzö* Ngarampa and the others gave me their initial recognition examination, they presented to me the Buddha statue that the previous Ganden Tripa had always kept in his possession, his mala, and his bowl, along with similar objects of the same size and type. The first object I picked up was the correct Buddha statue. They considered this to be auspicious that I had assented to acting as a bearer of the teachings. I also picked up the correct bowl. When it came to the mala I first picked up one of the similar malas but then put it down and picked up the correct one. The other one had been a mala that the master had not given away but had also kept so they developed a strong conviction that I was the correct incarnation.

In the meantime, in the upper wing of Chatreng, the Chagong Beda Troti family also had a boy who showed good signs and they harbored a desire for their son to be recognized as the reincarnation of the great throne-holder. Also, in the Tsäl Gungtang area, false rumors were flying that the *Changtzö* Tzongzur Legshä Gyatso had a son who would be recognized as the tulku. Finally letters were sent to Lhasa from Chatreng Monastery to *Changtzö* Ngarampa Dampa and Tzongzur Legshä Gyatso claiming that 'the reincarnation of our Lama is in Chatreng itself, so you may not have authority in Gungtang and may not recognize the beggar child in Gungtang.' Then responses would come from Trijang Labrang saying 'we are taking care of Chatreng Monastery, lands and property and the two of you may not take control!'

At Ganden and Sera, representatives of Chatreng also took differing positions. Some were indifferent, saying that it would be best to have the unmistakable incarnation recognized regardless of which region he came from. However, most said that the boy in Chatreng should be recognized.

Because such different sentiments were still being expressed, at the time of the Great Prayer Festival¹⁶, a meeting was held at the Lhasa Labrang by the abbot, monk officials of Ganden Shartse Tratsang, and representatives of Dokang Kangtsän and Samling Monastery. It went on for days. Finally, the official decree came – based upon the prophecies, divinations and intentions of the Gurus and Deities, it was agreed that I should be recognized. I have the earlier and later letters sent to my address from Chatreng, drafts of the letters sent from there, official prophecies and divinations given by the Gurus and Deities of central Tibet, record of the extensive pujas done for the sake of finding the definitive tulku, and the story of the previous throne-holder's passing and

¹⁶ Also known as *Monlam*

my recognition and care up to entering the monastery, all kept together with the documents in my room. Later on, they were kept at the retreat room in Chuzang.

As a result of the decision in Lhasa it was ordered that I be recognized as the tulku and take the seat of the previous incarnation of the master. Apart from a few in Chatreng who remained uncommitted, most regarded me as the holy reincarnation.

Although protests were heard, late in 1905, the very large army of the Chinese general Drao Erpung, also known as Drao Tarin, attacked many regional monasteries such as Litang and Ba Chöde. Chatreng Monastery, in particular, after being under attack for a long time, was finally lost in 1906. Many ordained and lay people lost their lives. The surviving monks and people of the region escaped into the forest, hiding and continuing to strike back at the Chinese. It was not until much later in 1918, that they finally managed to begin assembling in the ruins of the central meeting hall.

In the meantime, as there was no peace in the region for thirteen years, false claims of other parties automatically went dormant for a long period of time. Thus, by 1918, when I received the Geshe Lharampa¹⁷ title, a large part of the general population had developed faith in me. Later on, however, when it was 1928 and I was twenty-eight, a certain party from Beda region resurrected the old false claims. I would elaborate on this but suffice to say, this extreme of karma could not be altered even if Vishnu himself were to emanate with his thousand arms!

In 1904, when I was four years of age, I was first brought from my birthplace to Trijang Labrang in Lhasa. That day a large party of ordained and lay officials had gathered on the bank of the Kyichu River where the Ganden Tripa traditionally performed a consecration blessing at the conclusion of the Great Prayer Festival. They were just starting back when our party happened to meet them. It happened without prior planning, spontaneously, as if they had come to escort the Ganden Tripa, and people talked about how auspicious it was.

As we approached the Labrang, there was a girl carrying a load of wheat on her back. Because of the large party approaching on horseback, she lost her concentration. The strap of her load slipped out of her hand and the wheat fell to the ground. The spill practically blocked the entire entrance of the Labrang. All of the people escorting me thought it was very auspicious and tossed handfuls of grain into the air, like an initial offering from the Labrang to the lord of the teachings and beings.

When we reached my room there was a large number of people lined up and a door-opening inauguration ceremony was held. For some reason of auspiciousness my throne was set to face north so that the welcoming lama officials of Ganden Monastery were sitting on the northern side, facing south. There was someone named Togpa Kädrup who had differences of opinion from the general Ganden Shartse assembly. He had joined in league with a Chatreng bodyguard named Kamtrug who had lost samaya with the previous Ganden Tripa. I looked Togpa Kädrup in the face and pointed my finger at him, actually touching his cheek in a manner that showed he should be ashamed of himself. Those present were astonished and said that his face changed color and that he showed a guilty expression.

Some days later Ngaram Dampa, Tzongzur Legshä Gyatso and others came for my first arrival at the Chuzang Retreat. Like a golden garland, wearing their *chögö* and *namjar* robes and retreat pandit hats, there were many highly experienced bikshus present to escort and greet me, such as the majestic white-haired elder lama named Dromtö Geshe Rinpoche who had given as well as received teachings from the supreme Kyabje Pabongkapa Dorje Chang. In the full assembly, my throne faced east. On a throne behind me was placed tea and rice. The monks performed an auspicious ceremony for my long life with blessing consecrations, prostrations, and offerings. Among the offerings were implements of the sixteen arhats including a brocade with a mongoose design that was quite beautiful. Even now I remember how I held on to it for a moment before handing it on.

¹⁷ Equivalent to a doctorate in an Occidental institute of higher learning. A Geshe Lharampa degree can take up to 20 years to achieve

Ten days later, Lord Changtö Ngaram Dampa, said that it would be auspicious that I would spread the teachings in Tibet. Saying that it would be like the *lotsawas* of the past with scriptures written on palm leaves, he gave me a specially made small chalkboard. On it, he had written the thirty letters of the Tibetan alphabet in *uchen* script. At the end he added a few additional words including the following:

Mi yi mig gi ri yi trin di rig
Human eyes know this mountain of clouds

Tsun chung chung chung bum chung bum chung kur
The small young monk carries a few hundred thousand little vases.

Bande re re se dre re re kyer
Each monk carries a bushel load.

On the basis of that mnemonic device, and with the thirty letters that serve as a template for the writing of all of the scriptures, he began to teach me to read. I learned to recognize all of the letters that same day which pleased Dampa. Afterwards he proudly told others that I had learned the alphabet in a single day.

Then he continued to teach me writing on the basis of the *Eight Thousand Verse Prajnaparamita Sutra* and the *Son Kadampa Scripture*. He would also teach me reading via long sessions of practicing reading a handwritten *Lamrim* text¹⁸ by one of Panchen Chögyän's direct disciples that made use of extremely many abbreviations. Through his kindness of putting me through such difficult practice, it became easy for me to recite an entire volume of scripture every day, no matter how elegant or complex the language.

When I was staying at the Chuzang Retreat, I said 'Tzong Kusho is coming!' just before before Changtö Tzongzur Legshä Gyatso arrived from Lhasa without prior notice. Then one midmorning I said, 'Lhundrub has died!' Later we found out that an ex-monk named Lhundrub who supervised the lands at Mäldro Jara Do had died at that time. Ngaram Dampa was especially astonished and made a note of it. I was supposed to have said such things when I was a child but as for everything that came out of my mouth being a prophecy, it must be like the metaphor of the pig's head that made predictions. How could I, who cannot even guess what food the evening's excrement came from, know things that are hidden in the future?

When I was five my father Tsering Dondrup received novice and full ordination vows from Jangtse Chöje Kyenrab Yöntän Gyatso Pälzangpo¹⁹ and he retired. His ordination name was Kyenrab Chöpel. He provided for my mother, Tsering Drölma, and my two siblings, younger sister, Jampäl Tsötso, and youngest brother, leaving them with such things as funds for living expenses and some arable land named Gungtang Chökor Ling next to my uncle Chötri Gelong Gyatso's residence.

When I was six, Tänling Demo Rinpoche came to Dechang Lokä-la's residence at Chuzang Retreat. One day we invited him to my room. The moment Demo and myself first met, it was as peers sitting together on the same couch and, without any reason, we both wept for some time. Our managers, Changtö Ngarampa and Tänling Dechang Lokä both felt that there was an extremely deep connection between Tängyaling Labrang and our Labrang from the time of the previous Ganden Tripa Trichen Jangchub Chöpel. Yet my predecessor had criticized those who had made the previous Demo Rinpoche king of Tibet and as a result, they had been imprisoned and died there. It was probably because of the memory of this painful situation from our previous lives that we wept, but nothing like that occurred to me at the time.

¹⁸ *Lamrim Chenmo* – the Graded Stages of the Path to Enlightenment. A complete text authored by Lama Tsongkhapa which presents a whole graded path that can lead the practitioner fully to enlightenment.

¹⁹ He became Ganden Tripa after this.

Through the force of previously accumulated merit and the power of prayers made along with it, like a boulder of gold rolling right up to my door step, in 1905, the supremely excellent and glorious Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa²⁰ came to Chuzang Retreat. He stayed in our Dharma courtyard living room and continued to stay here for seven years, up to the end of 1912. At that time Lama Dorjechang²¹ was twenty-nine and had just excused himself from Gyütö Tantric College²². Serving him as attendants, after his elder brother who went by the title Sölpön-la, were only two other attendants. The elder was called Changtzo Ngawang Gyatso and an attendant offered by the Tashi house in Shöl was named Lozang. Gyälrong Geshe Tsangyang from Sera, an expert cook, would come to cook at times. He would stay for one or two days and would send cooks. Gungtrul Rinpoche Kyenrab Paldän Tänpay Nyima and Pänpo Gangkya Rinpoche, a lama from Kham named Minyag Rikü Rinpoche, and lamas from Chuzang such as Dromtö Geshe Rinpoche would occasionally gather and share teachings. They would also sometimes give teachings to twenty to thirty monks from the monasteries such as Sera. In the meantime Lama Dorjechang often did retreats and performed fire pujas when the retreats were concluded. The precious Guru himself personally made the lines for the hearth, arranged the offering substances, stirred and made the four water offerings and so forth. I was very young and, along with watching, I would scramble to help the Sölpön offer up and take back the offerings.

At that time the precious Guru had no possessions other than a great number of scriptures and he appeared to be nothing other than an ordinary monk. After I had finished my studies of scriptures in the morning, I had time off until lunch so I would go and play in the courtyard. Occasionally I would find myself in front of Kyabchog Dorjechang and, with a child's awareness, not showing respect or veneration, I danced before him the *Lamp of Gungtang* dance and the *Flower Offering* dance and would sometimes take a nap in his lap. He was very skilled at drawing and had me draw various pictures on paper. He also had a throne equal to his own made for me to sit on at mealtimes. Even though I was such a nuisance to him, Lama Rinpoche's nature was extremely calm and he never showed the slightest irritation as he took care of me cheerfully and affectionately. Now, as I think about it, I was receiving many vast and profound instructions from the incomparably kind Father Guru.

Although I could not practice with the Guru's level of understanding, I practiced like a firefly imitating the sun. Like the metaphor of 'in the language of the father', I did quite a lot of recitation copying the Guru's speech, like his reflection teaching and spreading the Dharma of Sutra and Tantra. It was principally Lamrim, the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*.

When I think about the opportunity I had, to be with and serve Lama Dorjechang to the best of my ability, materially and spiritually from the time I was first recognized as a tulku up to the time I received my Geshe degree (except for the sudden passing away of his precious supreme incarnation which was like an obstruction to the entire general and specific teachings of Dharma), the fact that the thoughtless foolish conduct of my childhood did not take a wrong turn and turned toward virtue instead, to me illustrates the point that the fortunate root of all good qualities of this and future lives is the auspicious connection with the Guru.

The first text Ngaram Dampa had me memorize was the Tantra, *Expression of the Names of Manjusri*. Every morning, without fail, he had me recite all the way up to the point I had memorized. He also had me memorize a short Orange Manjusri *sadhana* and recite the ARAPATSA mantra and dharani for increase of wisdom. Out of a wish to increase my wisdom, on my own initiative without urging, I persevered every morning and evening in reciting the mantras and counting them until I gradually reached one hundred thousand recitations.

²⁰ "Kyabchog Dorjechang" is a title of great respect and reverence that we can use to refer to our teachers because we hold them in such high esteem. Dorjechang means "Vajradhara" which means that our teacher is one with Vajradhara, i.e. fully enlightened, and a being we can take refuge in. Kyabchog means "supreme refuge". In this case, Trijang Rinpoche refers to Pabongka Rinpoche.

²¹ Also another way of referring to Pabongka Rinpoche.

²² One of two higher tantric colleges, the other being Gyume

One time my older brother Trati Kamlung Rinpoche came from Sera to Chuzang to introduce himself to me. He had a long page with the alphabet to give me for learning reading, thinking that I was studying the fundamentals. He was both embarrassed and delighted to find that I had already memorized many of the recitations from Bodhicharyavatara²³ and almost all of Abhisamayalankara²⁴.

At that age even just memorizing texts is indeed difficult but Ngaram Dampa's way of teaching with both peaceful and wrathful means was extremely good. Also, for me, when I memorized texts, even if I did not know the meaning of the word I was memorizing, if I memorized it with my own made-up understanding, it immediately stuck in my mind. When I asked Ngaram Dampa to teach me the meaning of the words, he would say that practices such as memorization brought together all of the auspicious circumstances necessary for understanding the meaning.

When I was seven, with the supreme Ngaram Lozang Täandar, Tzöpa Chizur Legshä Gyatso, Ganden Shartse Dokang Kangtsen Chatreng Nyitso Trinlä Tänzün, Nänang Dräshing Geshe, Sölpön Püntso and so forth, I left Chuzang Retreat and, taking the Pänpo Go pass, went to stay at the Langtang Temple for a while.

Then we crossed the Chagla pass and arrived at Ratreng Gepel Ling by way of Phödo. It was there that I received my Genyen and Getsül ordinations from Jetsün Ngawang Yeshe Tämpay Gyältsän Pälzangpo. He gave me the name Lozang Yeshe Tänzün Gyatso, composed a beautiful long life prayer that he presented to me, and also gave me reading transmissions of Abhisamayalankara and Madyamika; thus I received his kindness.

In the same month was a prayer festival in the Ratreng area and we saw the revealing of embroidered tangkas, performance of operas, and so on. During this festival, we made pilgrimage to the principal and secondary Ratreng temples to see the most venerated objects such as the Jowo Manjusrivajra statue and made thousand-fold offerings. In the Ratreng vicinity we went to the Tsenya Retreat, the Yangön Retreat, Tsüngön Samtän Ling and others to show veneration and make offerings. I had already read the *Kadam Buchö Son Scripture* twice as I was learning reading, so I knew the life story of the Prince Könchog Bang. Flashes of immediate recognition of the different places of Ratreng appeared to my mind as soon as the keepers of the places started to tell their histories. When I was practicing reading the *Buchö scripture*, Ngaram Dampa also gave me introductory explanation of some of the stories in the biographies. After that, when I read the rest of the biography, from the easily understandable verses and most of the stories, I was able to automatically get a rough understanding of the path. Similarly, as I was memorizing Bodhicharyavatara, I understood most of the general path from the rough meaning of the words of the Bodhicharyavatara prayer I had memorized, so I had an appreciation for the wisdom of the Aryas at that age.

During the time we spent at Ratreng, the Labrang gave me the windowed upper story of the labrang residence and offered my attendants and I elaborate hospitality. On the way back we spent a day at Taglung Monastery where we thoroughly viewed the upper and lower temples and holy objects. We even saw an amazing statue of Dromtönpa that grew hair!

Then we took the Pänpo main road through Thangsa, Ganden, Chökor and so forth, to Dromtö. On the journey I was eating yogurt that they had poured into leather bags for us at Ratreng, and it lasted all the way up to our arrival in Dromtö. Then we arrived back at Chuzang Retreat.

Before I had left for Ratreng, since Kändrung Tänzün Wangpo and the other lay and ordained people of my party had taken up permanent residence at Künzang Tse in Lhasa, they had left representatives residing in Gungtang. One of these new residents was my father's brother named Ane Yangtzom-lag and his Khampa wife, Bapa Apho-lag. Speaking to the elder Kün Tse aristocrat, the Kemä's son, Rinchen Wangyäl and others, they were slandering and ostracizing my

²³ Also known as *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, it is a famous Mahayana Buddhist text written in Sanskrit verse by Shantideva

²⁴ Also known as *the Ornament of Clear Realizations*, Abhisamayalankara is one of five Sanskrit-language Mahayana Buddhist scriptures which Maitreya is said to have revealed to Asanga

mother, claiming that she had secretly taken property. Even my older sister Kelsang Drölma aggravated the situation until one day Apho-lag suddenly came to my mother's residence at Gungtang Chökor Ling, sealed the door shut and evicted my mother and her two children.

For quite some time, they had to stay together with Zhangpo Uncle Gyatso-lag, who fed them. It was a lot like what happened to Jetsun Milarepa's mother, Nyangtsa Kargyän, and her sister Preta Gönkyi when they underwent great hardship. As soon as we heard what had happened, Changtö Chizur Legshä Gyatso went to the Kün Tse aristocrat's residence and gradually worked through the inflamed situation that had arisen. Finally, the locks were taken off and when a thorough inventory of the property was taken, the truth was revealed that no property had been taken.

When we heard of my mother's hardship at Chuzang we were greatly saddened and worried by the situation. Preparing that year during summer retreat, because Ngaram Dampa had mastered astrology and the associated texts, he calculated what rituals must be done to clear away the negative influence of new moon darkness and afflicted astrological conjunctions such as *bom ta gam* and *ching* and performed the rituals himself. On the third day of the seventh month Ngaram Dampa, Changtö Chizur, Tänling Dechang Lokä, the regent Tsedrön Jangchub Norzang, with a richly attired party on horseback, left the Lhasa Labrang. Although we were well prepared to stay and administer Gungtang Labrang, because Ane Yangtso and his workers had not taken care of it, we spent one day in the upper story of Gungtang Chötri Dratsang. That day, because my horse was draped and decorated with a golden saddle and I was very dressed up in 'raven-eyed' brocade robes, a wide brimmed *tangzha* hat and so forth, to me, as a child, it seemed a very happy occasion. We left Gungtang the next day to spend a day in the upper story of Dechen Sang Ngag Kar's Gyümä College. Those of Sang Ngag Kar Dratsang gave us a warm and elaborate welcome and some well-wishers who lived nearby offered *khataks* and other gifts.

The next day, some people from Ganden Dokang Samling had prepared a camp in the grove of Ganden Zhölsong hermitage with tents, food and drink and so on and we stayed there for one day. We left at daybreak the next day and Dokang Kangtsän had set up very extensive camp kitchens in the threshing rooms of the Serkang fields. On our arrival there was a large gathering of the Kangtsän's monks and teachers who offered tea and rice, representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, *khataks* and so forth.

The day before I had been told many frightening stories about a teacher at Dokang Kangtsän who would get angry and suddenly beat the children. That day I saw the teacher himself, a bearded monk with a dark complexion and puffed out chest. When I saw him, however, I was thinking, 'This must not be the one they were talking about yesterday!' and I didn't feel at all afraid.

When we arrived in Tsang, at the Shönbag flats Ganden Shartse Monastery had set up a very extensive reception camp with tents and so forth. With abbots and ex-abbots of Ganden Shartse and Ganden Jangtse at the head, chant leaders and other officials, the two dratsangs and practically all of their incarnate lamas lined up to offer *khataks* at the door of my tent. As soon as I saw Ganden Jangtse Tridag Rinpoche, without any need for an introduction, I thought, 'This is Tridag Rinpoche!' I felt as if we had already met before.

Ganden Shartse Dratsang offered tea, rice, *khataks* and representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind to all those in line. The monk officials and dratsangs also gave *khataks* and representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind.

Then we moved on with the incarnate lamas who were receiving me, riding horseback with elaborate attire. On Drogri Mountain the lamas and monk officials of Ganden had again set up reception tents and stood in line to receive me. I was offered tea and rice and the two abbots gave me *khataks* and representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind. Then the procession gradually moved on and when the great assembly of monks of Ganden neared the Chugo headwaters, a vast golden rosary of the monks of Shartse and Jangtse Dratsang were waiting in line there. When we arrived at Chugo I dismounted from my horse and sat on a divan and maroon colored rug facing the monastery. After making three full-length prostrations, I performed the

traditional rituals as Ngaram Dampa had taught me, including offering of tormas with expressions of auspiciousness.

Then, leading with incense, the escort procession arrived at Dokang Kangtsän where a line of lamas and officials, the dratsang and kangtsän gave me welcoming *khataks* and representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind. After that my kangtsän made a great celebration of it with offerings of tea and rice to all those who were in line as well as a fried biscuits and other food. Two philosophy students also held a public debate discussion²⁵ in the assembly.

After the reception line dispersed we went to the upper story of the kangtsän. There, many officials and private individuals offered me representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, rice, *khataks* and so forth. After that I moved out to the balcony. When I was at Chuzang I had always imagined what the great debating assembly in the vast courtyard of Ganden would look like, and when I first looked out from the balcony it was just as I had imagined it.

One day a representative of the Ganden Tripa took me before the third Tsemön Ling Rinpoche Lozang Tänpay Gyältsän after which the Kangtsän teacher took me before the abbot of Ganden Shartse Pukang Lozang Kyenrab to introduce me to him for the first time as was the custom. Then I showed veneration with a distribution of offerings on an auspicious occasion. I invited Tri Rinpoche Tsemön Lingpa and his entourage to the monastery at a time when teachings were being given, and I offered him *khatak* and representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind.

The representative of the Dalai Lama gave me tea and a silver seal, *kapse* fried cookies stacked five-high with a blessing cord, after which monk officials, groups from the Kangtsän, and relatives held an elaborate auspicious welcoming ceremony for me. Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa, the supreme, even sent an attendant with his kind gift of an auspicious *khatak* and enough brocade with which to make a set of robes.

When I first entered Ganden Shartse Monastery's teaching hall, Legshä Kundrog Ling, according to Ngaram Dampa's own instructions, basins such as *katora* were filled to overflowing with rice that was distributed to all of the monks who came to the assembly. All day long from morning to night we served special tea to the assembled monks and the public along with those in the teaching hall. I had already memorized most of the Dharma recitations that were done so I was able to recite them by heart except for the abbot's prayer to the lineage and the *chasum choga Three Part Ritual* that was done at the end of the evening session.

On one day during that period, I heard that the *Kazur*, ex-government official, Shädrapa was coming to my residence and I hurried back to my room where I suddenly met him. Rather portly, with the little hair that he had tied up in a few braids, he looked very impressive wearing his light-blue brocade *chupa*²⁶. He presented me with awards and a *khatak*. Being young I didn't know anything to say and stayed quiet. Ngaram Dampa and Shädrapa were previously acquainted and spoke at length about old times. Finally Shädrapa gave me a lot of advice saying that I must especially persevere in my studies, because I was 'the best we have, like a golden egg among all of the eggs, like the crown-jewel of Ganden!' As Shädrapa was from Ganden, at that time he was its uncommon elder patron and a chief benefactor of Dokang Kangtsän in particular. Also later on when he served as a government minister and came to Ganden with the Dalai Lama, they came to visit me.

During the time of the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Shädrapa Päljor Dorje, as he was called, and three others, Zhölkangpa, Changkyimpa, and Horkangpa served as the four *Kalön* ministers²⁷. Although the Dalai Lama undoubtedly had reasons beyond our unenlightened comprehension, to common view it appeared as if he was influenced by the divisive talk of one or

²⁵ A notable characteristic of the Gelugpa tradition, as founded by Lama Tsongkhapa, is the realisation of the Dharma through investigation and understanding. As a result, there is a strong tradition of debate in the sangha, to explore and deepen their understanding of the texts

²⁶ The clothing of a lay Tibetan person

²⁷ The governing council of the Tibetan government is known as the Kanshag. The ministers (three secular, one ordained) who sit in the Council hold the title of *Kalön*

two attendants. He issued a strict edict saying that the Tibetan parliament was unfit to fulfill its political responsibilities and placed the four *Kalön* ministers under strict house arrest at the Norling Palace²⁸.

Horkangpa was able to escape secretly and committed suicide at Kyichu. The other three ministers, Shädrapa, Zhölkangpa, and Changkyimpa were all removed from office and given permission to return to their homes but Shädrapa had to remain in Kongpo Orong as punishment. Later on, as fighting with the British army arrived in Chushur from the direction of Tsang, the Dalai Lama suddenly left on a trip to China and Mongolia. In his absence the Chinese minister named Amban Kragtarin came to Lhasa and sent a letter to Shädrapa insisting that he come to Lhasa because he had to serve in the government. Shädrapa therefore returned from Kongpo and the Amban placed the lands of Ganden under his authority. That was the time that Shädrapa had to insist to the Amban, 'I am someone the Dalai Lama has punished and expelled! My coming in country now is not permitted because it goes against the Dalai Lama's orders! I will stay as *'under Shädra.'*' In old manuscripts such as biographies of Je Rinpoche²⁹, the title *'Sharahor'* is used whereas later on, from about the time of Shädra Desi, the title *'under Shädra'* became preferred. In any case, the patron of the great being Je Rinpoche being the source, there appears to have been a tradition of the *'under Shädra'* making the daily inner offerings at the Ganden Chögyäl house and keeping many important holy objects such as the Kangyur³⁰ that Je Rinpoche studied.

Not long after that, from China, the Dalai Lama, with clear intention, put his seal on elevating Shädrapa, Zhölkangpa, and Changkyimpa back to the status of ministers and they held those posts for the rest of their lives.

After finishing the summer retreat we left Ganden, from Marlam Dechen Gongko residence to a field in front of Karab Shänka where, since we had already prepared the noon-day meal, we stopped for a little while. After that we stayed a day at Dechen Sang Ngag Kar Labrang. At that time we appreciated the auspicious hospitality of the residents of Dechen Lamo Tse and others with whom we had relationships.

Since it was coming time for the Marlam Gungtang Dharma Celebration that follows summer retreat, a big meeting tent was put up in the Jar Rag fields so we took a break at the heat of the day to watch a bit of the opera being performed which began with Jataka Tales, life stories of the Buddha. Because it was the first time I had seen an opera performance I felt very attracted to it and wanted to stay longer. However, we continued on and arrived in Lhasa that evening.

Having arrived in Lhasa I had to have my first audience with the Dalai Lama but since he had not returned from his trip to China and Mongolia, I went before the great throne at his residence in accordance with the tradition. In connection with that I also had my first audience with the regent Ganden Trisur³¹ Lozang Gyältsän Rinpoche who was residing at the upper story of the Lhasa Meru³² Dratsang.

Then, after we arrived at Chuzang Retreat we put up a meeting tent in the courtyard outside our rooms. To commemorate the auspiciousness of my having entered Ganden, with the supreme Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongka Pälzangpo in attendance, Dromtö Geshe Rinpoche and the retreatant meditator Gelong Jiyö hosted a celebratory feast for two days. Demo Rinpoche and I pitched a small tent of our own off to one side and enjoyed the party.

Ngaram Dampa requested the great Kyabje Dorjechang Pabongkapa to give all of the *jenangs*³³ of the Manjusri cycle of teachings. I had never had an initiation of Anutaratantra,

²⁸ Also known as the Norbulingka, the traditional summer residence of the Dalai Lamas

²⁹ Another name for Lama Tsongkhapa, founder of the Gelugpa lineage

³⁰ The Kangyur, or 'The Translation of the Word' is the Tibetan Buddhist canon. These consist of 108 volumes of teachings given by Buddha Shakyamuni himself. Alongside this compilation is the Tengyur, or 'The Translation of Treatises'

³¹ One who has formerly held the rank of the Ganden Tripa. Ganden Tripas who retire carry this title.

³² *rMeru*

³³ *Jenang* is the "permitting empowerment". It gives the disciple permission to recite the mantra and do the sadhana meditation of a deity. According to scriptures, it is a requirement for the disciple to have received a *wang* (complete empowerment) for any deity belonging to the same or a higher Tantra class, before they may receive a *jenang*

Unexcelled Highest Yoga Tantra such as Vajra Bhairava before but Lama Dorjechang, for the sake of auspiciousness, made an exception and gave me all of the *jenangs*. Although I did not understand other things he taught because of my young age, when he gave the Dharmaraja *jenang* I understood the story he told about giving the *jenang*, when no hand-symbol of a club had been prepared and using a *momo* dumpling stuck on the end of a pipe in substitution for it, and I remember repeating the phrase, ‘...I shall act accordingly’ a number of times during the Dharmaraja *jenang*.

Another day, acting in accordance with Ngaram Dampa’s request and urging, for the sake of auspiciousness, supreme Kyabchog Pabongka came to our room and taught us how to draw the hearths for peaceful, increasing, and subjugating fire pujas. If we messed up slightly in making the lines for the initiation hearth he immediately corrected us.

As I mentioned before, Lama Dorjechang made an exception for reasons of auspiciousness in giving me the *jenangs* of the Manjushri cycle. Yet I did not feel that I had sufficiently received it at that age so later on, when I was twenty-one, I received them all from him again.

After that, Ngaram Dampa and Tzöpa Chizur together decided that I needed a teacher to instruct me in the great treatises. **They compiled a list of good teachers from Ganden Shartse Dratsang and asked for an indication from supreme Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa and from Tänsung Gyalchen Dorje Shugden.** They both agreed that Lozang Tsultrim of Pukang Nangzang would be excellent so he was invited from Ganden. He came to Chuzang retreat together with Dosam Nyitso Trinle that year. On an astrologically auspicious date, after I made a small symbolic offering of tea and rice, *khatak* and so forth, he began teaching me by commenting on the expression of homage at the beginning of the *Ratö Collected Topics* text. Because I had already memorized all of Abhisamayalankara and more than half of Madyamakavatara³⁴, the supreme spiritual guide also examined me on that and was very pleased with my memorization.

In offering, dancers from the Ratreng region performed deer and yak dances that were extremely wild in which they planted one foot down on the ground, and spun quickly and randomly back and forth, to the left and right. I was imitating them and took up a clay oil lamp that was burning brightly. I was dancing with it near the statues when some of the fire burst out of the clay pot. It was a little frightening but since it was my first day with the teacher I didn’t get scolded or anything.

From that time on my holy tutor resided permanently with me. That year, during the winter Dharma session, we went to Ganden and he began teaching me composition, mathematics and dialectical debate. He did this through topics such as the presentation of colors in the beginning level of collected topics, then step-by-step through the topics of ‘establishment by valid cognition’, recognition of isolates and so forth, going through all subjects of the beginning, middle, and advanced levels of collected topics. That was what I was supposed to be studying over a period of four years.

From that year onwards I attended every one of the four season’s sessions of teachings, the Sangpu summer session, the Lhasa Great Prayer Festival, and so forth, without ever missing a single session all the way up until I received my Geshe title.

When I was eight, as requested by the Kalachakra ritual monks of Ganden, the definitively learned and realized great being Ganden Serkong Dorjechang Ngawang Tsultrim Döndän Pälzangpo bestowed the great initiation of Sri Kalachakra in the great white meeting hall of Ganden over a period of three days, including the day of preparation. I had the good fortune to bow my head with a red utpala³⁵ flower at the holy elegant Dharma feet of that great being and be among the rows of those initiated. There were so many attendees that they did not even fit inside the great

³⁴ The Madyamakavatara is a text by Chandrakirti on the Middle Way school. It is a commentary on the meaning of Nagarjuna’s Mulamadhyamakakarika and also the Dasabhumikasutra-sastra

³⁵ The utpala is a flower that rises from mud, like a lotus. A symbol of purity, it features in tangkas and as part of many deities’ symbology, for example Tara

meeting hall and people had to sit under the doorways and everywhere. I was sitting in front of the mandala³⁶ just behind Dräpfung Gomang Kyabje Kangsar Rinpoche.

At the time of the vase initiation, the Lama gave me the novice ablution, placing me on the cloth painting of the mandala and, for some auspicious reason perhaps, mixed the eye-medicine with honey and presented it to me. It was so delicious that I ate up every drop! Some of the Kalachakra monks of Tsenam wore the dance robes, carried vases, chanted with melodies and so forth; it was a great spectacle. The Vajra Holder gave very profound and vast explanations when he taught and sometimes he would cry or say something critical or sarcastic. I was so young that there was no way I could follow all of the symbolism of the initiation. But the next day, as he assured all in attendance that we need not doubt that we had received the empowerment, it was similar to when the mahasiddhas of old would ripen and liberate trainees by slapping them on the cheek; even someone of a difficult type like me, by the power of entrusting myself, had absolutely no doubt that special imprints had been implanted within me³⁷.

When I was nine years old, the disciplinarian in our Dratsang had us recite any of the tradition's scriptures in the middle of the assembly for the venerable title of *Kachu*³⁸, 'Those who study the ten scriptures.' I recited the first two pages of Legshe Nyingpo from memory without the slightest fright or hesitation and everyone praised me, saying that I had done very well for my age. After I had received the *Kachu* title from the both the Dratsang and the Mitsän³⁹, I made extensive offerings of veneration to all.

A ten-year old boy named Lhabu who was the son of a nomadic herder from Dechen Balam became my house student and also my playmate. From the rest of his sixty-six years, as is said in the *Laying of the Stalks Sutra*, 'acting as a boat, a vehicle, a vajra-mountain', he served me well as a personal attendant; his kindness was great.

Later in that same year, the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama returned to Tibet from his journey in China and Mongolia. At the Ganden Chökor Monastery in Pänpo, the Ganden Tri Rinpoche, the oracles of Ganden Shartse and Jangtse Dratsangs, and so forth; the abbots of Ganden Shatse and Jangtse from central Tibet, lamas, tulkus, and officials went to greet him and had a joyful welcoming celebration. I also went to greet him and experienced for the first time the good fortune of seeing his face, the golden face of a Buddha with the complete mandala of excellent signs of goodness and virtue.

Then the lamas, tulkus, and officials including Tri Rinpoche left for Lhasa where further welcoming celebrations would be held. I wanted to go to Lhasa and, like the wish of Tzöpa Tzongzur, I excused myself from Pänpo and went back to Ganden.

When I was ten, in the year of the iron dog, at the time of the Great Prayer Festival, the tenth Kundeling Tatsag, Thubten Kälzang Tämpay Drönme Rinpoche was getting his Geshe Degree so, in accordance with tradition, the Dalai Lama and his entourage was invited by the monastery. Likewise, from Amdo Tashikyil, the fourth Kunkyen Jamyang Zhepa Kälzang Thubten Wangchug was invited.

There was great excitement as everyone, ordained and lay, prepared for the Dalai Lama's party's arrival. As the first tea of the festival was being served, the large Chinese *Luuchun*⁴⁰ army suddenly arrived and started shelling Tälprung Gang east of Lhasa, killing several Tibetans and Tsedrön Jamyang Gyältsän the governor general of the Prayer Festival. People such as Punkang Gung Tashi Dorje were wounded by gunfire and so forth; everyone was very anxious and frightened.

³⁶ A representation of a deity's abode and enlightened state. It can also refer to a mandala offering which is a symbolic offering of the entire universe

³⁷ It is believed that when a high lama slaps a student it is a very powerful blessing, which helps to purify obstacles and plant very strong karmic imprints.

³⁸ *bka bchu*

³⁹ *mi tsan*, This is a further subdivision, a family within the Dratsang

⁴⁰ *lu'u chun*

That night the Dalai Lama and an entourage of important people left the Potala secretly by way of the Norbulingka Palace to go to India. The Chinese, such as the representative Amban Län, sent a large contingent of Chinese army hurrying after him. However, at the iron bridge over the canyon called Chänsäl Namgang, Tsarong Dazang Dradul (who had married into the Tsarong family) and a few other volunteers were able to stop the Chinese army and make them turn back.

That year the teacher Yongzin Lozang Tsultrim also stood for his Geshe Lharampa degree and received the award of second place Lharampa Geshe.

As if reborn by the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama's return from China and Mongolia, the government had its first minting of a one sang bill and a coin called the Thubten Sertam, and at the Prayer Festival gave each bikshu three silver coins and a *khatak* eraser cloth. Kundeling Labrang gave each monk five silver coins and Jamzhä Labrang gave three coins each.

During the Prayer Festival the Chinese took every opportunity to denigrate and show disrespect to the monks in whatever way they could. They sat on the tar roof of the courtyard balcony with their legs stretched out, smoking and throwing their cigarette butts into the center of the assembly. In the Dharma courtyard when Tri Rinpoche was teaching they marched in front, beating their drums.

That year we went to Sangpu for the summer Dharma session where, in addition to my study of *tsänyi*, logical reasoning, between the balconies of the courtyard, Ngaram Dampa began teaching me and my tutor astrology. We began with practicing writing the multiplication tables in the dust on the ground and gradually covering *nga dü* (the five-fold summary)⁴¹, the five planets *zhag sum* (the three-fold division of days)⁴², and practically all of the diagrams of astrology, drawing them and then erasing them in the *tsi zhong* basin⁴³. I would stick my finger out to draw and was excited about learning, but since I was young and later concentrated more on study of Dharma and reasoning, with all of the memorization and study and so forth, I no longer took much interest in astrology and left it aside. Therefore any knowledge of astrology I had at that time has been long forgotten and vanished.

While I was at the summer session in Sangpu, Amdo Jamyang Zhäpa came to Sangpu on pilgrimage. Because at that time Jamyang Zhäpa Rinpoche was highly regarded by the Chinese such as the Amban who was residing in Lhasa, Jamyang Zhäpa's attendants came ahead of time to prepare for his arrival, verbally threatening, kicking and beating the people of Sangpu. Some of the lay tax officers such as the owner of our house had to escape and hide in the woods in front of Sangpu for two or three days. Jamyang Zhäpa Rinpoche stayed in Sangpu for one day. The next day before he left he gave a half a *tam* of Tibetan money to each lama at a great gathering of ten sets of Sangpu lamas at the temple. After having an audience with the sangha population he left to return to Lhasa. He was quite elderly with a long white beard and wore a yellow *dhagotse* brocade robe.

Many people such as Lhasa residents called him a 'Chinese Lama' and disparaged him, as a result of which I did not develop great faith in him. However, as I thought about it later, other than his arrival coinciding with the Chinese presence there was nothing wrong with him and he seemed to me to be a well qualified lama.

That autumn there was a smallpox epidemic throughout all of central Tibet and Tsang so I stayed permanently at Ganden and did retreats. Supreme Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa, with great care, had brought the *sadhana* of Vishvamata and a *tsakali* picture from Chuzang retreat, so we did a 100,000 mantra recitation retreat of Vishvamata; also 100,000 mantra long life retreat of White Tara; and 100,000 *migtsema* mantra retreat, which I did together with my supreme holy tutor.

⁴¹ *Inga bsdus*: The five topics include planet, date, constellation, union and action

⁴² *zhag gsum*: The three are *khyim zhag*, one thirtieth of the time for the sun to cross over the sign of the zodiac, *nyin zhag*, the time from sunrise to the next sunrise, and *tse zhag* the division in time proportional to the waxing and waning of the moon.

⁴³ *rtis zhong*: A wooden basin in which astrological calculations are practiced

At that time we had no medicine to cure or prevent smallpox as is available nowadays. At Ganden alone there were so many monks who died that there was no more room for corpses at the charnal ground for sky burial because the previous corpses had not yet been taken. I also got smallpox in that year with a lot of pustules on my face and limbs but even though I was sick for many days, thanks primarily to continuing in mantra recitation practice according to the advice of Lama Dorjechang and especially the kindness of my holy tutor nursing me for many days on end, himself forgoing sleep, I recovered from the smallpox and was able to go to debate sessions at the beginning of the winter Dharma gathering. At the time when the smallpox had been most severe, whether it was in a dream or some kind of vision, I found myself up on the Nyagrong pass where some monks who were above me were beckoning and calling to me, 'Dear child come! Let's go to Tushita⁴⁴!' It seems that even if I had died at that time it would have been quite joyful, as I felt no influence of any negativity.

At about the same time I also had a vision that I had some kind of animal in my lap like a puppy or a kitten and a woman came up and snatched it away from me and took it away. I later found out that my younger brother who had been born after my younger sister Jampäl Chötso and who had been recognized as the incarnation of Lelung Tulku, had died in Gungtang the day that I had seen the vision. It was as if he had gone in place of myself.

When I was sick with smallpox, the Pukang Monastery's abbot Lozang Kyenrab advised Gän Yongzin Chog, my supreme tutor, to first treat it with tamarind pine and later, when the pustules were drawing pus, to treat it with white incense smoke. One day the pustules collapsed and started turning inwards. It became very dangerous and my tutor was seriously worried. He asked the Pukang abbot what he thought. The abbot said to take a slab of pork, cook it, and give me a few mouthfuls of pork fat by itself. He did that and the next morning, right where the pustules had collapsed, a second pustule had formed on top of them, rather like the stepped levels of a stupa⁴⁵. Then I gradually had a full recovery.

After my little brother died of smallpox, only my mother and her daughter Jampäl Chötso remained. The Gungtang resident lamas, Apo and Ane Yangtzom, continually acted so vindictively towards them that they could no longer bear to stay there. So Tzöpa Legshä Gyatso sent the two of them to a Labrang member Dechen Karab Ogong's house, where his father, Tänzin Zangpo, lived with his son, Döndrub.

When I was eleven, from Tänzin Trinlā Özer Rinpoche, the incarnation of Deyang *Tsänzhab* Nyäldra, I received the reading transmission of all fourteen volumes of the Domä edition of Tukän Chökyi Nyima's collected works in the Lhasa Meru eastern assembly hall.

As every year, Tängyaling Labrang invited us to the Demo cham dances with great hospitality and we went. In the center of Demo cham upper viewing area sat Demo Rinpoche. To his right sat Derlo Sempa, Dagyab Chungtsang, Tsangpa Känchän, myself, and Demo Rinpoche's tutor. To his left sat various Chinese ministers such as Len Amban. Those such as the Kashag Zhab Pä, the highest lay government official, were in the highly situated viewing areas of the residences on either side. The rest of the official government entourage was set up in a tent on the roof under the balcony.

Smoke from the cigarettes of the Chinese filled the viewing area. I was very displeased to see someone named Tzasa Chöjang Dradül-lag seeming to take delight in showing great respect to the Chinese. That evening, as the dancers for the cham of *Magzorma* principal and entourage were finishing their dance, one of the *Tänma*, the twelve earth goddesses, the one representing Kongtsün Demo, not only fell flat on his face as he went out the great ornamented doorway, but the Chinese Amban draped *khataks* over each dancer. All in all, the people of Lhasa considered these to be very bad signs. The next year, fighting with the Chinese army resulted in the complete destruction of Tängyaling Monastery.

⁴⁴ Lama Tsongkhapa's celestial abode.

⁴⁵ A representation of an attained being's enlightened mind.

That year, after summer retreat when I was still staying in Lhasa, an uprising revolt occurred in China. Even in Lhasa, on the day of *Lhabab Düchen*,⁴⁶ it resulted in fighting between the old and new regimes among the Chinese in Lhasa and a number of them killed each other. They also forced themselves into some of the households of Lhasa and seized horses and donkeys. Because there was so much conflict going on, my holy tutor and I rented a small room in the Lhasa Trokang and stayed there for many days.

At that time, the Chinese Amban named Län had to leave Lhasa and hid out at Drepung Monastery.

About the time of Ganden Ngamchö we went to Ganden and Ngaram Dampa taught my tutor and I how to draw the mandalas of Guyasamaja, Heruka, Yamantaka and Künrig, with detailed instructions on their colors, rituals and so forth. We practiced very intensively, right on the wall of our room in Ganden. Gän Rinpoche and I made complete colored mandalas of Guyasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka. They came out quite well. It was a time when the upper assembly hall in the kangtsän was being renovated.

At the time of the winter session I entered a new class to begin studying *Parchin, Paramita, the Perfections*. It was an oppressive time of conflict with the Chinese in the Lhasa area. As the situation was very dangerous, when I was twelve, Gän Rinpoche, Ngaram Dampa and I did not go to the Great Prayer Festival, but stayed at Ganden. That year the government placed a thousand monks from each of the monastic seats as security guards, so the government made general distributions of offerings for the monks at the Prayer Festival.

The second month of the year, the Chinese suddenly attacked Sera Monastery. The Tibetan government issued an order for two hundred monks from Ganden to immediately go to Sera. They strapped on and carried with them muzzle-loading rifles, knives, and spears that had been placed as visual offerings in some of the wrathful protector shrine rooms. Some wore clothing that was neither completely that of a monk nor completely that of a lay person. They wore *chupas*⁴⁷ over long upper robes, wearing leather monk's shoes, wearing variously colored *pecha*⁴⁸ cover cloths tied around their heads and so forth, it was an incredible-looking motley band that departed. When they got to Sera, they met and touched foreheads with some of the elder monks who, with tears, told them that the Sangha of the prior great monastic seat was gone. They said there were some monks who had tied kitchen knives to the ends of clubs, and were crouching down as they ran off, saying, 'Where are those Chinese? I'm going to kill them!'

Later the Tibetan government army, and the Sera and Ganden monks all banded together to expel the Chinese from Sera. They drove them off as far as Lhasa's Lhogyu, southern side. Some of the house students such as my attendant Lhabu, and eight Ganden monks who were there reciting the Kangyur, had to live under the Chinese for part of a month. They were made to work throughout Lhogyu, their food, clothing and provisions exhausted. The Chinese made them haul earth and rocks they dug out of ravines for their army bunkers even after some, like Lhabu, developed sores on their backs from the hauling; the danger, fear and suffering they experienced was immeasurable.

That year, because of the fighting we could not have Ganachakra offering at the Sangpu summer retreat. In my class, there was a son of the Pukang Yara family from the Markham Chashäl region, village of Kapo Ze, from Zadru Monastery, named Ngawang Lozang, who studied extremely well and who was very bright. He was good-natured and became Gän Rinpoche's student. From that year onwards, until he received his Geshe degree, he was my permanent Dharma discussion partner. In the monastery during what would have been summer retreat, in the upper residence of the Kangtsän, from Dokang, was a good student named Lozang Chödrag. In public debate together before the assembly we discussed and debated *Paramita*. From the beginning expression of respectful homage in *Chishä, General Explanation*, and continuing with debate

⁴⁶ The religious holiday commemorating Buddha's descent from Tushita heaven.

⁴⁷ The clothing of a lay Tibetan person

⁴⁸ The format of a Tibetan text. Pages are laid out in a landscape fashion, and the text is read from left to right

discussion, it went well without any improper reasoning, and Tzöpa Tzongzur Legshä Gyatso generously covered the expenditures for the traditional large offerings that we needed to make.

When fighting erupted in Lhasa, the sound of mortar fire was heard from the top of the Ganden Nyagrong pass. That year, by order of the supreme government, the great Kyabje Ganden Serkong Dorjechang came to Ganden and, before the Dharmaraja shrine in Yangpachen, performed the wrathful 'black mountain of poison' tormo ritual of super-secret Dharmaraja and threw the *zor* tormo on top of the bazaar. The recitation of serkyem that day was loud enough to hear it from my room in the upper quarters at Dokang. Also performed were the Lhamo and Hayagriva tormo rituals for averting harm, *si nän*, the ritual for suppressing harmful 'si' spirits, and various other wrathful rituals that were performed one after the other, for a month.

One day during that time, early in the year of the iron dog, the Dalai Lama came from Lhasa with, voluntarily following after him, a high Chinese general and Ramoche Gyälgo Donggi Chötzä, the keeper of the Ramoche temple. He performed *si nän* ritual in the Drag Go Che Par Nang, the 'outer great rock door' with even the wrathful preparation of heads and limbs of those killed by soldiers, including soldiers from Ganden. As each tormo was thrown, Serkong Dorjechang wanted to imitate the action and took various *cham* dancing steps, mistakenly losing his balance. Because Dorjechang was prematurely balding, for a moment the childish thought occurred to me, 'What a sight it would be if his hat came off!'

That year, at the end of summer retreat, the fighting around Lhasa was not yet resolved so we spent over two months in quasi retreat at Dechen Lamo Tsezhi. Gän Rinpoche had me memorize *Legshä Nyingpo* and at first, for part of a day, I pretended to memorize, picking out special words and memorizing them in a scattered fashion. When I was told to recite it by memory, it made no difference what part of the text I was shown, beginning, forward, backward, I started reading from the back side of the page and kept on going for some fifteen pages. When my lie was found out I got both a reprimand and a whipping. I had to start memorizing from the beginning again and, persevering, I memorized about seventy pages and all of the fourth chapter on the 'Twenty Sangha' in the Panchen's *General Explanation of the Paramitas*.

At that time, because I had good intelligence, Gän Rinpoche hoped that I would improve my memorization capability vastly but because I had little perseverance, Gän Rinpoche pushed me and scolded me quite a lot to subdue me. I had a lot of fleas on my body and one day with the help of my friend Yöntän-lag, we shook out my bedding and the fur and fleas that came out filled a whole cup!

In the ninth month of the year, I went to Gungtang with Gän and Ngaram Dampa to make prayers to my birth protector deity. The keeper of Gungtang Labrang, my maternal uncle Zhangpo Jamyang Gyatso, gave us the great upper bedroom of the temple where we stayed for several days with our meals provided in timely fashion from uncle's room. Otherwise, as I mentioned before, there was an Ane Yangtzom at Gungtang who was not convinced that I was the real incarnation of the Gungtang Lama and, because it was a time that he had control of the food, if it had been up to him, we would have had no one to serve us food for even a day!

At that time Kuntse Gomag Tzipön Rinwang and his wife, my older sister, came from Lhasa to Gungtang and stayed for about a week. One day they came to meet Ngaram Dampa and they served us tea and four meals together, one right after the next! Otherwise, Ane Yangtzom neglected us like a tree without a shadow, and gave us no sign of recognition. Not only then, but up until I received my Geshe degree, whenever we passed by Gungtang on the way from Lhasa to Ganden we stayed at my uncle Gyatso's at Chökor Ling and I had no thought to go to Gungtang Labrang.

Because the fighting around Lhasa had not been resolved, the night of Ganden Ngamchö we returned from Dechen back to Ganden and I persevered in studying the successive subjects from the Paramita class that had already been completed, beginning with *sem kye*, bodhicitta, *dam ngag*, instructions and so forth.

When the winter session let out we went to Lhasa, and on the sixteenth day of the twelfth month, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa from India and the government had a

welcoming reception for him at Kyitsäl Luding. Lamas and tulkus of the three monastic seats together went to have audience with him.

When I was thirteen, in the year of the water bull, when the Lhasa Great Prayer Festival concluded, in accordance with Ngaram Dampa's intention, we invited Tsedrung Zhabzur Sampelag to my room and I, Lhabu, and Tzong Legshä's nephew Tsultrim Tänzin, the three of us, began studying writing under his tutelage. In the meantime, for two or three months, we did our memorization, recitation and study of *tsänyi*⁴⁹ scriptures on the side.

After Ganachakra, together with Gän Rinpoche and Ngawang Lozang we moved to Drepung Monastery and received the lineage of the transmission of the entire *Kangyur*, all of Buddha's Teachings that are translated into Tibetan, and the *Tängyur*⁵⁰, from the great Kyabdag Kagyurwa Jetsun Lozang Döndän Pälzangpo in the Gomang Hardong house, as well as many other reading transmissions such as *Mani Kabum* and the *Father and Son Teachings of the Kadam*; it took over three months. Rinpoche was very large and impressive looking so whenever anyone fell asleep, talked unnecessarily, wrote notes or anything, even slightly, he would look around the room and pause for a moment; everything went very smoothly.

When the teachings at Drepung were finished, we moved to Ganden and during the summer and fall, following Gän Rinpoche's instructions, I studied *Paramita* with perseverance, starting from the *Twenty Sangha* chapter up to the third chapter with my Dharma friend Ngawang Lozang. We worked so hard that that year at the winter session, I was able to skip ahead to the older students' eighth chapter of *Paramita* and at the same time, during the winter session, studied the fourth chapter.

When I was fourteen, in the year of the wood tiger, at the end of the Great Prayer Festival, as requested by His Eminence Tatsag Hotogtu Rinpoche, at Lhasa Kundeling assembly hall, I received countless practices⁵¹ from Drepung Gomang Büldü Dorjechang Jetsun Lozang Yeshe Tānpay Gyältsän the glorious Vajrasattva lord of the hundred families, who conjoins beings' minds with the path and fruit of the four bodies of unification. All great initiations were conferred using painted mandalas with the *tagön* preliminary days of preparation. We also received instruction on the three essential points of the Mitra-system Avalokitesvara yoga and the Nyän Tsembupa-system of Avalokitesvara yoga. Dorjechang gave very vast and profound initiation instructions, clarifying the practice down to the finest details.

I was still young so the infinite profound essential points of the Sutras and Tantras that he explained could not fit into the vessel of my intelligence but I could understand almost all of the points to be contemplated and visualized during the initiations. I visualized each point directly as best I could. Thanks to that, even these days, the explanations given at that time and memories of the Lama Rinpoche's physical expressions still clearly appear in my mind. Compared to the funny way some village elders receive sets of a hundred initiations without understanding even the grossest level of the meaning, I understood the teachings rather well for my age.

For my general studies, I was now studying from the fifth chapter of *Paramita* and, during the summer retreat, I studied with a monk who was renowned as a good student, from Ganden Jangtse Gobo. We debated the eighth chapter of *Paramita* before the assembly and did well enough that the scholars had no need to laugh or be embarrassed. In connection with inviting Chogtsung Trichen Dorjechang Kyenrab Yöntän Gyatso Pälzangpo as head of the assembly, I had the opportunity to make traditional offerings to the assembly. It went very well in all major and minor aspects from beginning to middle to end. In the winter session I moved up to the new⁵² Madyamaka class.

⁴⁹ Logic, dialectics and philosophical studies.

⁵⁰ Commentary on Buddha's teachings.

⁵¹ Jigje, Vajra Bhairava, Pawo Chigpa, Solitary Hero initiation, and Lha Chugsum, Thirteen Deity Vajra Bhairava initiation, Guhyasamaja of Father Nagarjuna's system of Akshobyavajra initiation, Sixty-two Deity Heruka initiation of Luipa's system, Five-Deity Heruka initiation of Gandipa's system, and initiation of the Great Compassionate One Avalokitesvara of Bikshuni Pälmo's system.

⁵² Studying the later or 'newer' Madyamaka masters such as Chandrakirti. Later the 'ancient' Madyamikas such as Nagarjuna are studied.

When I was fifteen, starting from the seventeenth of the sixth month of the wood hare year, as requested by Ganden Jangtse Tsawa disciplinarian, Zurpa Yeshe-lag, at the Ganden Yangpachän Temple, the eighty-eighth Ganden Tripa, Trichen Kyenrab Yöntän Gyatso Pälzangpo gave forty-five great initiations with preliminary days of preparation⁵³. With Kyabchog Büldü Dorjechang, the Lord of Teachers of the Five Fields Drepung Lubum Geshe Sherab Gyatso Rinpoche, together with over six hundred Sangha including renowned and learned lamas, tulkus, and geshe all received a fortunate festival of bliss. During the *tülzhug*, the lifestyle conduct and initiation of the great initiation of Six-Wheel-Turning Heruka was done very extensively. I was given the clothing of the Deity to wear – such as the six bone ornaments – we circumambulated the mandala with parasols, victory banners, etc. the disciples were offered to the Deity and so on. All present had great merit and good fortune.

During these great initiations, I was fortunate to sit next to Kyabchog Büldü Dorjechang, who was a very good example for me to see completely focusing on the visualizations from beginning to end without distraction. Because of factors such as having listened well during the great initiations given the year before at Kundeling, I felt that I could at least perform the visualizations uninterruptedly. At that time, I began grammar classes with Kyabchog Büldü Dorjechang and he suggested that it would be good if I studied the fundamentals with Geshe Sherab Gyatso Rinpoche.

That year at the time of the winter session I had reached the class on the ancient Madyamikas⁵⁴.

When I was sixteen, in the year of the fire dragon, at the conclusion of the Great Prayer Festival, Gän Rinpoche and I invited the supreme Drepung Gomang Lubum Geshe Sherab Gyatso and moved to Chuzang Retreat where the precious Geshe, using the *Root Grammar Text* and the *Great Situ Commentary* as a basis, with Prati Geshe's commentary that emphasizes writing, instructed us in the grammatical texts of *Sum-chu-pa* and *Tag-gyi-jug-pa* in depth for over a month.

Later on, as well, the models he gave used only metered verse so that we could practice composition of poetic verse. To show our knowledge of which letters are to be conjoined with the various grammatical particles, he had us compose a poem using each letter of the alphabet in turn as the first letter of a line of verse, as an alphabet garland poem. Although it was my first effort, the precious Geshe was so pleased with the result that he composed a whole alphabet garland poem of his own to say 'well done!' that began, 'With the good intelligence that has composed this alphabet garland, I am sincerely delighted, and not just saying it...'

That year I also repeated the lesson at Ganden by composing another model alphabet garland poem incorporating all of the beginning to advanced elements of grammar. When the instructions on grammar were finished, we moved to Sangpu for summer retreat.

Because I could draw images without much mistake, during the summer retreat, in the room of my class debate partner, Ngawang Lozang, I drew a picture of the six symbols of long life⁵⁵ and the four harmonious friends⁵⁶ with a placard with several verses below each of them. Under the picture of the four harmonious friends I wrote,

In a lake of praise exalting one who teaches
The five fields extensively, Sarasvati's swan joins the play.

Because it was becoming too meaninglessly boastful, Gän Sherab Rinpoche wrote a letter of reprimand to me, in a playful way, saying,

⁵³ This included the *Forty-two Vajra Garland Mandalas* of the well distinguished tradition of the great master of the Land of the Aryas, Abhayakaragupta, also known as Jigme Jungne Zhab; and the *Three Mandalas That Confer Bliss and Virtue*, *Deleg su Jeday Kyilkor* in the tradition elucidated by Pandita Darpan Acharya, also known as Droway Melong Zhab; Mirror of Beings, as it was taught by Kriya Samutsa.

⁵⁴ *dbu ma rnying pa*

⁵⁵ the old man of long life, the tree, rock, water, birds, and deer of longevity

⁵⁶ the partridge, hare, monkey, and elephant

An ignoramus of the five dregs like me might be praised
As someone who teaches the five fields extensively,
But when masters of the five fields reject what I have to say
I will have to give up claiming knowledge of the five fields!
Making jokes to familiarize yourself with humor,
A son has been born who is greater than his mother!
I scribble this off by way of a pointed reminder
To help increase your peerless qualities still more!

That year at the winter session, I moved into the Abhidharma class. There, I studied the scriptures of *paramita* and *madhyamika*, in addition to relying chiefly on the writings of Je Tsongkhapa and his disciples, and Panchen Sönam Dragpa, following Gän Rinpoche's instructions, I also studied the writings of Je Gendun Drub, Kunkyen Jamyang Zhepa, and Jetsun Chökyi Gyältsän as much as I could.

When I was seventeen, in the year of the fire snake, after the Prayer Festival at Drepung Hardong Tantric College, Kyabje Büldü Dorjechang gave the great initiation of Gandhapa Five Deity Heruka and the *jenangs* of Rinjung Gyatsa which Gän Rinpoche and I attended. We slept above Lubum Kangtsän in Gän Sherab Rinpoche's bedroom. Because Ngaram Dampa had been slightly unwell after and during Mönlam, when I left for Drepung he came to see me off and gave me a great deal of plain-spoken, down-to-earth essence instructions and emotional heart-felt advice and I also cried uncontrollably when I left, stricken by the thought that I might never see him again.

During the teachings at Drepung, on the seventeenth of the second month we heard that Ngaram Dampa had passed away, and the grief that everyone felt seemed unbearable. Ngaram Dampa had been born in the wood dragon year of the fourteenth sixty-year cycle in the Ayig Thango family in the village of Ala Ngödö Kä included in Sho, Tar and Lho of Barkam County. He entered Arig Monastery and trained in recitation. After that he came to central Tibet and entered Drepung Gungru Kangtsän and after a few years entered Gyütö Tantric College and trained in depth in the performance of Tantric ritual. He became one of the Tantric ritual masters skilled in creation of sand mandalas, tormas, and so forth. He had touched the feet of many qualified Gurus such as Tatsag Yongzin Gedun Gyatso, a great scholar and yogi; Kagyurwa Lhotrul Ngawang Kyenrab Tämpay Wangchug; Gomang Känchen Kyenrab Tänpa Chöpel; Gungtrul Rinpoche Kyenrab Paldän Tämpay Nyima; and the previous Yongzin Ling Rinpoche Lozang Lungtog Tänzün Trinlä, and had received limitless initiations, transmissions and oral instructions. He was also a master of both the white and black, Indian and Chinese influenced, Tibetan astrological systems.

For some time, at the advice of Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, he went to his homeland and performed the great retreat of Vajra Bhairava very definitively with preparation, performance, and conclusion complete. He then returned to central Tibet and rejoined the Tantric college. He had to be the Amdo Kangtsän teacher for a number of years and served the Tantric college with great altruism. He told me many stories, too many to write of here.

Then, when the previous Ganden Tripa Lozang Tsultrim Paldän was abbot of Gyütö Tantric College, he served as his manager all the way from that time through the time that he ascended to the golden throne and for the five years that he remained as Ganden Tripa. Unlike in later times, before the nineteen twenties, when a Lama became abbot of the Tantric College or Ganden Tripa, taking care of expenses for offerings to the general Sangha and all extra offerings that had to be made when they took those positions were the responsibility of their Labrang in each instance and were handled without hindrance. Even the veneration of the Sangha was done elaborately with high reverence, not carelessly or using the worst that is available; like the yellow part of the leaf or the blue part of the cheese!

After the previous Ganden Tripa passed away, it was Ngaram Dampa who continued to serve him, taking responsibility for all that had to be done, such as making offerings for the Lama's passing, performing the cremation, and building his reliquary stupa at Ganden Yangpachen. From

the time I was recognized as the Tulku, he took responsibility along with the previous Ganden Tripa's nephew Ganden Chizur Legshä Gyatso and he was with me as my reading Teacher up until near the time he passed away. He treated me with kind care no different from that of a parent. As I said, he taught me reading, recitation, making of diagrams for ritual calculations, making of measurements and the coloring for Tantric mandalas, and the construction of three-dimensional Tantric mandalas. It goes without saying that he taught me the *kangso* protector rituals of the Tantric College, how to perform rituals, the way to hold mudras, and so forth.

He taught me how to make the sixteen-cornered *chag kar* wrathful torma, how to stack the nine *yug gu* throwing torma, even how to make the *drug chu ma* torma for Dharmaraja, the making of the sixteen sets of four *yug gu* and the reasons for why four offerings are made and so forth – in short, everything about the making of tormas and the reasons they are made the way they are. He taught me the procedures in each case of Tantric practice, the convening and dismissal of assemblies, even down to the various systems of officiating, only the purest experiential lineage practice without ever regarding any of it in a mundane way as ‘goods for sale’, and because he was always advising me in this regard, later when after I received my Geshe degree and focused on Tantric practice, I did not have to begin Tantric practice as a complete beginner like many Geshe, but I was already very familiar with Tantric practice. And not only that, when studying the *Drag Yerpa Cave*⁵⁷ teachings, I could draw the major lines of the mandalas and pass examinations given by the Abbot and Gurus on the dimensions of mandalas without difficulty and became someone who the younger Tantric students could consult to clear up their questions about practice. All this was due solely to the kindness of Ngaram Dampa and I feel inexpressibly indebted to him. To take the activities of one day for example, we would rise in the early dawn when the first rooster crowed and wash up. After recollecting the auspices of the day⁵⁸ we would recite the mantra for blessing our speech and the ‘multiplier’ mantra. Then, with Ganden Lhagyema, we would recite hundreds of Migtsemas, hundreds of four line Refuge Prayers⁵⁹, the *sadhana* of Vajra Bhairava Solitary Hero in connection with the recitation of one mala of Hundred-syllable Mantras. He would do a great deal of recitation of the Bhairava mantras, reciting them in a relaxed and slow manner, and when we came to the end, at the point after making the torma offering and arriving at the beginning of the

⁵⁷ Two hours drive Northeast of Lhasa. The ruins of the eleventh century Kadampa Monastery of Yerpa Drubde sits 100m below caves in the white cliffs. Caves include Tendrel Drubpuk associated with Atisha and the Kadampas, Chakna Dorje Puk which has a self-risen stone Vajrapani image, Jampa Lhakhang which used to have a famous 13th century image of Maitreya along with the Eight Bodhisattvas, below which are relief images of the Lords of the Three Families, Drubtob Puk the Mahasidhas cave, Chogyel Pug where King Songtsen Gampo meditated in the seventh century, once contained images of the king and Pelden Lhamo, Dawa Puk containing a sculpted image of Padmasambhava, a self-risen image of Ekajati, and stone footprints of Padmasambhava and his student Lhalung Pelgyi Dorje, Lhalung Puk where Lhalung Pelgyi Dorje hid before and after he assassinated the apostate king Langdarma, and Neten Lhakhang constructed by Lu-me in 1011, formerly containing images of Buddha Shakyamuni surrounded by the Sixteen Arhats. Below Neten Lhakhang is a stone throne used by Atisha and a charnel ground. Tibet Handbook, Gyurme Dorje, pg 202-3, Footprint Handbooks, e-mail handbooks@footprint.compulink.co.uk

⁵⁸ Time of month, whether it is a religious holiday, and so forth.

⁵⁹ (Tibetan)

Lama la kyab su chi wo
Sangye la kyab su chi wo
Cho la kyab su chi wo
Gedun la kyab su chi wo

I go for refuge in Guru,
go for refuge in Buddha,
go for refuge in Dharma,
go for refuge in Sangha

(Sanskrit)

NAMO GURUBYA
NAMO BUDDHAYA
NAMO DHARMAYA
NAMO SANGHAYA

Dharmaraja ritual, he would go on to perform the complete extensive Dharmaraja ritual with visualization, the long and short fulfillment and confession rituals with praises during which time he would have me make a hundred water-bowl offerings. For my sake he would do the long-life White Tara practice, offer the *Torma Shaka Tubma* with hundreds of hand-printed tormas, with *surupa* and *sur* burnt offerings. It was only after finishing all of this that he would have tea and some breakfast. Then he would examine me on my reading and Dharma recitations. When it was appropriate to begin new instructions, he would perform extensive ablutions in connections with recitations of Jorcho Preliminary Practice, *Thubtän Lhunpo'i Tzegyän*, make many mandala offerings for accumulations; make hundreds of prostrations with *Confession of Downfalls*⁶⁰.

Next, he would perform the *sadhana* of Secret Hayagriva solitary system and as he was reciting the root mantra five thousand times daily, without fail, he would take little strolls through the Chuzang debate courtyard or wherever we were, to check up on everything.

At noon he would recite the *Three Jewels Recollection Sutra* and then have lunch. After throwing out the hand-printed tormas he would perform Vajradaka fire puja. With the offering of the first portion, he would imprint hundreds of small Buddha images, all the while praying to the Guru inseparable from Mahakala with the *Choying Taläma* recitation. He would recite one mala of Samayavajra's mantra, the Shambhala Prayer, and then for my sake he would recite the *Prayer of the Sixteen Arhats*, my long life prayer, the Hayagriva harm-averting ritual *Namgyel Tobkyi Tsöncha*, the *Peak Forces Ornament Dharani*, and the *Dispeller of Darkness of the Ten Directions Sutra*. With perfect pronunciation, he would recite the complete twelve chapters of the Guyasamaja Root Tantra, the first chapter of the Heruka Root Tantra, and the entire Condensed Prajnaparamita Sutra.

At that point he would go for circumambulation on the Chuzang Retreat Lingkör. After having had evening tea, to help me in my work, he would perform the *sadhana* and mantra recitation of Five-Deity Secret Kurukulla. Then finally after doing recitation and meditation of *Kyung Nag Meyi Putri*, *Black Garuda Razor of Fire*, he would recite about three thousand MANI mantras. Every morning and evening, we each did our own *Six-Session Guru Yoga*. Whether on the third or ninth day of each month, we performed the extensive Drugchuma torma offering to Dharmaraja and, on the full moon, new moon, and eighth day of each month, Ngaram Dampa would arrange to give me command protection abluion⁶¹ alternating between using the Hayagriva and Vajravidaran systems.

In his daily recitations of ritual and scripture his voice was always unhurried, clear and correct and because this is what I would hear continually, my mind was most always at peace. When he sat with the Tantric College practitioners, even reciting something like Guyasamaja, he could chant along with them in perfect unison without standing out. When he resided in Lhasa and at Ganden, he would begin Hayagriva mantra recitation in the morning and then circumambulate on the lingkör as he kept on reciting the mantra. Again, although Ngaram Dampa had no title of Geshe or Karam from the monastery, he had received extensive teachings of Sutra and Tantra including initiations, transmissions, and instructions from many qualified Gurus, and as I said before, in his samaya he seemed to have no ordinary competitiveness, never presenting himself as a great yogi who had done retreat.

Even in the political realm, he wisely distinguished between what was essential and otherwise and took deep responsibility for his commitments, a great elder with wisdom rivaling that of Brahma. Even when he bore responsibilities such as being the resident Teacher at Amdo Kangtsän of Gyütö Tantric College, all of the Tantric College by consensus considered him greater than others. Taking our house as an example, after the previous Ganden Tripa had passed away, although various people from the local Chatreng Monastery area and the monastic university, from both within and without, sought opportunity to falsely deny us with calculated accusations, like the supreme of mountains, he remained immovable, self-sufficiently taking care of the Labrang and making sure that all was well.

⁶⁰ *Itung bshags*

⁶¹ *byab khrus (jab trü)*

When he was approaching the end of his life and was ill, he took Mahayana Precepts *Sojong* every day and would only drink milk and no coarse food. In addition to having them make new power objects especially for the cremation of his remains, he gave those who would be the cremation attendants, Chatreng Nyitso Trinlä, and Tzongzur Legshä, many instructions as to how to handle his remains. For a full year before his death, every night before going to sleep he meditated on *powa*, sending his consciousness like a shooting star to the Pure Lands; in summary, he was in all ways a fully qualified Spiritual Guide. On the seventeenth day of the second month of the year of the fire snake, when he was seventy-four, he passed away. After the Ganachakra offering, at Drepung Hardong Tantric College, we received from Büldü Dorjechang the great initiation of Secret Hayagriva, the Zurka Gyatsa *jenangs*, commentary on the *Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion*, the *Twenty Verses on the Vows* and the root and secondary vows of Tantra.

When I turned eighteen, in the first year of the earth horse, Tzöpa Tzongzur Legshä Gyatso became seriously ill and no treatment would reverse the progress of the sickness until he passed away on the first day of the third month of the year.

In the meantime, Chizur handled responsibility for our household. Although Gän Rinpoche and I had trained in nothing but Dharma and lacked any experience in administration, since Gän Rinpoche did not have too heavy a load of students Chizur suddenly gave Gän Rinpoche and I responsibility for administration of the house. When we took inventory of the manager's house documents and items, the money at hand was less than a hundred silver coins, and because Ngaram Dampa's final illness had been a long one, everything was about to run out. There was only about two half loads of butter and one or two bricks of tea left in storage so everything necessary for taking care of his passing had to be accomplished by borrowing from others.

Chizur was someone who had knowledge of the outside world and he always took everyone into consideration, so he had kept everything organized. There were many outstanding debts, of which he had kept close records, which, in addition to having not been repaid, each such as that from the *Tseshö*⁶² office, were accumulating interest each month. When we added up all of the notations that were recorded in a little black book, it came to 294 *tamdo*⁶³ and included an additional six silver *tamdo* that were borrowed for cremation preparations and so forth, it came to a total of 300 *tamdo* of debt.

At that time in Tibet, in general, silver was extremely rare, and compared to later times after the Red Chinese had occupied Tibet, at that time owing three hundred *tamdo* of silver seemed to us like owing 30,000 *tamdo*! It was an extremely heavy responsibility. It was quite a difficult time with lots of arguments over the cost of expenditures on various things like barley, tea, cloth and so forth. And when Ngaram Dampa had handed the managerial responsibilities over to Tzongzur Legshe, Legshe had heavy expenditures during the Lhasa Water Mouse year fighting with the Chinese army and, with no way to return, covering the offerings that I had to make before and after entering Dharma, taking examinations, and so forth. Apart from three nomad families who were supporting me, I had nothing, not even a plot of ground as big as your palm. Although I received the continued support of the three families, it went to supporting all of our residents and their relations. As Je Milarepa has said,

Thunder and lightning and southern clouds,
Arise from nowhere else but space
And disappear nowhere else but space;
They are all self-arising and self-dissolving.

Rainbows and mists and fog,
Arise in the sky itself
And dissolve into the sky itself;
They are all self-arising and self-dissolving.

⁶² *rtse shod*, top and bottom, Amounts

⁶³ *tam rdo*

It was like that; the Labrang was impressive outside but empty inside like a shaman drum stripped bare. When I resided at the monastery, except for at the time of the Great Prayer Festival in Lhasa, I had only an upper robe with five or six patches, and a *zän*, similarly patched, that I had to wear. We lived on a daily fare of tsampa and a few vegetables, so when there was no call for Geshe or other official ceremonies, or rituals to be done, in the evenings it seemed like happiness had disappeared. When personal offerings were made, such as at funeral rites, I would secretly keep aside a few coins so that when we stayed in Lhasa I could send out my attendant Lhabu a few times to buy some *mog-mogs* from a restaurant. A few times we got them easily enough from an acquaintance at the college, but I had to eat them out of sight of my manager. At that time, money was scarce and food was expensive. I would buy some of the Yardrog nomad's dried mutton that the traders had available, early on at a price of three *päshag zho* a sheep's quarter, and later on at price of five *zho* and I had to eat it in hiding. In terms of living circumstances, we were at subsistence level. At Lhasa Monlam and at Ganachakra gatherings, some of the Sera and Drepung lamas and tulkus were admired as impressive but everyone had it rather hard at that time. Geshe Ben said,

Before, my mouth didn't find mood.
Now, food doesn't find my mouth!

Likewise, the fact that we don't just experience misfortune in this life is only the kindness of the Virtuous Spiritual Guide!

That year when I went to Sangpu for summer retreat, at the urging of one monk of Ganden Shartse Dokam Kangtsän, I gave a reading transmission of the *Eight-Thousand Verse Prajnaparamita Sutra* to a Sangha of eighty monks. I had already memorized the root Abhidharma text some years earlier but, for mastery of the meaning that accords with the words, I was studying Sera Me Gyälwang Choje's Abhidharma text which is very explicit and draws from Je Gendun Drub, the First Dalai Lama's Abhidharma commentary, *Tharlam Sälje, Illuminator of the Path to Liberation*; and was also studying in detail Chimjam Yangpa's Abhidharma commentary, and because I was applying myself to this study I could instantly quote lines of commentary to the root text in all of Abhidharma's eight chapters.

At that time, there was a worker of Ganden Shartse's abbot named Nyagre Lodrö Chöpel, whom Ganden Serkong Dorjechang praised as one of his best disciples. Out of his great consideration to him and to Gän Rinpoche and myself, Kän Rinpoche, the precious abbot, specially moved up the Lharampa Geshe examination to be earlier that year, the year of the earth sheep. At that time, there had not been a title of Geshe Dorampa or Lingsepa in the college and no Vinaya class necessarily required from Abhidharma, but in order for me to study Vinaya, the abbot made an exception and shifted Vinaya class to summer retreat. Because I had already memorized the summary of Vinaya composed by Sera Me Sharchen, I recited the summary of important points from the root commentary as I attended the class. In this way I studied the Vinaya scripture during summer retreat and, in accordance with previous tradition, I took my comprehensive examination on Vinaya in the great assembly and my examination on Abhidharma for the college at the same time.

The chanting for the conjoined Protector pujas and other recitations on important holidays would alternate year by year between the two colleges and this year the uncommon chant melodies of Ganden Shartse were being used. Because I had great appreciation for the chant melodies of the Protector Puja and other chanting, and there had to be a new notation written out for some of the chanting that was different from previous *Kangso* and other chant melodies so, as urged by the delegates of the college, I wrote them out by hand, with a colophon I composed at the end.

The night of Ganden Ngamchö, in the great assembly of Ganden, I was examined in both discourse for Dorampa level and in dialectical debate. I recited about thirty pages of *Drang-nge Leg-she Nying-po, Essence of Eloquence of the Provisional and Definitive*, and in both the great assembly hall and the debate courtyard I was examined for two days at each place with various

students of both Ganden Shartse and Ganden Jangtse throwing debates at me and I was able to answer well enough not to disgrace my Gurus. One of my Dharma companions who received Dorampa degree at that time from Tsawa house of Ganden Jangtse, a Geshe Chödän was an excellent scholar and kind person whom the previous Dalai Lama later appointed to be abbot of Ganden Jangtse.

On the day of the Dorampa examination, a messenger came on horseback from the Dalai Lama's Norbulingka Palace with an order that all those who were engaging in the public dialectical examination for Lharam and Tsogram Geshe degrees that year, the year of the earth sheep, must come for examination in the Norling Kälzang Palace at noon in two days. So the next day Gän Rinpoche and I, with our Dharma companion Ngawang Lozang, went by way of Shätsöl and arrived in Lhasa in one day and went to the Norbulingka residence at noon the next day. Previously, up to that time, those who stand for the Geshe Lharampa degrees had been named by the abbots of the individual monastic seats but this time, rather than leaving the status quo alone, without real precedent for having the authority to do so, the government declared a special debate examination. The Geshe from that year, the year before my examination, all suddenly came for debate examination at the Norbulingka Palace and the abbots of the monastic seats were summoned to the site of the debate and were told that among that year's Geshe, there appeared to be some who were not qualified for the Lharampa degree but that since this was the first time that the debate examination would be held at the Norbulingka an exception would be made and degrees would be left as they were. However, they did not say that starting next year onwards, anyone who could not hold their own amongst the best Geshe students would have their Geshe titles revoked. After word came down that even the abbots were being criticized, for two days before the debate examination began, there was a good deal of trepidation and anxiety.

At the actual debate examination, in the Sunlight residence of the Norbulingka Palace, the important guest Tänpa Dargyä was present to witness the debate, and Deyang Tsänshab Rinpoche came to give the examination. The Dalai Lama himself looked out at times from the curtained door of his residence above, listening and watching inconspicuously. Those presenting debates were not allowed to simply choose their prepared subject for debate and, instead, Deyang *Tsänzhab* Rinpoche chose what scriptural reference or precept had to be debated and from what point. Some Geshe who were unsure of themselves paced back and forth as they waited.

Although the subjects of debate were unfixed, repeating some subjects and then skipping ahead to others, as if ordained by fate, I remained un-refuted, and when theories were presented, whether I chose to say that I could accept them or not, I was not blind-sided or confounded by any arguments that were presented. Yet after the examination was over, I returned to Ganden with my mind wondering what was going to happen. Four of our Geshe companions, Dokang Samling Batar, Sera Mey Pomra Ratag, Sera Je Dänma Tulku, and Gomang Uchu Muchin, the Mongolian Hotogtu, were told to stay in Lhasa and await the results which would not yet be decided for about one month. Afterwards, Hotogtu was fined ten gold coins, Dänma Tulku, five gold coins, and Sermä Ratag and Gashar Batar were fined one gold coin each and just managed to retain their Geshe degrees.

Geshe Batar's Geshe ceremony was held during the second winter Dharma session. In the waxing moon cycle of the eleventh month, during the first winter session, in the great assembly hall, he offered two services of tea to the whole assembly and hot rice soup with two Tibetan *tam* coins for each monk. At Ganden Shartse Dratsang, he also offered all of the monks two teas and hot rice soup. He offered each bikshu a *khatak* and a washcloth and two white coins minted by the Ganden Podrang Government, and one ancient *yang tam* good-fortune coin. To the whole assembly, he offered three brocade tangkas of the three Long-Life Deities and, for the great Protector fulfillment and restoration ceremony, a good large pair of *bub* cymbals, with their storage case, to be played by the chant-leader. In Dokang Kangtsän he served tea for the gathering and noodle soup with individual offerings to the monks that were the same as those made at the Dratsang. In addition, for everyone, he offered a large chief object of veneration, a five-eyed silver butter lamp, and an offering of four female yaks, *drimo*, brought from east Dechen Balam region.

To those at Dokang Samling he made offerings similar to those at the Kangtsän and some extra offerings at the New Year's ceremonies. At Ganden Jangtse Dratsang he offered tea and two white *tam* coins to each monk. At Serkong Kangtsän and to the people of Samling, he made distributions similar to those at Jangtse Dratsang. Thus, he followed the procedures in accordance with previous tradition, as he had to take Geshe examination in the debate courtyard of Shartse College for two days and was called for examination at Dokang, Sogpa, Ganden Jangtse Lubum, Gyälrong, and Trehor Kangtsän's. Once the ceremonies were concluded at Ganden, they made offerings at Chötri Dratsang and Zim Kangshar Dratsang so they were not omitted, at least. On the eighth day of the twelfth month, at Drepung Monastery, the Lharampa Geshe received their rankings with representatives of the Dalai Lama, a government functionary and an abbot present. Gän Yongzin Dampa went as our representative, and the examination was set for the sixth day of the first month.

When I was nineteen, in the year of the earth sheep, at the Great Prayer Festival, I was to take my Lharampa Geshe examination, so I went in the first line of the festival for audience with the Dalai Lama at the Norbulingka Palace on the third day of the year. On the day of the sixth of the first month was the day of the actual examination. There were three gatherings. In the first gathering I had to present the five root scriptures and, in the morning on Pramana, at midday, on Madhyamaka and Paramita, and in the evening, on Vinaya and Abhidharma, I had to answer debate challenges. While I would not say that I sustained such pure motivations as renunciation, bodhicitta, and so forth throughout the entire examination, without pollution of such bad motivations as fear and expectation or boastful pride, I gave straightforward answers. I explained what I understood with honesty, without pretending to see or understand things that I didn't, yet with many of the best students of Sera and Drepung Monasteries throwing debates at me I was never confounded or stuck for answers. Early on the day of the seventh, I made offerings at the Ganden general assembly, at the two Dratsangs individually, and to the groups at the Kangtsäns. That day, at the evening tea of the Great Prayer Festival, I offered tea to the gathering and a *tam* coin to everyone.

Quite a large number of well-wishers with whom I had connections also came, offering *khataks* to congratulate me on the results of the examinations and Gän Rinpoche, Geshe Sherab Rinpoche, and many other Geshe, Dharma companions, and students with whom I was connected to or acquainted with were happily saying, 'The examination yesterday went very well!'

As I said before, we had large household debts so, to celebrate the as yet unknown results, we had to take offering bowls, a serkyem set, and a few other silver implements, a six-inch gau Zeu Lhakhang golden amulet box, and some fabric from the time of the previous master to sell to pay for the distributed offerings of money, cost of rice, and so on, and it turned out to be just enough to cover the expenses for the ceremonial offerings. In addition, the butter offered from east Dechen Balam was almost enough and we made up the rest by borrowing a little more from others; in this way, we covered my Geshe ceremony expenses without going into much further debt.

During the Prayer Festival, the day's activities from morning to noon to night included the morning public debate between tea service and Ganachakra offerings, Teachings, then the midday public debate and evening public debate, applying relevant commentaries to their respective root texts, and so forth, following all of the ancient traditions well. There was a tradition that after the Prayer Festival tormas had been thrown, the Geshe would go to the residence of the Lhasa Labrang and, in audience with the Dalai Lama, the best debaters would receive their awards and rankings, but this year, since the Dalai Lama was in a long Yamantaka retreat, the government had us Geshe and the two abbots come for audience at the Norbulingka. There, in the Norbulingka 'Sunlight' residence, Tse Kändrung Cenmo read the list of the rankings. First place went to the Drepung Gomang Hardong's Mongolian Borä Tuwa Thubtän Nyingpo, and Drepung Loseling's Minyag Tashi Tongdü.⁶⁴ Second place went to Sera Je Hardong's Mongolian Gönpo Tsering and Ganden Jangtse's Trehor Tau Tsewang Gönpo. Third place went to Drepung Loseling's Demo Tulku

⁶⁴ He later became Ganden Tripa, ascending to the golden throne in 1995.

Rinpoche and myself. Those who were ranked lined up in order of ranking, and those without ranking, in order of ordination seniority. Because the Hotogtu had not placed in the ranking, his throne, with its backrest and so forth, had been set up at the end of the line of the six of us, near the door, which was an unprecedented sort of oddity! Everyone received tea and rice and those who had received the top rankings were given congratulatory awards. Demo Rinpoche and I, for our third place ranking, received Dharma robes, *zän* robes, yellow hats, silk *khataks*, and two bricks of tea as awards.

In this way I just barely managed not to embarrass myself before the scholars in the public debate and questioning. Yet it seems to me that if one does not apply great effort over a long period of time acquainting oneself with the meaning of the scriptures through detailed analysis, and really impress their meaning upon one's mind, if one is lazy and relies solely upon one's intellectual ability to understand, it will only last as long as it is tested in debate, and as the years pass it will fade away like a rainbow and remain afterwards as no more than a remembered dream.

After the Prayer Festival public debates were over, like the Arhats who declared, 'I have completed the work! I shall experience no further rebirth after this life!' for some days we relaxed and rested. Afterwards, in the time between prayers and assemblies, when Geshe Sherab Gyatso again went to the Norbulingka to proofread the printing of the *Kangyur*, I went with him every day and received instructions on the *Root Text On Poetry* and the third chapter instructions on the basis of Sarasvati's *Song Of Joy* Commentary. When he was teaching 'signs of direct perception' thanks to his using only verses of metaphor and my having gained some familiarity with the subject, I would immediately offer spontaneously composed verses of metaphor back to him. Although I intended to eventually study the first and last chapters with him as well, it was left aside because of the schedule at the tantric college and having to attend other teachings.

With the addition of the *ngäl shöl*⁶⁵ month, in the second month of the year of the earth sheep, on the day of Ganachakra gathering, I was called to the Norbulingka Kälzang Palace and, with the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama Jetsun Ngawang Lozang Thubtän Gyatso Jigdräl Wangchug, the all-victorious, glorious and excellent acting as both abbot and master, Deyang *Tsänzhab* Rinpoche Tänzün Trinlā Özer acting as Revealer of Secrets⁶⁶, Namdra Dükor Lobpön Jampa Sönam acting as timekeeper, Jangtse Chöje Drepung Loseling Trehor Jampa Chödrag and Sharpa Chöje Sera Je Lawa Lozang Gyältsän⁶⁷, and so forth, in the center of a Sangha gathering of ten abbots and masters, I received the vows of a Bikshu.

I would like to explain something at this point. From the time I first came to Gän Rinpoche's room until I entered the Tantric college, we would rise in the early dawn and recite together, for longevity, Ganden Lhagyäma, Expression of the Names of Manjusri,⁶⁸ and Yamantaka *sadhana*. After finishing the recitations, until breakfast was ready, I would always memorize at least one and a half pages of a long page style text of whatever philosophical text I was currently studying. After morning tea, in accordance with each of the four seasonal sessions at the monastery, I would go to the morning session in the debate courtyard and the evening Tara Ritual Puja⁶⁹ and debate session in the courtyard every day without fail, remaining discussing the teachings for a long time, usually past ten o'clock.

Between morning assembly and mid-day debate session assembly I had to either go for instruction from Gän Rinpoche or continue my study in discussion with my Dharma companion Ngawang Lozang or others. It was so cold during the winter session that every year my ears and hands would be injured and crack open and drip with pus, I was never bothered by it and always went to every debate session.

⁶⁵ *Mngal bshol*, 'pregnancy postponement'.

⁶⁶ *gsang ston*

⁶⁷ Both this and the previous lama both became Ganden Tripas.

⁶⁸ Translated with Sanskrit and Tibetan phonetics as *Chanting the Names of Manjusri*, Alex Wayman, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007.

⁶⁹ Tara Praises, (the Twenty-one Taras 45 times before, nowadays, ten times) and other recitations done in assembly by the monks as a puja for elimination of obstacles to their study and training in *tsän nyi*, logic and dialectics.

Between terms and in Lhasa, after morning class, Gän Rinpoche would go for circumambulation on the *ling kor*. When I was young it was a chance to play and draw pictures and such. When Gän Rinpoche was nearly back from his circumambulation, from close by or the table in front of me there would always come a quite loud knocking sound so that if I quickly collected my toys and pretended to be studying my text, I could avoid being scolded by Gän Rinpoche when he returned. Because this would happen, I could relax and play until the knocking sound occurred.

That one named Gyalchen Dorje Shugden has cared for me like a loving mother, countless times, even when I was a child at play. Between terms and when staying in Lhasa, etc. once night had fallen, I had to come out and do recitation until ten or eleven o'clock. At that time, if I did not remember words of the scripture or missed them, fell asleep, or was unclear in my pronunciation, when I came back in I would get a rain of Gän Rinpoche's scolding and beating.

Until the first year of Madhyamaka class, every year, at the great winter session, the students would have to offer their memorized recitation before the precious abbot of the Dratsang and if their memorization reached a thousand pages they would be given first place awards. There was two or three years that I received these awards as well.

I always had a Nartang edition of the *Kangyur* in my room in Lhasa. In addition to that, in the year of the water mouse when there was fighting in Lhasa with the Chinese army and Tängyā Ling Dratsang was destroyed, the government had entrusted many of their holy scriptures and a complete hand written copy of the *Tängyur* to Ganden Monastery which, for many years, was also kept in my room. Because of this, when I was thirteen and had just received transmission of the *Kangyur*, I began reading it, starting with the thirteen volumes of Vinaya transmission, and enjoyed this so immensely that I eventually read the entire *Kangyur* and over half of the *Tängyur* including sections such as the Collection of Praises and various subjects of Sutra and Tantra. Apprehensive that I might be scolded by Gän Rinpoche, I would hide half of a volume of scripture in the altar by the head of my bed and when Gän Rinpoche had gone out as well as most every night, after I was finished doing recitation of the scriptures I had memorized and Gän Rinpoche had gone to bed, I would silently read forty or fifty pages of scriptures in bed by the light of a lamp. Furthermore, in Lhasa and at Chuzang Retreat, I read all of Je Rinpoche and his Disciples' collected works and the collected works and life stories of many Lamas such as those of various Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas, and miscellaneous writings in various fields of Sutra and Tantra. I read so widely that it became almost as if there was no volume that I had left unread. I kept up such occasional reading until going to Chatreng in the year of the wood mouse and when I was in Kham and when I came back to central Tibet, I continued reading the earlier and later works of many Lamas of non-partisan tenets. As said in the *Hundred Verses Of Wisdom*,⁷⁰

Knowledge left in the scriptures,
Secret mantra that is not practiced,
Training that is done by the forgetful,
Most of these will fail in time of need!

Likewise, like a child watching the show in the temple, any trace of my reading and contemplating these scriptures are now nothing but a relative of the proverbial horn of a rabbit!

After the Geshe assemblies and pujas I entered glorious Gyütö Tantric College and then went to the spring session at the Gyütö Chudar College there in central Tibet and from Precious Abbot Sera Mey Gyälrong Lozang Tsöndrü received the transmission of the four combined commentaries on Guyasamaja. When the spring session was over I went to summer session at Ganden, to the Lhasa Great Torma Ritual⁷¹ and Offering of Practice,⁷² and to the Dharma session at Sera Monastery. In the course of that, during the seventh month of the year, at the traditional Tantric College late summer session at Drag Yerpa, I attended all that was required of the new

⁷⁰ *Shes rab brgya pa*

⁷¹ *gtor chhen*

⁷² *sgrub mchhod*

Geshes, the debate examination, seven days of training in mandala dimensions, and the three days of *Tig Chen*, or *Great Lines* examination before the abbots and lamas. During the *Tig Chen*, as in prior times, an abbot and lama instructed the Geshes about the symbolism of the two and three dimensional mandalas of Guyasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka, and ritual assistants received colored mandala sand. As is traditional, the beginners were asked questions about the three dimensional mandalas and others and, because I was there in front of all the Geshes I had to answer questions but thanks to the kindness of Ngaram Dampa, I was able to answer them all directly.

At Yerpa we had teachings on the four combined Guyasamaja commentaries, Heruka Root Tantra and the *Illumination of the Hidden Meaning*⁷³ Commentary. That was the time that a nephew of my predecessor, Rigzin, Latsab Geshe, and two members of Gyütö, a party of four that Tzongzur Legshä had sent out a number of years earlier towards Torgod Mongolia for collection of offerings returned. But after dividing the amount they had left over by four, after paying back the principal and interest for their original supplies, they had not been able to accomplish anything more than their own support. It was at that time that Gän Rinpoche and I handed over to Rigzin all responsibility for handling the affairs of the house. After the Yerpa session concluded, we proceeded on for the autumn session in Lhasa, the Tse Dharma session, and the winter session at Ganden.

When I was twenty in the year of the iron monkey, after the Prayer Festival was over, I went to the Tantric College session at Kyormolung. In the earlier tradition of the Tantric College, when tulkus first entered the great assembly of the Tantric College, for three days they would remain like new ordinary monks and have to go to all gatherings and debate sessions. Then, after three days they have to make an elaborate tea offering called the *ne ja*⁷⁴ to the college officials, and a distribution of offerings to the general Sangha. From that time onwards they move to their official position in the assembly and can ask to be excused from assemblies and so forth, similar to what is normally permitted to ex-officials in the College. Even though I was permitted to do this, it was a year before I ever had to ask to be excused from a single session and I attended every assembly and teaching no differently than any other ordinary monk. This made the Tantric College and practitioners very happy. How I had adhered to the discipline of the program even became an example that they would later mention to tulkus who entered the college.

That year, when I went to the winter session at Ganden, requested by Geshe Gedun from Mili, I offered about three hundred monks in Dokang Kangtsän the reading transmission of the three volume Migtsema Collection and Tashi Lhunpo's Tantric Ritual Prayer Book.

Since I had no permanent residence after entering Gyütö Tantric College and following its program and then attending teachings at Chuzang Retreat, at the request of Gän Rinpoche's many students from both Jangtse and Shartse colleges of Ganden Monastery, all the way up until he passed away, we went to Ganden every year for summer retreat and great winter Dharma session and otherwise, during both spring and fall, we stayed at my room in Lhasa.

When I was twenty-one, in the spring of the year of the iron bird, at Chuzang Retreat, I received from Kyabchog Dorjechang Phabongkhapa the blessing of the four initiations of Vajrayogini's sindhura mandala and the profound instructions on the generation and completion stages, and *jenangs* of the Thirteen Golden Dharmas of the Sakyas, the Thirteen Pure Visions of Tagpu,⁷⁵ the Manjusri cycle of teachings, the Close Lhodrag Lineage, and the Fifteen Vaishravana Teachings.

From the third of the latter seventh month of Shölda until the sixth of the eighth month of the year, at Tagdrag Retreat, ninety seven Geshes such as Dragyab Obom Togdän Jamyang Lodrö, together with a large entourage, received from a group of the most exalted high Lamas⁷⁶ the sixty-

⁷³ *sbas don kun gsal*

⁷⁴ *sne ja*

⁷⁵ *stag phu'i dag snang bchu gsum*

⁷⁶ These lamas included a second Buddha Vajradhara founder of the Tantric teachings Tagdrag Tritrul Rinpoche Ngawang Sungrab Tutob Tänpay Gyälsän Päl Zangpo, a group of twenty-one lamas and tulkus including Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa Pälzangpo Chog, Kyabdag Kagyurwa Chenpo Lozang Döndän, Gomang Kangsar Dorjechang,

five great initiations of the uncommon Mitra mandalas out of the One Hundred and Eight Mandalas Well Laid-out By Mitrajogi. Each morning an initiation of one of the lower classes of tantra was conferred and each evening, an initiation of unexcelled highest yoga tantra, so two initiations were given each day. The preparations for the initiations of each of the four classes of tantra were all conducted in full, without any abbreviations made for the sake of convenience; everything was received completely in accordance with the tradition of the sacred lineage holders.

That year, because of a dispute over a treasurer appointment at Drepung Loseling Monastery, at the urging of a few unofficial misinformed monks, quite a large number of monks gathered below the window of the Norbuling Palace and were making prostrations and shouting from above the balcony. It was out of keeping with disciplined tradition and when the Dalai Lama, with an aspect of having been crossed, wrathfully summoned the ringleaders, one named Nyagre Gyao, Bearded Nyagre, was said to have escaped and hid in the Tölung area. Some government soldiers went to hunt for him in the Taglung caves and even once the teachings had commenced some of the bearded men in attendance were very afraid that soldiers might suspect them and come to arrest them.

Between sessions at that time I received from Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa the Ngag Tu⁷⁷, Mantra Gathering, *jenang* of Vajrayogini and instructions on peaceful and wrathful *drugchuma* torma of Dharmaraja. After returning to Chuzang from Tagdrag Retreat, as requested by the lady Lhalü Lhacham Yangtzom Tsering, in the Dharma courtyard of Nyangdrän Chuzang Retreat, over a thousand people, lay and ordained and headed by a Sangha of lamas and tulkus received many great teachings from that embodiment of all Refuges, actual Lozang Tubwang Dorjechang, Je Pabongkapa the great. Starting from the thirtieth day of the eighth month, for twenty-four days, we received *Lamrim* teachings of the Jampäl Shäl Lung, Teachings of Manjusri, central lineage, as well as those of the southern lineage and the *Nyurlam Martri*, the *Swift Path Explicit Instructions*. The fortunate beings in attendance received detailed extensive experiential instructions on the path to enlightenment on the basis of these three commentaries combined, and the ritual conferral of aspirational and engaging bodhisattva vows.

When Lama Dorjechang was teaching he said,

‘This is vast and profound for those of discriminating wisdom,
Yet easy to understand and remember for those of lesser intelligence.’

Thus, because of his skillful mode of exposition, it was easy for everyone to understand, regardless of their respective level of intelligence. Because he taught on the basis of experience, without high-sounding words so that everyone could understand, it made this spoiled unruly mind of mine that was like a wild stallion let loose in the mountains, enter the straightforward path of Dharma. I could never repay that kindness even if I carried the debt continuously on the crown of my head until the attainment of enlightenment.

At that time there were some rough notes of the teachings that Dagyab Dong Gong Tulku had taken which, up to the invitation of the merit field for *Jor Chö*, the *Preliminary Practice Ritual*, Kyabchog Dorjechang himself had checked and corrected. At the urging of many interested parties, I compiled the notes of the rest of the *Lamrim* teachings that preceded and followed it, and made additions from my slight ascertainment of the teachings that had been given as suitable, and this is what has been printed and published nowadays as *Namdröl Lagchang, Liberation In Our Hands*.

Chagong Bemda Tulku and Laka Tulku were both coming from Chatreng and had left their home regions at the same time, but emissaries from Bemda Tulku and his group had been sent ahead to petition the Dalai Lama to be able to proceed to take over Trijang Labrang in Lhasa as the rightful incarnation ‘like a bird entering its nest or a sword going into its scabbard,’ and he and the rest of his party had to wait for a response for over a month in Amdo. Laka Tulku left ahead of

Domo Geshe Rinpoche Ngawang Kälzang, Ön Gyälsä Rinpoche, Tsawa Özer Tulku, Tri Ngawang Norbu Rinpoche, and Ganden Jangtse Tridag Rinpoche.

⁷⁷ *sngags btu'i rje gnang*

Bemda Tulku and came to my residence at Chuzang Retreat. He told me that I must be his teacher when he was at Ganden and I agreed. After the *Lamrim* teachings were over and I came to Lhasa, my arrival at the *Mindröl* bridge on the northeast sector of the *Lingkor* happened to coincide with the moment of Bemda Tulku and his party's first arrival in Lhasa as they were met by Sera Mey Pomra Geshe Dapön. The possibility of that happening seemed as likely as the proverbial sea turtle surfacing with its neck inside the golden yoke; it was the strangest thing!

When the answer to Bemda Tulku's petition came back saying, 'The real Trijang Tulku, as recognized in accordance with indications and in actuality, entered and studied at Ganden Monastic University, and even attained the Geshe Lharampa degree. He is presently enrolled in the curriculum of glorious Gyütö Tantric College. It is not at all appropriate for you to take over Trijang Labrang! Enter whichever monastery determined by your parental ancestry!' Because this was the answer, the Tulku entered Sera Mey Dratsang. The Tulku's relative, a humble 'Geshe Yeshe' who came back to his home region after the Tulku had passed away, gave me copies of a number of similar petitions that he had presented to the Ta Lama both before and after that one, and asked me to forgive him for having created so much meaningless trouble in the past.

After the *Lamrim* teaching was finished, I rested for some days and then, once again, from Kyabchog Dorjechang at Chuzang Retreat with sixty people, found myself so fortunate as to receive teachings on that practice which has been left to us by the millions of supreme siddhas and treasured by the Vajrayoginis, the ultimate most secret of secret tantras, glorious Gantapa system of Chakrasamvara outer Five-Deity Initiation and the Gantapa Heruka body mandala initiation followed by the profound commentary on the generation and completion stages of Heruka body mandala practice as well as the instructions on the Six Yogas Of Naropa, and after the teachings were dismissed at night, a few of us had a review session and received detailed instructions on such things as the physical exercises to be practiced in connection with the Six Yogas. One night we were all practicing holding the *vase breath* with the precious Lama, doing the physical exercises. Everything was very peaceful and quiet when someone in the back loudly released some flatulence! The Lama and everyone broke into laughter and had to take a break for a little while.

When I was twenty-two, in the year of the water dog, after the Prayer Festival, following the instructions of the great Dalai Lama, at the Lhasa Meru⁷⁸ Assembly Hall, supreme Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa gave transmission of the commentary of the middle-length *Lamrim* with about four thousand people in attendance. We went to attend. When the Ganachakra offering was over, Kyabdag Tagpu Dorjechang Lozang Jampäl Tānpay Ngödrub, also known as Supreme Padmavajra, came from Barkam to Lhasa and I had the good fortune to bow at his feet when he was staying at Kashag Lho.

At the request of the minister Shölkangpa's son, Sharpa Tulku, he gave over thirty initiations and teachings on profound practices from his own pure visions to myself and seven supreme holy beings including Kyabje Tagdrag Dorjechang, Ganden Tridag Rinpoche, and Drepung Mogchog Rinpoche. Our waiting vessels were filled with nectar of unexcelled blessings. One day I was invited to the room of the Guru Vajradhara where I received his kind conferral of the Cittamani Tara 'Heart Entry' *jenang* and the Tangtong close lineage long life initiation, *Chime Pälder*, Glorious Treasure of Immortality.

According to Tagpu Tānpay Gyältsän, Garwang Rinpoche and others, Tagpu Dorjechang often had visions of Gurus and Deities and, in particular, that he repeatedly met Venerable Tara face-to-face, just as one person meets another, and received inconceivable secret teachings and prophecies from her that filled one 'Mother Volume' and about three 'Son Volumes.' Because he was a great being who embodied the infinite ocean of mandalas simultaneously, I asked him for a prophecy concerning my meditational Deity and where I would go after this life. He asked Tara and she gave him eight lines of verse. If it is not deceptive, it is the kind of thing that allows happy sleep.

⁷⁸ *rme ru*

Kagyur Lama Rinpoche Lozang Döndän Pälzangpo was always very kind to me. One day he came to my room and said, ‘Because you have not yet received transmission of the Collected Works of Je Tsongkhapa and his two disciples, listen and I will give it to you!’ He neither asked for any offering nor did I have to request it, but just as he said, so gladly and compassionately, in his small residence at the college, I received from him bestowal of the entire readying transmission from the Tsang edition of the Collected Works Of The Father Manjusri Tsongkhapa And His Two Sons. At that time I was so poor as to not be able to offer more than five *do-tsä* of silver⁷⁹.

Commencing just as that was coming to a conclusion, I received from Kagyur Lama Rinpoche at Shide Nyangnä Lhakang, transmission of the five volumes of Tagpu Garwang’s Collected Works. At that time, with single intention, Kyabchog Dorjechang and an entourage of a number of lamas, tulkus, and geshees including Ganden Jangtse Tridag Rinpoche, Gomang Mogchog Rinpoche, Tsona Göntse Rinpoche and ourselves, at the Lhasa Shäzur residence, trained precisely in practice of the three dimensional mandalas of Guyasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka.

When I was twenty three, in the year of the water boar, at the Chuzang retreat, I received from Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongka the *jenangs* for the Bari Gyatsa, the Bari lineage of a hundred Deities’ initiations, for Drubtab Gyatso, the Ocean of Sadhanas, and the Nartang Gyatsa, the Nartang lineage of a hundred Deities’ initiations, and an experiential commentary on the generation and completion stages, on the basis of the *zamatog*, ‘vessel of enlightenment’, *sadhana* of Thirteen-Deity Yamantaka; commentary on *Guru Yoga* and *Mahamudra on the basis of the Profound Path of Lama Chöpa*, *Guru Puja*, and the Root Text of *Mahamudra*; and various other transmissions and commentaries such as the commentary on how to perform the great retreat of Yamantaka Pawo Chigpa, Solitary Hero.

As I mentioned before, responsibility for our house’s administration had been given to Tzöpa Rigzin. We had hoped for the best but his having little knowledge or means and a liking for dice games hurt his ability to administer anything. Therefore, as in the example of meat already given but not a drop of it yet received, Gän Rinpoche and I did not always receive timely food and drink.

The acting minister at that time was Kalön Kemä Zhabpä Rinchen Wang-gyäl and because he was one of the most powerful people, if he assisted and protected you, there was great hope that a mere word from him would get things accomplished, so we went with some small offerings to Kunzang Tserkong and related to him the situation in detail. We asked for an order that a proper investigation be carried out because of the changing ideas and conduct of Rigzin. He said, ‘There has never been a tradition of your tulku having to take administrative responsibility other than giving a bit of advice here and there. As it is said, “I am my own protector. Who else will protect me?” If you can’t support yourself, it is poor form to hope others will! Also, as Je Ba Rawa Gyältsän Pälzang said,

“Though relationships with friends and relations be equal
When you are wealthy they pay you great attention.
When you are poor and destitute and have misfortune,
You are ignored as worthless. Your stature is diminished.
Steadfast friends in hard times are rare to find!”

It was a sobering thought and settled what I could expect from relations.

Once I started into the Gyütö curriculum, my permanent residence was primarily at Chuzang Retreat, but I would go wherever Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa the supreme was giving teachings, and in the time between teachings earlier and later in the year, I did *lä-rung* retreats of Varjayogini, Yamantaka Solitary Hero and Thirteen-Deity, Gandipa Five-Deity Heruka, Secret Hayagriva, Pälmo System Great Compassionate One, and so forth, seeking to progress in mental development mainly by putting as much effort as I could on the *Lamrim* meditations, in

⁷⁹ *rdot sad*, equal to 50 *srang*, five would be 250 *srang*.

connection with the preliminary practices for purification and accumulation. Before long, however, other conditions would mandate that I had to go to Chatreng or somewhere else to take care of some kind of distracting business, so any traces of experience in contemplation or meditation would dissipate like the mist in winter which, I think, was the result of much non-meritorious karma that I had committed in previous lifetimes.

When I was twenty-four, in the year of the wood rat, it was decided that I should go to Chatreng as it was being called for and urged by the people of the Chatreng Monastery region in general. After the Prayer Festival was over, I asked permission to be excused from the tantric college schedule. The same day that I took up my meditation mat, Kyabje Ling Chogtrül Rinpoche was newly entering the college and laying out his mat; it coincided with my last tea ceremony with the assembly.

After the Ganachakra was over, at my Tashi Rabtän room in Lhasa, as requested by Ganden Shartse Dokang Samling Geshe Yöntän, with about two hundred Sangha in attendance, I gave the reading transmission of the Collected Works of Je Tsongkhapa and his disciples. I read one volume per day at that time. My tongue never had the ability to recite two and three volumes per day as some others do.

At that time, those including Sera Mey Pomra Chatreng Pälchug Dapön Geshe and Kroti Tsultrim, once again raising problems about our coming to Kham, submitted a petition to the Dalai Lama's minister Tsarongpa Dazang Dradül. **One day, at the request of the government representative named Zhide Ta Lama, we invited to my residence one pure monk who was very respectful and receptive to Lama Dorjechang's instructions, who had acted for him as an oracle for Gyalchen Dorje Shugden under strict secrecy, only a few times before, and we requested advice. This was because we were uncertain about what problems existed in Kham and also wanted to know whether it would be good to ask the Khamsän to administrate the rooms when I was in Kham. The transmission received stated,**

The precious parasol is supreme for protection from heat.

(This referred to the Dalai Lama.)

The golden fish, heart entrustment, virtue in the great ocean,

(This referred to the Monastery Khamsän.)

The phenomena of many enemies in the desirable vase,

(The nature of many false practitioners,)

The friend of the lotus [the sun] need not stop the moon

(Not looking out for only one's own purpose,)

If Dharma conch's speech upholds nothing but the

Ganden Oral Lineage from the unending knot of secret Mind,

I shall be the wrathful wheel that proclaims victory

For the Dharma victory banner!

That was precisely the prophecy received.

At about the end of that time, as requested by Trehor Kartze Trungsar Rinpoche, supreme Kyabdag Kagyurwa Chenpo Jetsun Lozang Döndän Pälzangpo gave a reading transmission of Tukwan Chökyi Nyima's Collected Works, including the works that are sealed in secrecy, to a Sangha of about eighty lamas and tulkus of central Tibet. As requested by Chötsün Trinlā Dechen of Pangda, for about sixty lay and ordained listeners, he gave a Vajrayogini blessing and generation and completion stage instructions. To an entourage of about two hundred, he gave a Five-Deity Gantapa Heruka initiation and the great initiation of Secret Hayagriva.

When it neared time to return to Kham, I received an audience to bow my head at the lotus feet of the great Dalai Lama and received from him a great deal of advice on what to do in Kham.

Following the advice of the great Dalai Lama, I went to make my parting prostrations at Yarlam, where the great Lord Kagyurwa, Jetsün Lozang Döndän Chogtse was teaching the extensive Pratimoksha Sutra during the monastic summer retreat. At Drepung Loseling Dratsang

the face of all Refugees collected, Dorjechang Pabongkapa Pälzangpo, was giving teachings on Lamrim Chenmo so I went to his Kungarawa Palace residence there to make my parting prostration to him. With great kindness, he gave me precise and extensive advice that was like essence of nectar on such things as the need for spreading the pure Ganden lineage in Kham and also gave me extensive gifts.

As I mentioned before, because my house official, Rigzin, was not conducting himself properly, we felt there was a danger that there could be administrative problems while we were in Kham, so we asked Ganden Dokang Kangtsän to take responsibility. We gave the Kangtsän responsibility for my room at Ganden and the receipt of rentals sent by the overseers of the Ganden general assembly lands at Meldro. Responsibility for the room at Lhasa, receipt of the Shartse land rentals and the rentals from Dechen Lamotse and the lands at Deyangpa and the Gyamag land was supposed to have been left with Rigzin, the administrative manager, but out of three hundred *tamdo* in receipts, two hundred which were to pay back to the kangtsän and one hundred to pay back to himself, after we returned from Kham, in addition to the two hundred *tamdo* to be paid back to the kangtsän, we had accumulated more debts to the kangtsän and were still continuing to make and repay some small loans to Rigzin in addition to the debt from before!

In the meantime, due to the passing from previous to later manager, the expenses of my own Geshe ceremony⁸⁰ which had to be paid, and so forth, along with heavy responsibilities, actual receipts did not make it up, so we had quite a bit of difficulty preparing supplies for the journey to Kham. However, by requesting help and loans from some of my students and patrons, we just managed to prepare enough and, at daybreak of the seventh month, I, my personal attendant Lhabu, my ritual assistant, Gyütö Ngagram Zedru Göndra Budor from Markam, my Dharma friend Gyütö Pukang Lozang Tashi, cook Namgyäl Dorje, tailor Tenzin Lhawang, two people including Sönam Wangdü to keep the horses and donkeys and so forth, were able to start our journey. An advance escort of four people including Tändrong Pälbar Togme set out from Lhasa and spent two days at Yarlam Gungtang.

When my birth protector, Dragshul Wangpo, and Nyima Zhönnu, principal and entourage were invoked, rather than Tzöpa Rigzin escorting me, a spirit traveling to Kham, Tsängö, an agent of Dragshul Wangpo, advised me about taking care of my health, diet, packing, critical intersections I would come to on the way and so forth; it was quite funny!

Then we left and spent a day with my mother and sister Jampäl Chötso at Dechen Karab Ogong's family's place. The next day we arrived at Ganden and had a relaxed audience with supreme Gän Rinpoche Lozang Tsultrim. During my stay there, I gave Thirteen-Deity Vajra Bhairava two-day great initiation to over five hundred Sangha at Dokang Kantsän assembly hall, and spent another day making offerings before the *Serdong Chenmo*, the reliquary stupa of Je Tsongkhapa, and *sang*, fragrant smoke offering, up on Wangkur Mountain.

I went to Shartse college, at their invitation. When the abbot's emissary Pukang Lozang Kyenrab was raising up the offerings of the three representations of enlightened body, speech and mind sent by the college, he recited a verse for each. When he was reciting the verse for the offering of the stupa he said,

*käl pa je wa sam yä su
chöd-tän tzä ching zhug gyur chig*

For millions of eons beyond conception
Please remain being a stupa!

Thus, although he was widely famed as a scholar of dialectics and the scriptures, in this instance he exhibited faulty knowledge of correct grammar.

⁸⁰ All monks in the monastery would, at some point in their monastic education, make an offering to the Sangha. This is often done after one receives his Geshe degree, although others who are not studying for the degree can also make this offering.

The Chatreng people did not abstain from guerrilla warfare and while they were raising the loudest cry, some who lacked faith in me were there as well, making it rather difficult for me to again conveniently return from Chatreng to central Tibet. In this situation, with everyone feeling they were being watched or for whatever reason, after my departure from Ganden, Gän Rinpoche remained in his room, and many people made what appeared to be hypocritical offerings of *khataks* to Rigzin and members of the Kamtsän, as if they were calculating how much longer they would be there. Kyabchog Dorjechang said,

From rainclouds which should be protective
Pours down sleet and hail and flaming bolts of lightning.
Even sunlight, so suitable to life,
Burns like something left in the fires of hell!

It seemed like that. After paying the expenses involved in requesting permanent residence at Ganden, hosting ceremonial meetings with friends and Dharma companions, making the offerings before the *Serdong Chenmo*, and so forth, I had about fifteen silver *sang* remaining which I offered to Gän Rinpoche.

The day I left Ganden, with an aspect of tearful deep sadness, Gän Rinpoche gave me a great deal of essential heart advice, both from the point of view of whether I left Ganden or not, and my mind was so attached to him that parting from him was practically unbearable to me.

After having spent two days at the Mäldro Jara Do estate we passed through Richen Ling, Özer Gyang, Tsomo Rag; Kongpo, Bala pass, and Gyamda, the Tro pass, Lharigo, Bändhala, Nubgong pass, successively traversing frightening paths over deep narrow gorges, tall steep cliffs and difficult bridges until we suddenly arrived in Ngödö. We spent one day at Ari Monastery, the local monastery of kind Ngaram Dampa, and made abbreviated offerings. The next day, we went inside Dampa's bedroom, Ayig Tangowa for a moment and I left a symbolic gift with the *tsa-tsas* that contained his relics.

I went to Gyatso Ling Monastery at the invitation of the Labrang and spent a day there. I had received many Tantric teachings in lineage from the previous Gungtrul Rinpoche and made offerings before his reliquary stupa. The present incarnation of the Gyatso Ling Tulku resided there. He appears to enjoy playing games because he was still young.

We crossed the Shargong pass and arrived in Chagra Pälbar. There, at Gyümä Ngarampa Pälbar Geshe Ngawang Chöjorchän's request, I gave instructions on the novice and complete ordination vows to about ten Sangha of Pälbar Dratsang.

We then passed successively through Lhatse and Shopado until arriving at Tzitor with its two dratsangs of Nyinpa and Sipa. As requested by Nyinpa Dratsang, we spent three days there. For a newly constructed Maitreya statue, I performed the extensive consecration *Geleg Charbeb* in connection with Vajra Bhairava with the dratsang's ritual performance monks, and also gave a long-life initiation for the local people. Between the assemblies, invited by Sibpa Dratsang and Drag Nag Labrang, I went there as a guest and performed consecrations and so forth.

Then we stayed with the family of the chief benefactor of the previous Ganden Tripa at Lhotzong and, invited by the local Tram Monastery, I went there for a short time, performed consecration of the holy objects, and made a brief Dharma connection with the Sangha there.

We then crossed *Yidag* pass, crossed the great bridge over the Gyälmo Ngülchu River, crossed the Chutsul Pass and arrived at Mari Mountain in Wako. From Kyungpo Tengchen, the *Horchi*, the Government Minister In Charge of Northern Nomads, Känchung Yutogpa Wangdü Norbu sent an emissary with a message that we should wait at Mari Mountain to have a meeting with him. So, we went to Mari and spent the day there. The next day the Horchi and his agents came and I spent the day in relaxed meeting with him and offered him Drubgyäl system long-life initiation. I offered to the Horchi the money from the generous offering that Känchung had made and the small offerings that had been collected on the way, and ordered the construction of two gilded pillar ornaments to offer to Dokang Kangtsän.

This Känchung is the one who previously, in the year of the earth horse, following the command of the great Dalai Lama, was the principal government appointed supervisor when the Sangpu Temple was renovated. I was at summer session enjoying study including going to the monastery courtyard to debate scriptural quotations and logic. I was asked to compose an extensive renovation dedication to be written on the wall of the temple. I wrote, (incorporating in the poetry the name of the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Ngagwang Lozang Thubtän Gyatso Jigdräl Wangchug Choglä Namgyälway De):

Friend whose speech of faith (that which liberates the faithful) draws forth mind-captivating fragrance in the lotus of power,

Who has travelled the ocean of Dharma, that great lamp of samsara and nirvana, the Teachings given by the Able One,

Fearless, peerless, illuminating Lord, victorious over all maras and negativity,

Sun of human beings known as embodiment of the ten powers, I keep you on the crown of my head!

With these words, I expressed homage to the Objects of Refuge and some poetic lines of engagement and aspiration, which, from that time on, became very popular to use in connection with making offerings.

Then by way of, successively, Tsawa, Pomda, Tzogang, and so on, we arrived in Markam and spent a day near the pass called the Kongjo pass. That night I dreamt of someone like my sister Kuntse Cham Dekyi Yangchän wearing fancy clothing and jewelry showing many expressions of delight, who led me inside a large castle like the red Potala Palace. Inside a temple with many rooms there were representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, many offerings and monks. She also gradually led me up an inner staircase that was gilded in gold, and gave me something to eat and drink. The next day in conversation, the local people mentioned a local spirit lord, Pawo Trobar, and his sister named Tachang Ma, and I thought it must have been some sort of emanation of them. Later, in 1964 Dharamsala, through medium of the Khampa lady, Namgyäl Drölma, I had direct contact with both Trobar and Tachang Ma. Tachang Ma told me that when I had previously visited their region, she had given me a sign through direct contact in dream. This confirmed what I had thought before. The next day we crossed a bridged stretched over a great river called the Dachu. All of the people, horses, and donkey were lashed in with the ropes tying the yaks together.

Because we had never experienced anything like it before, everyone was quite apprehensive but we all eventually got across without any problem and arrived in Gartog in Markam. I stayed in the Labrang residence at Markam Özer Monastery. When the previous incarnation of Özer Rinpoche had lived in Lhasa we had become so well acquainted that when I came to Kham, he returned the hospitality very generously.

We left Gartog and, in Marlam Lhadün, saw the temple with the stone Buddha Vairochana statue renowned as Chagzo, where the Chinese Queen Gyaza passed by on her way to go before the king. The day we arrived at Markam Zeudru Monastery, Gangkar Lama Rinpoche Könchog Chödrag, a great lord of siddhas, came to escort us at the outpost castle of the monastery. I stayed a few days at the newly constructed labrang residence in the monastery.

Gangkar Rinpoche was previously at Drepung Loseling. Although he was not very scripturally learned as the time he had spent there as a student had not been long, but he had reached high levels of experiential realization. He had many unimpeded clairvoyances and was a great yogi tertön, treasure-revealer, who brought out statues, samaya substances, and treasures out of lakes and rock mountains. He lived as a pure ordained monk who cultivated the pure view and practice of the Ganden tradition. Although he had not met me before that time, because of the

karmic connection between our tulkus over many lifetimes, he wrote to me many times during the time I lived in Tibet. I gave Thirteen-Deity Vajra Bhairava initiation to the Sangha at the monastery, and great initiation of Avalokitesvara, the Great Compassionate One, to the public, both lay and ordained people. Lama Rinpoche gave me a naturally created bronze Heruka that he had obtained out of the rock in the middle of Bumtso lake which I still carry with me all the time.

Then we crossed the Drichu river by the upper monastery of the Gowo Rong Gönsar monastery and took a steep narrow path called the *tramko lam*, eventually arriving at Tzetze Monastery, where there lived one named Dranag Lama or Lama Chöpag, who had been my Dharma companion when receiving transmission of the Kangyur in Tibet. Since parting ways he had practiced *chöd* and had seen many miraculous apparitions of spirits and devas. At many local monasteries from Kongpo to Kham, when practicing *chöd* with others between assemblies, at night in the darkness, those attending would hear disembodied voices in Chinese, Tibetan and many various languages and weapons would go off for no reason. People would hear voices counting a great deal of money, crying out in pain, and so forth, coming from all around the building, inside and outside, various apparitions and sounds that everyone could perceive would occur so that he had come to be regarded as an emanation of Lobsön Rinpoche, Padmasambhava and everyone showed him great faith and respect. His activities as a lama gradually increased until later on, by will of the public, in the midst of much fighting between the Chinese and Tibetans he became a commanding general type of figure in charge of a very large army of soldiers with weapons and armor both inside and outside Tzetze Monastery. Because I was his Dharma companion from before, in the ways of the people of that area, having made inquiries, at the instructions of the great Dalai Lama and others, there were some bad sorts acting as lamas, and he gave special consideration to my advice and suggestions. I made a Dharma connection with the Sangha there.

Then I spent a day with the Dalai Lama Gyälwa Tsultrim Gyatso at Shogdrug Drodog village. There we met a fifty horsemen escort from the region of Chatreng monastery. Going by way of Ragtag Monastery and so forth, I spent a day at the family home at Chatreng. There arrived officials such as the Samling Monastery abbot's emissary Nyanang Drodru Geshe Lozang Tarchin. When I was at the monastery, Drodru Geshe was the monastery chant leader and when Gän Rinpoche had scolded or hit me, he had interceded on my behalf, asked him to forgive me and so forth. We felt great affection for each other and were both very happy to meet again that day. The next day, on the third day of the eleventh month, we arrived at Chatreng Sampel Ling Monastery. We rested there for a while, but while my physical body was relaxing, my mind was anticipating meeting various different people.

When I was twenty-five, in the first month of the year of the wood ox, during the monastery's new year's Prayer Festival, I went to the debate courtyard early everyday. The time came for the traditional teaching on the Thirty-four Jatakas. However, the text was bound up in poetic verse and, for most of the people there, lay and ordained alike, it had been a long time since any of them had heard such a teaching. So, instead of an alternative, because it would be easy to understand and realize, and because most of the people had, in the meantime, become accustomed to fighting and stealing and were confused about what to adopt and abandon in terms of the natural law of karma, I gave, in plain colloquial language of Chatreng, a commentary on the *Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish*. When the Prayer Festival was over, at the request of the people of the monastery and general public of the region, I gave the great initiation of the Great Compassionate One, Thousand-Armed Avalokitesvara in the Pälmo system to about five thousand lay and ordained people on the stone courtyard of the monastery. When I conferred the vase initiation on the day of the actual initiation, gentle rain fell and rainbows appeared, such are signs of devas and nagas being happy.

Because of the conditions created by Luchun's army, the monastery had, for many years, been empty, even the local people had had to disperse into the mountains. In order to therefore restore the degeneration of beings, the earth and environment, for devas, nagas and the local deity lords, I blessed vase water with about 1200 *migtsema* recitations, ripening and accomplishing the

points⁸¹, and spread and had it distributed to the local people throughout the entire upper and lower areas of the region, and did protective concealment ritual.

In the third month of the year, I gave commentary on the *Nyur Lam, Swift Path Lamrim* for fifteen days concluding with the bodhicitta offering to about two thousand attendees, the monastery's Sangha and local people, in the assembly hall of the monastery. After that, to about five hundred people and Sangha who took commitment to recite *Six-Session Guru Yoga* and one hundred *Migtsema* mantras daily, I gave the great initiation of Thirteen-Deity Vajra Bhairava that takes two days including the day of preparation. Then I gave the great initiation of Solitary Hero Vajra Bhairava to one hundred and forty-eight people who committed to practicing Bhairava Solitary Hero *sadhana* every day, I gave extensive commentary on the generation and completion stage yogas and how to perform the long retreat to sixty-three people who took commitment to do long retreat of Vajra Bhairava, for twelve days, all done in accordance with Lama Dorjechang's tradition.

In the fourth month of that year, since it was intended that a new primary holy object for the monastery, a gilded gold statue of Buddha Maitreya, should be made, my attendant Lhabu and some others were sent to Lhasa to procure the necessary items, gem ornaments and so forth, that needed to be bought or made. I sent with him requests for protection addressed to the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkhapa, Kagyur Lama Rinpoche, Gän Yongzin Rinpoche Lozang Tsültrim, Geshe Sherab Rinpoche and so forth, all of the lamas who were my objects of refuge due to the actual Dharma connection that I had with them. **I also included a verse request that I composed to Kyabdag Dorjechang Pabongkapa Pälzangpo and a similar request to Dromo Geshe Rinpoche Ngawang Käälzang Chog, to present to the Dungkar Monastery Gyalchen Dorje Shugden oracle a request for detailed prophecy concerning the situation in Chatreng.**

The year prior to my arrival in Chatreng, one well known as Chatreng Butsa Bugän, had been secretly killed by Chagzha Tänpa and others in the Chatreng region who, out of dislike or jealousy towards people, used occult methods to give them heart disease. In addition, quite a lot of money was being lost from the Chatreng treasury. Hence, there was reputed to be continual serious thievery going on. Principal lay and ordained officials of the monastery and region, some people on Bugän's side, using the problem of the heart disease as a pretext to seek their own ends, 'moved mountains and stirred up the ocean' summoning all potential fighters through connections in upper and lower Chatreng, Gang Kar Ling, Dabpa, Mebo, Mongra, and so forth, and also called on Bai Sasung Gopön and the Chinese Marsiling army to help them. When Chatreng Chagzha Tänpa and his 'band of thieves' had been identified and were about to be captured, many of them, with Chagzha Tänpa, went to Tzetze Monastery where the aforementioned Lama Chöpäg lived and asked him to accept them under his command.

As the army from Chatreng Monastery and region was intending to depart, I tried all I could to properly explain what is right and wrong to such people. However, just as it is uncertain whether steps taken based on being's desires will take them where they want to go, rather than turning them from their course, my heart-felt advice went in one ear and out the other, and the huge army left. Not only that, even in the monastery in acts kept secret from me, several monks who belonged to Chagzha Tänpa's group were killed by fires suddenly lit in their rooms; others were killed at their homes, and so forth, many terrible things were done. As Zhangzhung Chöwang Dragpa said,

You may lead one whose attitude has hardened
Up to the stainless crystal staircase,
But even Indra cannot make him enter
The excellent mansion of victory.

⁸¹ *gnad smin sgrub*

As just that was occurring, I thought, ‘These are the kinds of students that a Guru of degenerate times like me will have!’ . Unfortunately, nothing else could be done.

Dranag Lama had gathered a very powerful force at Tzetze Monastery and was firmly established there. So, the Chatreng army could only manage to surround them, but could not gain access to the monastery. Many months passed by in a standoff.

During summer retreat at the monastery I did *lärung* retreat of Guyasamaja Akshobyavajra. After it was over, because of the fighting and such, there was no quiet or peace from the tension, and because I had been invited by Gönkar Ling Monastery and its area people, I left with an entourage of a small number of highly capable people, going by way of the ‘Mongra’ region and reached the residence of Gangling Tso Tögpön.

I stayed there about fifteen days. During that time, at the request of some aspirants, I gave Five-Deity Ghantapa Heruka Initiation and the sindhura blessing of Vajrayogini along with brief commentary on the generation and completion stage practices. Afterwards, Gangling Sherab Tulku, who was from my class at the monastery, arrived along with Sangha of Gangling Monastery and, with this extensive escort, we arrived at the monastery.

I gave Guyasamaja Akshobyavajra Initiation on the basis of a painted mandala, in two days including the day of preparation, to about four hundred people there, including Sangha. In addition, I conferred great initiation of the Great Compassionate One, and long life initiation to over a thousand people.

Then, with Sherab Tulku, we accepted the invitation of the previous Ganden Tripa’s patron Nyingkung Bumtze Bälsä Pön. After traveling for two days, we arrived at the Pön family estate, where we stayed for about ten days. To our entourage and the residents and workers, I gave great initiation of the Great Compassionate One and long life initiation. I gave chanted consecration for their *Kangyur* temple and protector temple and also did Vaisravana prosperity ritual in their treasury.

We then left, intending to make pilgrimage to a site in Yarlam Gangkar known as Rigsum Gönpo, Lords of the Three Lineages but we made dwelling places at Tsogo Retreat and, for about three weeks, did a sort of refresher retreat of Gantapa Five-Deity Heruka, accumulating as many mantras as the time allowed. It was all very peaceful and pleasant there because there were no deluded argumentative voices to be heard. It is also because the previous incarnation of Zeudru Monastery Gangkar Lama Rinpoche, known as the Gunkar Lama, who was quite powerful, had stayed there for a long time engaged in meditative practice.

To a number of Sangha in Gangkar and some pilgrims I gave long life initiation of the Lords of the Three Lineages. As we were staying there, at Tzetze Monastery, Dranag Lama Chöpag’s chief attendant and one of the lama’s enemies from Chatreng, by mutual malicious intent, bribed someone in the lama’s army who went to the lama’s room late at night pretending to be asking for a *mo* divination regarding the lama’s sister having become very sick. When he called, the chief attendant opened the door, and as soon as he entered, the man axed down Lama Chöpag in his bed where he lay. There had always been a lot of talk about the lama’s clairvoyance and miracle powers but, at the time that he needed them, they failed him. It was like when Maudgyalyana was previously beaten by wandering ascetics. Forget miracle powers, it is said that he did not even remember the *existence* of miracle powers, and this case seemed no different.

The lama’s army entourage became like a headless corpse and the enemy army also had been in the field so long that, many had gradually left for their homes one after another, unobserved. Both sides were finished with fighting: they expressed their mutual regrets, and everything was naturally resolved and pacified. I left where I was staying. Along the way, I stopped at Gangling Zipön’s residence and, for the people that were there at the time, gave long-life initiation, *Mani* mantra transmission, and so on. After which, I again stayed some days at Gankar Ling Monastery. I returned back to Chatreng monastery by way of Me O⁸² in the twelfth month of the Tibetan year.

⁸² rme o

When I was twenty-six, in the year of the fire tiger, during Prayer Festival, between teaching sessions at the monastery, I again continued commenting on the Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish, from the story of Loba Goba⁸³, the Work Organizer, and so on. I heard that some people said, ‘After he runs out of Dharma commentary, he tells stories!’

Spring session at the monastery I did retreat fulfilling *lärung* requirements for Heruka of the Luipa system, and Kunrig retreat before and after it. During summer retreat I gave the Sangha Sixty-two Deity Heruka Initiation of the Mahasiddha Luipa’s tradition, the great initiation of Kunrig, and the *jenangs* of the Rinjung Gyatsa.

During the fourth month of that year, my attendant Lhabu and his companions returned back from Lhasa carrying messages from the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, messages from Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa the supreme and Geshe Sherab Rinpoche both adorned with poetic verse, and letters from Gän Rinpoche and other friends. They brought jewel adornments for the new statue of Lord Maitreya and many mantra rolls and blessed items for putting inside it. The previous year in Chamdo, early in Lhabu’s trip to Lhasa, by his request, the Domä Chikyab Kalön Trimönpa Norbu Wangyäl had dispatched two men to find the best deity statue sculptors in the Chamdo-Tzachu River area. The artists had been found and they also arrived with Lhabu’s party and began construction of the statue. With the help of the best artisans in Chatreng they completed a three-story tall gilded gold statue of Buddha Maitreya. They worked continuously for three months. Offered inside the statue were *dharanis* of the four types of relics, the five great *dharanis* and so forth, which are Dharmakaya relics; bone relics of the Tathagata Buddha, a statue of Jamgön Tsongkhapa that was an inner holy object of the lower college at Ganden, with the Lord’s own handprint, and furthermore, reliquary remains of many great holy beings of India and Tibet, many relics of their hair, wheels and treasure vases of male and female yaksha wealth deities, and so forth. Blessing and accomplishing the *zung*, in company with a group of careful and qualified practitioners, everything that was to be put inside was done with my own hands involved, and it was requested to remain in the great assembly hall of the monastery. A complete list of expenses was kept from the beginning to the middle to the end of the project, as well as a list of all of the holy objects and blessings placed inside. A list of the benefits of making statues, prostrating and making offerings, and so forth, was also placed on the wall of the Maitreya temple. Making thousand water bowl offerings, light offerings, continually lit lamps, and so forth, after all of the essential offerings were made, with myself acting as vajra-master and twenty bikshus who had completed Yamantaka retreat, we consecrated the statue with the elaborate *Geleg Charbeb* ritual from the preliminaries, actual consecration and conclusion. When specific sponsors were mentioned, the monastery teachers and I, along with the Sangha, recited elaborate prayers such as the praise of the eight auspicious substances.

When that was concluded, at the request of Yangteng Dratsang, I went to Yangteng Monastery and gave ten days of commentary on the *Nyurlam*, the *Swift Path Lamrim*, the great initiation of Thirteen-Deity Vajra Bhairava, and many other initiations and *jenangs* to spiritual aspirants. I continued traveling in nearby areas of Säl Lha, Dechen, Tsang, and so forth, giving teachings in accordance with the people’s interests, and afterwards returned to Chatreng Monastery.

It had been the earlier tradition of Chatreng Monastery to perform the offering of practice and self-entry to the mandalas of Guyasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka; the great *kangso*’s of Mahakala and Dharmaraja with the ritual melodies and music as in Gyütö Dratsang; Paldän Lhamo, Vaisravana, Setrab chant and music, and Dharma Conduct Haygriva in the tradition of Ganden Shartse. In the meantime for many years, because of the destruction of the monastery and the fact that there had been only a few teachers left, they had forgotten the chant melodies and there was quite a lot of degeneration. Therefore, I invited the Gyütö Ngarampa named Bu Sönam from the Markam Lura Monastery. He and the monastery abbot’s representative, the ex-chant leader of Ganden Shartse Drodru, Geshe Lozang Tharchin, the two of them specially trained about fifty of the prominent monastery members in the practice of the chanting for the *kangso*’s and all the other

⁸³ *blo ba* ‘go sba

practices just mentioned above. Then Bu Sönam, the makers of the Maitreya statue including the two sculptors from Chamdo, were all made offerings and congratulated and then dispatched back to their homes.

Because the monastery did not have complete outfits for the Gutor Cham, the previous year, using only the best material, we had repaired and replenished the costumes. In the eleventh month of the year, to reinstitute the Gutor Cham, that year we invited monks to act as the *acharya*, the clown, and to perform the Kshetrapala Cham as in the tradition of Tängyäling from Özer Monastery in Markam.

In the twelfth month, in accordance with insistent invitations from Nangzang Monastery, I went there by way of Pälshar and Gobo Pälbar Monasteries, finally arriving at Nangzang Pälgyäling. There, I gave a great initiation of Guyasamaja Akshobya to about seven hundred monks, and to everyone I gave the great initiation of Avalokitesvara. To people of Gän Yongzin Rinpoche Lozang Tsultrim's birthplace, I gave some presents of money and clothing.

When I was twenty-seven in the year of the fire hare, at *losar*, I went back to Chatreng Monastery. During the teachings of the Prayer festival, I gave teachings on the *Kadam Buchö*, the Son Teachings of the Kadampas, from the beginning. When *mönlam* was over, at the request of the monastery abbot, Drodru Geshe, to about eighty Sangha who committed to reciting *Guru Puja* daily, I gave twenty-five days of commentary on *Guru Puja*.

A message from Gangkar Lama Könchog Chödrag Rinpoche said,

‘At the time of your previous incarnation, there was a demon adversary with evil intentions, one of whose bases was on top of a mountain in Chatreng where there was a cave shaped like a fish upside-down. From the root of the cave comes a stream that falls into the big river at the base of the mountain. Near where it falls into the river there are some lepers and there is a naga that lives in the cave putting spells on people. If I came there, I could do a ritual to make it leave but it would be difficult, so it is very important to make a qualified *rül*, talisman, and to do a ritual concealing it there at the cave. The cave is one that is visible from on top of the chest in your room at Chatreng Monastery...’

In the letter he insisted that it was very important, so, with the abbot Drodru Geshe and ten monks who had completed Yamantaka retreat, we made a qualified *rül* talisman. Drodru Geshe and his attendant Ngaram Budor were sent, and they found the mountain, the cave and the river, just as Gangkar Lama had described. They performed the *rül* burying ritual there. That year, in the eleventh month, one evening about dusk, suddenly, from the south of the monastery, there came a sound like mortar fire. It went off twice. At first we wondered what it was, but then we simply decided it was thunder and, although there was not that much thunder usually heard in Chatreng, we did not doubt that was what it must have been. Later, people that lived nearby said that lightning had struck the top of the mountain where the *rül* was buried.

When I later arrived in Lhasa, there was a ritual lama named Tsewang Gyältsän, a Nyingma lama, whom, when I met him, said,

‘During the time of your previous incarnation there was a sorcerer who was suppressing others, in both Kham and in central Tibet. With those two lightning bolts you sent down in Kham, you destroyed him. Now, there is a place in front of Ganden where there is a spring. You must place a *rül* talisman there!’

No one but Lhabu and myself knew what had happened in Chatreng, so it seemed that the talk of Tsewang Gyältsän having clairvoyance was true, and that the *rül* was a fully qualified one.

Elder monks Chatreng Pälbar Chödrag and Pälchug Dampa Chödrag said to me something to the effect of, ‘When traveling in Tibet from Kham to the places which have connections with you, the three monastic universities, the two tantric colleges, various kamtsän and families, and Lhasa Mönlam Chenmo, you have to make huge distributions and offerings which are definitely

expensive. The small amount of offerings you happen to receive on the way will not cover it, so it would be good if we did some business and the two of us together do business with horses and donkeys through Chamdo. We will definitely do that and with the proceeds that come from it the two of us will assist you. Your people will not have to work.” The whole thing was arranged, capital and interest, accompanied by the sound of fists pounding on tables, and a bountiful offering ritual. But as it is said in the *Eloquence of the Sakyas*,

The sweet talk of the deceitful
Is for their own sake, not from reverence.
The laughter of birds of prey
Is a bad sign, it doesn't come from joy!

I accepted, not knowing this was subterfuge of that sort, like being deceived by a green calf, and because both of these individuals were among the most stable of the best of the monastic assembly and assumed to be altruistic people with whom I we had direct connections. The actual amount of money they set out with was 30,000 Chinese dollars, called, *tram chen*, and they had twenty small mules with some full grown mules to go with them. The two of them did not clearly state that but it did seem as if they had quite a lot.

When the final results were later tallied, however, it turned out, according to the Three Region Government, the Pälbar household gave 10,000 Chinese *tram chen* and Pälchug Dampa Chödrag gave 3,000 *tram chen*. He did not actually go and the only thing he actually did was send out someone named Dampa Tharchin. The Pälbar family, saying it was their own private business ‘on the side’, profited on twenty of the ‘supporting’ mules and also sent out someone named Tänzin who was doing business both officially and privately, whose private profits for Pälbar were not told to me.

We did not receive even a dividend from the capital but they said that we must divide the taxes for the government three ways equally without considering our relative amounts of profit. For the sake of their two own private profits, they had taken the name of Trijang Labrang for their own business! It became clear that, ultimately, they had intended to use my capital for their own sakes, and that they had been disingenuous. But because it had somehow related material things and Dharma, I did not know how to withdraw from the business connection, and let it be as they wished.

The Zhitse Gyapön family of Trehor and the general treasurer of Beri Monastery, Yatrug Tsongpön, both of whom I had known as benefactors before in Lhasa, had been writing me letters inviting me to the Trehor region. Finally, that summer, I and a small group of very capable people departed from Chatreng Monastery by way of the Tongjung Nang and Gämo Ngapchu nomad lands to a place in Litang called Dezhung Nakatang, a grassy plain where the natural colors of the blooming flowers and the colors of the people, horse and donkeys could turn your head and make your jaw drop! We were crossing the vast expanse for practically two full days with moving herds of deer, antelope, and so forth, and through the lands of Nyarong such as Trom Tar⁸⁴ until we eventually arrived in the lands of Beri in Trehor. At the Beri River, the monks of Beri Monastery headed by Getag Tulku Rinpoche came to escort us in procession to the small residence above the monastery. At the request of the monastery in general and the two previously mentioned patrons, I gave experiential commentary on *Lamrim Delam – The Blissful Path Lamrim*, great initiations of Guyasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka, Kunrig, and the Great Compassionate One, *jenangs* of Mahakala, Dharmaraja, Sridevi, Vaisravana, and Chamsing, the Drubgyäl long-life initiation, and other transmissions and so forth as requested to the local resident Sangha and lay and ordained from all over the region; there were over seven hundred people. I stayed there teaching for over a month.

⁸⁴ *khrom thar*

After that, invited by Trehor Kartze Trungsar Rinpoche, I traveled to Trungsar Retreat and gave Rinpoche reading transmissions of Gyälwa Wensapa and Kädrup Sangyā Yeshe's collected works, the Migtsema Collection, and so on. In the retreat assembly room, to quite a large gathering of many lay and ordained including the Sangha of Kartze Monastery, I gave great initiation of Kunrig. One day, at the request of Kartze Monastery, I went and did consecration of their great assembly hall and three monastic residence halls, strewing flowers. On the way, at the invitation of Kyabgön Tulku, I went to the Labrang as a guest, and in the evening returned to Trungsar Retreat.

At that time Trehor Dragkar Rinpoche, who was very famed as a master-scholar and the previous incarnation of Lamdrag Rinpoche, a yogi-mahasiddha, lived near there and I wanted to go meet them. But Dragkar house and Kangsar Rinpoche's previous incarnation, Lozang Tsultrim, had hindered each other, and this had offended Lamdrag Kangsarpön's wife. She was supposed to be powerful and even those such as Trungsar Rinpoche and Gyapön Bu fearfully avoided her, so I did not get a convenient chance to visit them.

One day in the morning, on the flats in front of Kartze Monastery where there is the 'Community Protector Temple', I saw the full-story-high statues of Eight-Deity Tent Mahakala that were renowned to have been previously made by Drogön Chögyäl Pagpa in Yarlam upon his return from China. Then I returned back to Beri Monastery.

At that time Trehor Dargyā Monastery had a large Sangha and vast authority and wealth, but the assembly was poor in Dharma knowledge and realization. Because they were caught up in business types of things, most of the monks occupied themselves with horses, knives, guns and so forth and there were few monks really practicing Dharma. As even the few there had no Dharmic or political power in the monastery, the father of the Gyapön household, Chögyälu, a patron of Dhargyā Monastery, with an altruistic intention to guide the peaceful and subdued monks, said that I should give them a Lamrim teaching. I accepted, but when he talked to the monastery assembly about it, they said, 'We don't need a Lamrim teaching that will take many days. Strokes are causing many deaths among the monks so we need an initiation to control planetary influences and since we need Kunrig ritual again and again for the sake of the deceased, we need the great initiation of Kunrig!'

The father of the Gyapön family, terribly disappointed, said that I should give the great initiation of Kunrig as they wished. This Gyapön father Gyälu, when Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa first went to Dagpo to receive Lamrim from Kyabje Jampäl Lhündrub, had been the one who supplied all of the mules used for mounts. At the time that he was serving as an attendant, Dagpo Lama Rinpoche gave him one of his teeth. As he told me this he showed it to me and I could clearly see the image of Four-Armed Avalokitesvara on it. He was one who always persevered in reciting the Jorchö, Lamrim Preparatory Practice.

Then, as Gyälu said, from Beri I went to Dargyā Monastery and for two days, there, in the great field in front of the monastery, a tent was pitched and I gave great initiation of Kunrig to a large assembly of monastic and local people over two days including the day of preparation. Even though it was not planned that I would teach Lamrim, I taught it quite extensively during the preparatory phase of the initiation. I performed consecration, strewing flowers from above the assembly hall of the monastery.

Then, I traveled to the estate of the Shitse Gyapön family and spent about two weeks there. On their altar they had holy objects of an Avalokitesvara statue, complete Kangyur, and quite extensive representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, for which I did extensive consecration over the course of three days just as I did at Dargyā Monastery. In the treasury I performed Vaisravana prosperity ritual. I gave a commentary on the Seven Points of Mind Training to quite a large group of local people. Finishing with a long-life initiation, I started back, through the lands of Nyagröng, and came to a peaceful place where streams ran through a grassy meadow at the wing of a mountain in upper Tromkok. We stopped there for the day. The Gyapön family's son, Döndrub Namgyäl and Tsongpön Yatrug and their entourage had accompanied us this far. At this point, they parted from us and turned back, they requested instructions on Draminyän Longevity practice and I gave them a brief explanation.

Later on that day, around the time of evening tea, dark clouds suddenly gathered and let loose violent hail, at the same time, sky-splitting thunder roared and lightning struck ferociously. It even made the inside of the tents flicker with red light. Because it was so furious and, by the taste and smell of it, seemed about to shower down meteorites, I offered *sur*—scent offerings for spirits, *zhidag tormā*—offering cake for the local deity lords of the land, *de gyā serkyem*—golden drink for the eight classes of spirits of worldly aspect, *tinchöl*—propitiation, and did recitation with mantras for protection from hail and lightning. Even though I performed quite wrathful visualizations, however, it still didn't help. So, I burned some wet human feces in an extremely hot fire. Immediately, like curtains opening, pure blue sky came out directly overhead. The lightning and hail subsided by itself, and sunlight even overtook the rain. That night at around midnight, for no reason, the horses and mules suddenly whinnied and even broke away from their ties and escaped in all directions. It wasn't until dawn that they could all be gathered together again.

When I later arrived in Litang, I found that some of the older generation spoke of the Dalai Lama Sönam Gyatso having been traveling through that area when a local Bön deity had hurled lightning down upon him. They spoke about a fierce storm that had sprung up at that place when my previous incarnation had been there, as well.

Then, when we arrived at Bum Nyag Tang, a vast abundant meadowland in Litang, a member of the Litang community named Washul Yönrü and the whole nomadic community under the Yönrü command was gathered there. The monks of the Yönrü community were Gelugpa along with Sakya and Nyingma Sangha. They had a tradition of pitching a meeting tent and assembling together in the name of what they called, '*our own Yönrü Dharma*', and each doing their own rituals. Therefore, official lama representatives of the abbot of the Yönrü Rabgyäling Sangha including Tromtog Tulku came to me and said, 'Your previous incarnation came to our Dharma assembly and stayed and had a Dharma relationship with us. We have many elder lay men and women and Sangha who met your previous incarnation. Now, for us to spontaneously meet here without prior planning is very auspicious, so you must remain with us and relax once the teachings are over!'

They were very strong on this point and, even though I was not free to remain with them for a very long time, I stayed for about two weeks, during which time the assembly was conducted, for the most part, just as in a Gelug monastery. To a Sangha of about five hundred, I gave explanatory instructions on Je Rinpoche's *Lamrim Nyamgur* – Lamrim Song of Realization, gave the two day initiation of Heruka in the Luipa tradition, gave the general *jenang* for Je Rinpoche-Lords of the Three Lineages, and others. Every five days their Sangha would perform mandala offerings of practice of Guyasamaja, Heruka, Yamantaka and Kunrig in turn. I attended the Heruka practice offering assembly one day. Their system was primarily the same as that of Gyume Tantric College. There were brocade sachets of powdered incense offerings that had been given to them by the previous Ganden Tripa. I also offered the Sangha service for a full day and made a distribution of statues. They had four two-storey high Gelug monastery assembly tents that were each so large they can easily fit five hundred monks. They had elaborate offerings arranged and, although the abbot, lamas, tulkus, and geshe sat on the ground, they made seats out of stacked up felts and rugs, so everything was very pleasant and nice.

When having visited this nomadic monastic community in the past, previous holy beings had established a tradition whereby the assembly would offer only white types of food such as barley tsampa, rice, and melted butter during ceremonies, and no meat offering was allowed. The fact that they were maintaining this tradition without backsliding was extremely admirable.

Sakya and Nyingma Dratsang that were nearby also came when invited and received offerings and gave teachings as requested such as reading transmissions. Invited by nomads in the surrounding areas, I visited fifteen to twenty yak-hair tent communities and performed consecrations, and gave teachings according to their wishes. The nomad groups offered many horses until I had over a hundred! Because we took the horses from the pastures of their home, at night they would escape back and it was difficult to keep them, so we sold them off to the nomads and offered the proceeds to make a yearly distribution of offerings at Gelug Rabgyäling Monastery.

Then hearing that I must come to the major Litang Monastery, some lama officials came to specially invite me and, met by an oceanic assembled procession of abbots and disciples, we arrived at Tubchen Jampa Ling Monastery. There, in the great assembly hall, at the general request of the monastery, I gave the Pälmo tradition great initiation of the Great Compassionate One with the preparatory day and the Drubgyäl tradition long-life initiation. In the old assembly hall, to lamas and tulkus and about five hundred Sangha including Tsatag Rinpoche and Gozab Rinpoche, I gave explanatory commentary on *Lamrim Nyurlam – The Swift Path Lamrim*, great initiation of Solitary Hero Bhairava. In the Tubchen Temple, myself acting as abbot, Tsatag Känzur Rinpoche acting as *lälob* –action master, and Gozab Känpo acting as *sang tön* – secret preceptor, we gave novice and full ordination vows to about thirty monks. At Tsosum Kangtsän I gave the Mahakala Zhäl Drubdü *jenang*. At Gozab Labrang I gave Drubgyäl long-life initiation to the lama’s entourage and the general Je Rinpoche-Lords of the Three Lineages *jenang*. I also fulfilled various wishes of many lay and ordained people in the meantime. In the great assembly hall of Litang, I made a great distribution and an elaborate offering of capital to the general assembly.

In Litang town, as requested by the people of the Dalai Lama Kälzang Gyatso’s birthplace, I went there one day and offered ablution and consecration to the statue of the Seventh Dalai Lama and other representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, and made a brief Dharma connection with the people. As requested by the nomad community of Litang’s Otog Pöntsang family, I went there and performed prosperity and consecration rituals and gave various teachings they requested such as Avalokitesvara *jenang* and long-life initiation to Pön Achö and his entourage and community and a vast number of lay people and Sangha including those of Otog Monastery. Washul, Yönru and Otog, these three groups of nomads all had great faith in Dharma and many times would recite billions of Mani mantras and hundreds of millions of Migstema mantras. This time, as well, they recited a hundred million Mani’s and Migtsemas, a hundred thousand Samantabhadra prayers, and a hundred Nyungne two-day fasting practices, and so forth. Because they had such great merit, they were flourishing, had many people, and had attained something truly meaningful in the midst of their nomadic wandering.

Because I had heard that it is a tradition of these nomads that, when a lama is invited, a sheep will be especially slaughtered for a great feast, I made it clear from the beginning when I was invited that I would eat nothing but white foods and that they must not prepare meat. I went to many of the nomad communities in Otog region, performed ablution consecration rituals, and gave them teachings as they requested.

After these activities in Litang, on the way back I went for pilgrimage to Kampo Nä, a place where Karmapa Düsüm Kyenpa resided for a long time and attained realization, and is the source from which his Kamtsang Kagyu tradition got its name, a great pilgrimage site of Sri Chakrasamvara. I stayed in the upper room of Nägo Dratsang and did Heruka retreat for about a week and then performed extensive consecration for three days by means of the Deity Heruka. To about fifty Sangha indigenous to the area I conferred the great initiation of Gantapa Five-Deity Heruka. They offered real silver and a small scroll painting of Heruka. Thinking that it was auspicious, I kept it, and still have it with me as a holy object in Lhasa.

I offered service to the Sangha and one day went on pilgrimage to the upper part of the valley called Kampo Nä. The name comes primarily from a huge boulder there with a naturally formed letter ‘Ka’. I went there and offered Ganachakra. Along the way there was a temple where you could see many weapons of heroes that had been subdued by the hero Gesar of Ling such as mail and armor and arrows, sword, and spears, Gyatsa Zhälkar’s sword, Yazi Kardrän.⁸⁵ Kampo Nä comprises one larger snow mountain, which is the seat of the principal, Chakrasamavara, garlanded by many smaller snow mountains of the entourage of Deities. From the moment you arrive in the area of the site your awareness is clear and peaceful. I wanted to just relax and stay there when we received news from a special messenger who suddenly arrived from Pälbar and the Dampa family in Chatreng. Our three merchant relations had been coming back from Chamdo with horses, mules

⁸⁵ *ya zi skar bran*

and merchandise in the upper Bumpa region. As they were returning in Kangtseg pass, a difficult passage near the village of Ka, there was a large force of the upper and lower Bumpa guerilla army waiting in ambush. They killed four people including Tänzin—a Pälbar family cousin and Tarchin—Dampa Chödrag’s nephew, as well as one of the Pälbar family’s mules and one of ours, and had seized every bit of the merchandise. Because they had not yet answered those enemies and lacked the power to do so, they said I should come to Chatreng immediately. I went to Chatreng quickly. As soon as I arrived, Pälbar Chödrag and Dampa Chödrag, were very aggressive. They were giving me many reasons why we must go to war. I said that because my name was involved in our three-way partnership, I, who am supposed to be a lama, to first arrive and teach Dharma of Sutra and Tantra at the monastery, and finally, on my return to central Tibet, to unleash some kind of war cannot accomplish anything for this or future lives! So, I told them that they must just give up and let go of the people, livestock, and merchandise that was lost to the enemy, and forbade them and made them promise to quietly put aside their preparations for war.

When we later checked further, the object of the Bumpa army in ambushing the merchant party was that when war had been waged previously with Lama Dranag at Tzetze Monastery, at the head of the Chatreng army had been Pälbar Togme, as they took from the land of Bumpa vast amounts of weapons and food without pledging anything in return. Even though Pälbar Togme had sickened and died on the battlefield, the Bumpas had not let go of it. They were still holding a grudge against the Pälbar family. Furthermore, since the merchant leader was bearing the name of Pälbar and because it was business of the Pälbar family, they had attacked it; it did not seem that they had attacked the party in spite of knowing that I had a connection with it.

Because war with Bumpa was attenuated, there were peaceful talks in face-to-face meetings that brought resolution. A representative of the Pälbar family, Tändrong Sampel Tänzin, Dampa Chödrag, himself from the Dampa family, and two from us, our secretary Gönpo and Ngaram Budor, went to a place for reconciliation. One widely known as Zangdän, manager of the Jema Lama, the high lama of Gowo Gönsar monastery, said that they came to Gowo Rong for the peaceful meeting near Bumpa and Yül Lung, but the Bumpas had not intelligently considered preventing the mutual suffering of war so the meeting was terribly prolonged, taking three months before it could be cleanly resolved. Finally the Bumpas returned a little bit of silver, some old mules, and some useless clothing which in no way made up the high cost in lives. Most of the silver went to the Pälbar and Dampa families as recompense for their loss of life and they haggled over the price of their *gau* boxes for protection from weapons, meteorite vajras, revolvers, etc. While it is important that the little bit of silver left over and various pieces of clothing that they received should be the same as the merchandise they had had when they first started out, on the other hand, as samsara and nirvana are of one taste, when it was divided three ways, we received nothing but a small amount, so it was a loss all-around. Still, as Jowo Lama Rakshita says,

When one is deceived by others
The fault is the lustful demon of ones pride;
It is the weapon of bad karma turning on oneself.

As he says, not remaining humbly still and following what others say can be a demon that brings fire down upon oneself, but the mere fact that we did not have to start a war that would have resulted in the murder of human beings was encouraging to me, and I did not have great regrets over what had happened. The two of them who had harbored intentions to achieve their own profit, like in the example of a hundred unimagined occurrences for every one that can be imagined, these two important people were struck by the painful lightning of defeat by enemies and so forth.

At about that time, the uncle of the previously mentioned Sera Me Pomra Kangtsän Beda Troti Tulku named Beda Tsultrim arrived from Lhasa pretending to be someone who had come to the Chatreng Monastery area trying to raise funds for the tulku’s geshe degree ceremony, but the fact of the matter was that he was meeting with the main lay and ordained leaders of upper Chatreng for many days in the old general assembly hall, and rather than talking about raising

funds for ceremonies, he was making underhanded allegiances with some of them to back his nephew as the 'real' incarnation, secretly planning to shoot me, have me arrested, destroyed or disenfranchised.

When one who was befriending the tulku, Tändrong Sampel Tänzín was asked his opinion, the first thing he said was, 'You have to check if you can put yourself in your leader's hands! I don't know if the people of Chatreng will rise up in his support. If they do, I can pretend to be an objective intermediary and protect you. Because I am a sponsor of Trijang Labrang, we should not be seen together!'

When what was, essentially, the seriously bad actions of a conspiracy of jackals was revealed, because there were witnesses such as the loyal and faithful Tsaka Lagän and Bali Kädrub who had observed who had emerged from the meetings and so forth, and had brought me secret news of this. Because I had no more than a few people in my entourage, since I was supposed to be preparing for the journey back to central Tibet, I called several intelligent monks to help put additional bolts at the top and bottom of the door of my room above the assembly hall. Also, we made a place to hide in the back of my bedroom between the wall and the curtain where there was room for a person to fit. People with solely altruistic intentions such as Puntsog Dargyä from the area near the monastery and some of the monks in the monastery, talking about being attacked and so forth, said to my attendants, 'If you can just hold out for a little while, we will be alert to come and back you up!' Even my attendants were prepared to temporarily be bodyguards.

I made requests to the Three Jewels and propitiation of the Protectors, in addition to which I entrusted myself from the depths of my heart in the truth of two laws of karma: 1. one will never meet with the results of actions not committed oneself and 2. the results of actions committed are never wasted and waited for whatever karma had in store for me.

For about one month I had to remain, having exhausted all other means of action, and there were about ten days when there was no doubt that some kind of risky situation would make an intrusion, as such things as the inner lock on the outside door of my room was broken and the horizontal bar to block it was completely lost, no one knowing who had broken the one or who had taken the other. One day suddenly, just after dusk, there was a knock on the outer door of the horse corral of our compound and someone called. When my attendants, with great fear, asked who it was, it was one 'Wangyäl', a man of the Pälbar Chödrag family, a relative of Sampel Tänzín's. He said that Sampel Tänzín had just had some kind of stroke, that half of his head was paralyzed, and to immediately send some blessing pills and incense and to come the next day to command protection and drive out spirits.

Since it was supposed to be Sampel Tänzín and the family of a benefactor, there was no way I could decline. I sent the blessing pills and burning substance, etc, and had to assent to coming the next day. The attendants such as Ngaram Budor were suspicious, wondering if it might be a trick, but judging by the body language and speech of Wangyäl, he seemed truthful to me and, keeping quiet, I felt great joy I could barely contain. Also, to someone who was supposed to have heard mind-training teachings from my lama many times, yet not actually put it into practice, it was not my intent to be someone who 'looks like a practitioner when their belly is full and the sun is shining, yet is completely ordinary when misfortune befalls them'. Free of fear, I went with a relaxed mind.

We soon came before the site of the break in samaya. I felt extremely reticent to give the initiation and blessing and because it was an outside patron, some of the servants and entourage had come along still feeling great trepidation. When we arrived, Tänzín had risen from his bed. He told me, 'When you did not retaliate for the Bumpas attack on the merchants and the spiteful Bumpas had not gotten the response they expected, because of that I developed great faith and respect for you. But because of my slight transgression of trust, the Dharma Protectors have punished me!' Confessing with regret he requested ablution and vows. A Gorong area lama had told him that he must definitely receive the Lords of the Three Lineages *jenang* from me. He told me that I must give it to him this time no matter what. He could not bear his guilt and wept with regret, with the expression of someone who was revealing something they had been hiding. As great Ralo said,

You offer various things like gold,
I explain Sadmukhakumara like Bhairava.

It was like the example.

By the next day he was a little improved. Gradually, for about twenty days, he became able to walk back and forth. But again he met with Pälbar Chödrag in the upper part of their house. They had a meal together with meat broth and fell back into the same bad talk of destroying us, as they did before. He again had a very serious stroke, could no longer speak, and died that night. Requested to come early the next day to conduct *powa*, I went back and did *powa* and made requests, dedications, and prayers as best I could. Because Sampel Tänzün had died, his support collapsed like a broken balloon and the preparations of Troti tulku's entourage also died down of their own accord. Just before Sampel Tänzün had his stroke, I dreamt that someone killed a large yak, which was a sign that the protectors would soon enact wrathful action. That was not the only time I had such a dream. Each time I dreamt that a goat, sheep, yak, etc., was killed, not long after, someone who had, directly or indirectly, disavowed sacred truths, would sooner or later be eventually ushered on to their next life.

When I was twenty-eight, in the year of the earth dragon, when Prayer Festival was over, I was invited by village communities from the 'Trengr' wing of Chatreng such as Rigang and Chagra Gang. I traveled to them one by one, making Dharma connections by giving teachings at each private or public gathering in accordance with their respective wishes and aspirations. In particular, at Chagra temple where the sixth Karmapa Tongwa Döndän went and spent a winter, there is a bodhi tree that sprung up where he struck the ground with a bag holding his mala. There is a blessed statue of him and other objects as well. I spent several days there and gave long-life initiation and Six-Syllable Mantra transmission to the general public.

The upper and lower parts of the region are filled with ruins of many different Kagyu temples from that previous time in Chatreng, when the Karmapa's Dharma lineage spread pervasively throughout Chatreng. And there were also ritualists in each village who would perform *to*⁸⁶ (protection), and *dö*⁸⁷ (effigy), rituals in the Tantric lineage called Amnye. They maintained traditions of making offerings to Guru Rinpoche on the tenth day of the month, practiced Bernag 'Black-robed' Mahakala (Protector of the Tsurpu Teachings), as well as the Shingkyong Tragshä, and Tashi Tseringma Protectors. The Ngagpa's (Tantrickas), who lived in the vicinity all gathered and discussed what initiations and transmissions they needed.

Accordingly, at Chagra Temple, from the Yidam *sadhanas* of the Dalai Lama Gendun Gyatso, I conferred peaceful and wrathful Guru Rinpoche *jenangs*, and the Protectors, Gönpö Legdän, Mahakala Bernag, Tragshä, and the Tsering Chenga – the Five Long Life Sisters, from the Rinjung *sadhana* collection. When I gave the Guru Rinpoche blessing at the Chagra Padma family household, I was given a bunch of fine blossoming white lotuses, which was an unplanned auspicious coincidence.

In my dreams that night, a dark man came and spoke to me about the need to renovate the temple. Understanding it as urging from the Protectors, I urged the local people the next day to do new repairs on the temple and to build a small residence above it. The next year they built a new temple but the residence was not built, and was left un-built for many years. Later, in the year of the wood horse, the residence was built, and the next year, on my return from China I traveled through Yarlam Chatreng and got the opportunity to spend a night at Chagra Temple. They said that the future of my previous order to build the residence could now be directly perceived; it was nothing but the fulfillment of the previous plan I had made. The nearby faithful, following the example of 'hypocritical lamas', said they had always thought that something like this would be built and had made prophecies to that effect!

⁸⁶ *gto*

⁸⁷ *mdos*

Then I traveled through upper and lower Ragpo. I stayed three days where there was a hot springs in Ragtö – Upper Ragpo – for my health and, at the request of the people of the area, wrote a text on the dimensions and benefits of the Tashi Lhakang temple.

I accepted invitations to travel to the three areas of Dongsum. In particular, I spent about a week in the area where the previous Ganden Tripa Jangchub Chöpel was born, at the Dongsum Rig Nga (Five Family) temple, where I placed ten tangkas of the Thousand Buddhas for the *mitsän*⁸⁸ – *kangtsän family divisions* – naturally arranged from top to bottom, and I gave to the public the great initiation of the Great Compassionate One, long-life initiation, etc. I went to the previous Ganden Tripa's residence at Chuzang Monastery where I did consecration and gave quite a few gifts of fabric and other things to the family members, there.

Staying again at Chatreng, apart from the household of Troti Tulku in upper Chatreng in Chagong and some of the families in Söpa and Pälge who still remained very prejudiced against me and did not invite me. I visited all of the others who had invited me in the distant and recent past throughout all of the villages of upper and lower Chatreng, without shunning any difficulties, giving teachings and performing rituals, fulfilling all of their wishes. But as it is said in the Sherab Dongbu (Trunk of Wisdom),

In a city of naked people, without clothes,
What work is there for a launderer?

So, I stayed there, but there was no great purpose or benefit in it. Not only that, as it is said in the Jataka tales,

Those who develop jealousy for people
Always find others' attainments unbearable.
With hatred, they act with blindness and pretense;
At that time, my wish is to go elsewhere.

Thus, I decided that I would definitely return to central Tibet within that year. A letter from Zeu Dru Monastery's Gangkar Lama Rinpoche had said that up until the fifteenth of the fourth month of the year I should not leave Chatreng because there was great danger to my life. I also had to visit all of the villages such as Chagra Gang, Ragpo, and Dongsum as mentioned above and had not been able to efficiently prepare for the journey, so it had been postponed.

In the meantime, monks and traders who had gone to Lhasa earlier in the year and were returning, said that when they had arrived in Markam Gartog, some of the people of Markam falsely accused them of having taken unwarranted punitive taxes from them, so they had had legal problems with the Markam Dapön Shelkar Lingpa border police. This was because they were still holding grudges from the prior conflict with Chatreng. The Chatreng monks and their traveling companion, son of the Drodog Chödrag family, were arrested and detained. They took their horses, mules and merchandise, but could not resolve the matter. xxxx

Pälbar Lagän Chödrag still had strong attachment to the deceased Sampel and harbored evil intentions to stop us from traveling to Lhasa. When he was able to delay monks such as Shepa Pagtrug, merchant parties, Drodog Chödrag and some of the most powerful people of Drodog from going to Lhasa as well as ourselves, Markam Datzong negotiated for immediate release of the monks and merchandise, which was very helpful. In spite of some, including my own, suggestions and advice, Drodog Chödrag and the others insisted that they must postpone traveling to Lhasa until the dispute was settled. I explained to them that we had already decided that we were going to Lhasa this year and we could make a request to the Dalai Lama at the capital, but we had already made a request.

⁸⁸ *mi tsan*, subdivisions of kangtsän

Because I would not accept postponing the journey, Pälbar Lagän and Drodog Chödrag made an evil plot to meet up in Yarlam Drodog, and made preparations to destroy me and seize authority, gathering soldiers and so forth. There was one named Pälge Gyagser Yapa, a monk with a goiter who, with Troti Tulku's uncle, had originally received Lamrim teachings and Yamantaka initiation and commentary from me and had taken commitment to do long retreat, but who now was heard to say, 'Will the Trijang party get to Lhasa easily and directly? I wonder! Just watch the show!' Later on Yapa's goiter festered and he hovered on the brink of death for a long time. He sent a letter of confession to me in Lhasa, but he was beyond help and passed away.

As I said, the situation had reached a critical point where there was a lot of danger coming from every direction. Therefore Lutag Tashi Tsongpön, Nyanang Puntsog Dargyä, Shab Gyatso Nyima, and the chief leaders with around one thousand horse-mounted soldiers, asked to take responsibility for escorting us as far as Markam, and for us to secretly go directly by way of Drodog. Were they to escort us through Yarlam, we definitely could make it through easily without danger, but I thought the escorts would fight with the Marlam army which would undoubtedly lead to a vast loss of life. Therefore, I intended to go around from the area of Nangzang Monastery and I sent a secret messenger to Nangzang, but got an answer from them saying that, since the others had guaranteed my safe passage, that I should go with them.

That, at least, settled what my route would be, but Drodog Chödrag knew about it and sent a message asking that I stay a little longer so that some young monks and traders could also be escorted from Markam. It also included a message with a threatening tone stating, 'We had intended to have you come through Nangzang Monastery but when you were coming the lama had already left. Later on, we have to talk.' But Nangzangpa said, 'Whatever you do later on, our lama will take responsibility when you come', and so forth, so that going through Nangzang again seemed feasible because of the extreme danger.

Although it had already been determined that we would leave from Chatreng on the third day of the sixth month, up until the second, we had still not decided on which route. That day, at risk and out of alternatives, I performed *kangso* with propitiation and divination as to whether going by way of Drodog, Nanzang, or, at others' suggestions, by way of Litang or Gyältang to see which of these would be best. I used the 'paper rolled in dough balls' divination method and it came out that it was best to go by way of Gyältang. So that was the internal secret decision, while externally we continued to pretend that we would be going north by way of Drodog.

Early on the third, before going, we had told only the monastery authorities that we would be going south through Gyältang. The information was kept so tightly secret from everyone else, that some of the monks and escorts who were coming along with us as traveling companions had already left in the direction of Drodog and had to turn around and come to Gyältang. That day our entourage left from Chatreng Sampeling Monastery and, as I thought back over the difficult situation that had developed there through the rejection of altruism, when we reached the mountain on the far side of the big bridge in front of the monastery, I felt like I was being liberated from a dark dungeon.

Although I felt like I would never return there, when I thought about it, I remembered that I had left my mat and pandit's hat on the throne in the monastery assembly hall, and reconsidering what I had done, I(it?) seemed like a bad sign, and I thought, 'I will probably have to experience this bad smell again!' Later on, when I was fifty-five in the year of the wood sheep, I was returning from China through Yarlam and, at the instructions of the Dalai Lama, I had to go to a number of Gelug monasteries in the south of Kham including Litang, Chatreng and Ba.

Arriving back in Chatreng was a manifestation of the previous interdependent event. I had severed the strands of karmic connection, both good and bad, but they would not stay cut. Once again, because of being in the line of incarnations of the Ganden Tripa Jangchub Chöpäl, I had restored both the political and Dharma life of the Chatreng Monastery area and was supposed to have worked long and hard my with body, speech, and mind in many ways to insure that it would no longer degenerate but would continue to improve. Because of that, most of the lay and ordained people love me and have pure samaya with me. However, as Tukän Chökyi Nyima has said,

You teach them Dharma; they sin in return.
You benefit them with kindness; they harm you back.
You trust in them; they deceive you in return.
People of degenerate times are difficult to be with!

Also, as Chöje Zur Karwa Legshä Tsöl has said,

Even though you benefit people greatly,
With equanimity free from prejudice of high or low,
Many, without shame, repay you with dirt;
It causes me to generate renunciation!

As he said, some people who do not repay kindness and whose desires are impossible to fulfill – they want a mountain of food but without the mountain – and their followers, although they began many courses of action both early and late, intended and prepared to put my head into a sesame grinder. **However, thanks to the compassion of the Guru and Three Jewels, the power of the truth of karma, and by the power of long being accompanied, like a body and its shadow, by the unfailing timely action of a Dharma Protector by the name of ‘Dorje’ (Dorje Shugden), I was freed from the impasse of negative conditions into a cloudless moonlit sky.**

The evening of the day I left Chatreng Monastery, I spent the night at Ragtö Tashi Lhakang. Going through Wangshö, Gumnag, and so forth, I arrived at Gyältang Sumtsen Ling Monastery where I was met by an elaborate greeting party of the monastery’s abbots and ex-abbots, lamas, tulkus and officials and a golden procession of many monks. I stayed in the well-lit windowed residence above the large assembly hall. There, in the large hall, I gave *Nyurlam Lamrim* teachings and great initiation of Thirteen-Deity Vajra Bhairava to a Sangha of about two thousand monks. As requested by each of the eight different Kangtsäns such as Chatreng, I went and gave teachings and performed consecrations according to each of their wishes. I stayed there about three weeks. During that period I met a number of times with Gyältang Tongwa Lhakar Rinpoche’s previous incarnation who was over sixty years of age. When we first met he sort of tested me by asking many questions about Sutra and Tantra. I was not lacking for responses, which delighted him, and he attended my Lamrim teachings. Every year afterwards until he passed away he would send me a letter with a gift of gold as he traveled through Kham.

When I arrived in Lhasa, supreme Kyabje Dorjechang Pabongka told Lhakar Rinpoche who had been one class behind him when they had been at the monastery, that I definitely had great wisdom learning. Furthermore, I accepted invitations to visit Panglung Labrang and some of the other labrangas such as Kagyurtsang. Gyältang Sumtseling Monastery was founded during the time of the great Fifth Dalai Lama and as it was highly regarded by the Dalai Lama’s patron Narim and the Chinese emperor, there were many tangkas of figures such as Gushri Tänzin Chögyäl, Desi, and the successive Dalai Lamas, with documentation seals embroidered in golden thread, strung across tall pillars, like offerings on display. They are said to have their own tradition of each of the eight kangtsän having their own chant melodies for their practices of Sutra and Tantra, while joining together in one tradition of chant melody when they met for their great assembly. Gyältang Monastery, in its own system emphasized that members must set their name and cushion. Accordingly, I put my name on the list and made symbolic offering distributions at the great assembly and at *tob kung* (source of attainments) Chatreng Kangtsän.

From Gyältang, going through Rongpa Tangtö (upper Tang), and Tangmä (lower Tang), we arrived at the Drichu River. Descending for a day into the very steep Nyeri Gorge we arrived at Dabtang on the banks of the Drichu. Beams were prepared and lashed together, making a flat beam boat with nothing to prop yourself up against, on which, with great trepidation, we crossed over the great river Drichu.

After spending two days traveling along the river and extremely rough gorge we arrived at the place of the village of Kontserag, also known as Pomtserag. The next day, at Yarlam Shipäl Retreat, Tratang Rinpoche's previous incarnation with locals dressed in their finest joined our retinue, and with a greeting party of lamas, tulkus, and officials from Döndrub Ling Monastery, we arrived there, and I stayed a number of days in Ludrub Labrang.

The previous incarnation of the present Ludrub Tulku was only about seven or eight years old at that time. I conferred the great initiation of Gantapa Five Deity Heruka Initiation to Tratang Rinpoche, the lamas, tulku, and entire Sangha.

I stayed for three days at Jöl Dechen Ling Monastery, in Zamdong Labrang, and gave the Sangha the general "Lord of the Three Family Je Rinpoche" *jenang*, and other teachings appropriate for the occasion such as long-life initiation.

Zamdong Rinpoche's previous incarnation, a good Dharma companion with whom I had attended teachings in Lhasa, had returned to his home country here and was giving long-life initiation to the public in one of the villages, when he was shot from the Pari forest by some bad local people and died of his wounds.

Then, traveling by way of the village called Jöldong, we crossed a small pass and stayed for three or four days at Tso Kamka lake. Gangkar Lama's family and escorts from Zeudru Monastery came to greet me there. The escorts from Chatreng turned back, going in the direction of Nangzang.

Our party went through Tsala pass and arrived at Dranag Monastery. I gave the Sangha there, including Nyira Tulku, teachings such as commentary and transmission of the *Foundation Of Good Qualities*.

Passing successively through Chusumdo and Kapo Butsa villages, we arrived at the Zeudru Monastery and the family of Gangkar Lama. While staying there for over ten days the lama's family treated us all with gracious hospitality. We felt so familiar with Rinpoche's entourage it was as if we had arrived at our own home. In a very relaxed atmosphere, I gave the lay and ordained people of the monastery and local region the great initiation of the Great Compassionate One, and to the pure Sangha, I conferred Thirteen Deity Yamantaka.

One day, the lama's family gave me an extensive long life puja with Ganachakra. The lama told Ngaram Budor that in his vision that day he saw me as Master Padmasambhava, and it had caused him to remember situations connected with a number of my previous lifetimes, such as when I had taken birth as the great translator Vairochana. Now, it is certainly possible that anything can appear to the vision of a yogi, but that does not prove it so! Because he had pure bond with me and great faith, I guess he had some kind of vision of purity but, other than that, I have nothing to say other than that I have not even the slightest scent of such predispositions, and do not even dream to presume that I caused the lama's vision. I also offered an extensive long-life puja for the Lama Rinpoche with Ganachakra.

Whilst I was at Chatreng, Markam General Shelkar Lingpa wanted to sieze the southern of Gangkar lama's salt pits. He therefore deployed five hundred soldiers of their fourth army (in addition to local fighters from all regions of Markam) to suddenly secretly surround the lama's household at Zeudru Monastery and subject them to a great deal of shelling and fire on them with other guns many times. However, just before the army secretly came, in the lama's dream, like a prophecy, a garuda from Dragkar Tzong came and gave him iron pills of immortality to protect him from weapons, which he had accepted, and he was given an opened treasure box. Pointing out seven special monks by name, he was told that they must each be given a pill and, each carrying a single sword, that they must drive the opposing army to the site of the stupa at the mountain below the monastery and make them return from there, without dispute. The vast army just described was driven like sheep chased by wolves and had to leave their clothes, food containers, shoes, and so forth, on the battlefield and flee. A mortar shell fired by the soldiers even landed in the Gangkar Lama's residence but failed to blow up. You can still see it there!

The room where the treasure box with the iron pills is kept was pervaded by the smell of medicinal incense. The Lama Rinpoche let us view the treasure box, opened it for us, and gave us iron pills. As for the nature of the treasure box, it was filled up to about five finger widths with

something like ‘naga mud’, while the width of the box was only about three finger widths, and it had various self-risen Deity images on its sides. It was filled to the brim with pills. Then, even though the lama gave each of my entourage and Chatreng people (about twenty of us), a generous amount of the pills, the pills immediately increased in number, not fitting in the box, and the overflow broke the cardboard, and then it stopped. It was something very wonderful that induced faithful belief.

Before leaving I asked the Lama Rinpoche for observations on a few matters including the actions of my body, speech, and mind. In the lama’s clear dream, he said that there was a large old throne in a great assembly hall. Some people were gathered in front of it anxiously building a new throne when an impressive monk official, like a Lord Chamberlain, arrived. As soon as he arrived the throne builders peacefully passed away. The monk officials’ servant, wearing red garments, destroyed the new throne completely and swept up the remains and expelled all of the people completely. He said, ‘Sir, it is certain that negative conditions will not affect you. It seems that Gyalchen Dorje Shugden has arranged everything!’ With a booming voice, he proclaimed, ‘I can guarantee it!’

Later on, at the Great Prayer Festival of Lhasa in the year of the water monkey, one of Troti Tulku’s principal people, Chatreng Pälchug Dapön Geshe, was struck with a fatal disease and died. Seven days after that the tulku himself got sick and died. Even the people in Kham who had previously been involved in the mistaken planning and activities met with various calamities that caused their deaths not long after.

Again, as regards to Gangkar Rinpoche, in the recognition of reincarnations or when people wanted to find things they had lost, he would check for signs in dreams or sometimes close his eyes for a little while and go into equipoise, and give predictions clearly pointing to: the region and location, village, direction the door of the house is facing, the family, and the name. His predictions would always be certain, leading to finding that which was sought, I experienced it directly for myself a number of times.

Not only that, when I first came out to Chatreng, the lama was white-haired but, when I came back to Yarlam later and met him again, his hair had turned black. He had great faith and aspiration towards the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and always said that he would not die as long as the Dalai Lama lived. When he later heard of the Dalai Lama’s passing he immediately said, ‘Now, it’s time for me to be an old monk!’ and he became a bit sick with water retention and passed away. He called his attendants before him and after they had all recited the Heart Sutra together, he said the GATE mantra once followed by a loud PHAT, and then passed away. Such events were clear credible signs of his accomplishment of realizations. Other than traditions of *Guru Puja*, Yamantaka, Secret Hayagriva, ‘One Story Stall Stupa’⁸⁹, and the Protector Setrab, he practiced many Yidams and Dharmapalas for which he did not leave established lineages.

As invited by the fourth Tzongpön Tai Jidrung Korpel, we left from Zeudru Monastery, going through Markham, Lhadun, Goshö, Pomda, Tsang, and so forth, towards Tzongkhang. There I gave Ku-ngo Tang-chäl, and for some of the Sangha of Özer Monastery the Sindhura Blessing of Vajrayogini, and to the lay and ordained public, I gave the great initiation of the Great Compassionate One.

As invited by Markam Sasung General⁹⁰ Shelkar Lingpa, I went to their army camp and gave a long life initiation. Özer Monastery had been newly rebuilt, moved from the site where it was originally founded to a place above Gartog. Invited to come there, I performed a consecration through chanting.

Then, invited to Kyung Bum Lur Monastery, I went there especially to give Thirteen Deity Yamantaka great initiation to the Sangha.

On the way we spent one night at Ribur Monastery. They were in the process of building a new three-dimensional Gyusamaja Mandala. They had some questions regarding elements of the

⁸⁹ *gchod stan thog gchig ma*

⁹⁰ *mda dpon*

construction, which I cleared up for them, thus establishing a Dharma connection with them in relation to a few miscellaneous topics of which they had needed clarification to.

I spent two days at Chagna Mutig (Pearl In The Hand) Monastery. Among the monks there was one who had previously been Cham Master in Lhasa at Tängyaling Dratsang. It was said that he was well trained in Cham, and one day they performed Cham such as of Mahakala, Dharmaraja, Paldän Lhamo, the Black Hat dance, and so forth. It was just like the Tängyaling Demo Gu Cham⁹¹ of before.

We crossed over the Sampa Dreng Dachu River and passed successively through monasteries and villages of Tsawa, Rong, Dugda, Tzogang Sang Nyag Ling, Uyag, Tsawa Kochen Tang, Pangda Monastery, Wako Mar-ri, Zhabyä Zampa, Lhotzong Zhitram Monastery, Tzito Monastery, Shodo Monastery, Poti Monastery, Lhatse Monastery, with me giving various initiations, transmissions, commentaries and so forth, as requested. Eventually we arrived at Chagra Pälbar and stayed at Pälbar Tzong and, as requested by Gyümä Ngagram Ngawang Chöjor, I gave commentary and transmission of the *Abbreviated Lamrim*⁹² to the Sangha of the monastery.

There was an oracular deity invoked there named Gönpo Tsedü Nagpo whose oracle was brought to us by Ngaram Ngag Chö. The deity entered the oracle with the oracle himself holding a drum in his left hand, which he would beat with a stick in his right hand. At the same time that we invoked the deity into the oracle, someone had to grab the drum as the oracle sat upright upon the throne. There is a good story about the origin of him beating the drum with his right hand, and some of his prophecies regarding later practice occurred just as he said.

Then we crossed Shargong Pass and arrived at Ari Monastery. With an exchange of gifts, we met Ngaram Dampa's relatives. We left Ala Chag Monastery, and before we arrived at Dotug, the chef named Namgyäl Dorje left early one morning and fell to his death from a steep narrow path. We spent the day there, performing Powa, making dedication prayers, and cremating his body.

That evening we went through the pass and then, passing through Lhari Go, Kongpo, Gyamda, and so forth. When we arrived at Özer Gyang we were met and escorted by representatives of Ganden Dokang Kangtsän and Samling Mitsän. Dokang Kangtsän had prepared for us to stay at Tsunmo Tsäl Monastery, and we spent a day there. We made offerings there before the stupa of Dulzin Dragpa Gyältsän. It was long known that the stupa with Dulzin Rinpoche's reliquary body was at Tsunmo Tsäl Monastery, and, in the meantime, because it was necessary to make some repairs to the place where it was being kept, Ganden Lhopa Gyälsä Tulku and Dokang Geshe Chödrag of the monastery administration brought me to perform argha–water–puja. When we broke the stupa open, among the holy objects placed inside, there was a wooden box where inside was the entire holy body with no decay and it had grown quite a bit of hair! It was wrapped in two *namjar* (monk's robes), an old and a new one. There was an antique bowl in front of the body that seemed to have been filled with fruit. The fragrant scent of pure morality spread throughout a large area, confirming what I had heard from Geshe Chödrag while at the monastery.

The pujas, offerings and so forth that I made in preparation, delayed my journey a little longer, but at the beginning of the tenth month of the year, I arrived happily back at my room in Lhasa. It was like nectar to my eyes to once again see my peerlessly kind tutor Gän Yongzin Rinpoche, Geshe Sherab Rinpoche and the others and, in an atmosphere of auspicious happiness, we enjoyed a festive gathering as, day and night together, we talked about what had happened since we had last seen each other. Many different well-wishing relations came to see me. I went for the traditional arrival audience with the Great Dalai Lama at the Norbulingka Palace's Sunlight Residence and a private audience with him at the Peak Residence⁹³ at Jangchub Gakyil where I touched the crown of my head to the lotus feet of he who is the crown jewel of all existence and offered the *tän sum mandala* – representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind, one *sang* of

⁹¹ *de mo dgu 'cham*

⁹² *lam rim bsdus don*, Je Rinpoche's short *Lamrim*.

⁹³ *dbu rtse' gzim chung*

gold, one thousand Chinese dollars, and a few products from Kham. He had many questions about the situation in Kham and I answered him honestly, without fabrication.

After that I went before the supreme Dorjechang Pabongkapa at Chusang Retreat. The moment I saw the mandala of his face which is more meaningful to see than a wish-fulfilling jewel that has been polished with sublime patience one hundred times, I bowed my head and made prostration. I made offerings such as silver and gold and felt the inexpressible joy and relief of hearing his voice in a long meeting.

Chone Lama Rinpoche Lozang Gyatso Trin Pälzangpo was also staying at Chuzang Retreat. I went to meet him and afterwards attended whatever teachings he gave.

At the beginning of the eleventh month, on the way to Ganden, at the new Bönpo Monastery below Ganden, officials such as the abbot's representative, the Dokang official, Lozang Dargyā came to greet me to escort me from Shartse Dratsang and from the mouth of the Nyarong pass we went down to the bazaar. From there, a procession of Sangha from Shartse, the abbots of Shartse and Jangtse, lamas, tulkus, and monk officials escorted me with incense to the hall of Dokang Kangtsän where a feast of fried foods had been prepared. I received the governing council of the monastery, the Dratsangs, Kangtsäns, Mitsäns and so forth, many groups and individuals who came to greet me, offer *khataks*, and so forth.

To celebrate our not having been harmed by the difficult conditions of our travel and stay in Kham and our successful return, I offered two teas and a serving of noodle soup during the general great Ganden assembly, offered each monk one sang and five zho of silver, and a package of grain. Additionally, as an offering to all in common, I arranged for a yearly offering of one *tam*⁹⁴ to be made.

At Shartse Dratsang I offered two services of tea and hot rice soup to the monks, and distributed three sang of silver and a package of grain to each monk. For all in common I offered long practice rugs, one for each of the eighteen long rows of monks in the assembly hall, accented with gold and lotus designs. For those such as the abbots, lamas, chant leaders and ritual assistants, I offered some square-shaped rug cushion, all with very nice fluff and a vermilion border design. I also arranged for one *tam* yearly offering to be made.

At Jangtse Dratsang I made the two offerings of tea, one of soup, and a distribution of three sang of silver to each monk, and a yearly offering of one *tam*.

At Dokang Kangtsän I offered tea and rice soup at the assembly and three sang and a package of grain for each monk. As a general offering, for the four tall pillars, I offered banners with copper and gold embossed cat-shaped heads, trunks of fine Russian rose brocade, and multicolored tail banners; two large sachets of powdered incense, one victory banner, and one *tam* donation.

I served tea and made offerings to the monks at Dokang Samling Mitsän, Serkong Kangtsän and Serkong Kangtsän Mitsän.

Having also made a yearly donation at Ganden, I went and offered services at Marlam Dechen Sang Ngag Kar Monastery and offered gifts to my mother and others at the Gongko family estate. In Gungtang, I made day-long offerings of service and distributions of offerings at Chötri Dratsang and Zimshar Dratsang. I set up thanksgiving offerings up in my room in Lhasa and invited the oracle of my birth deities Dragshul Wangpo and Nyima Shonnu Principal and Entourage, presenting those offerings

When I was twenty-nine in the year of the earth snake, I offered a tea service at the Great Prayer Festival and distributed offerings of three *sho* of silver to all of the Sangha. After *Mönlam* was over, I also made tea offerings and distributions at the great assemblies of Drepung and Sera Monasteries, Gyutö and Gyume Tantric Colleges and Chuzang Retreat. At Gyutö, I offered one hundred and fifty Five-Buddha-Family initiation crowns that I had had especially made in Chatreng.

⁹⁴ 50 *srang*

That year, at Chuzang Retreat, from Kyabje Dorjechang Pabongkapa, I received commentaries on *Guru Puja* and *Mahamudra* based on the great *Guru Puja* commentary, the root *Mahamudra* text, and so forth. I received commentary on the generation and completion stage practices of Yamantaka again to renew the power of the commentary, and was fortunate to receive many other teachings that he gave.

When I was thirty, in the year of the iron horse, in order to newly establish a Yamantaka practice session and renew the previous traditional Gantapa Heruka practice session that had declined, Gungtang Labrang's war-officer, Magdrung Kälzang, asked me to give great initiations of Yamantaka and Heruka. I was suffering from a cold sickness, but not wishing to reject the urging of Magdrung Kälzang, at the beginning of the fourth month of the year, I went to Guntang and gave the initiations. That aggravated my illness and crossing the Tsangchu River there and back and so forth, worsened the cold condition until finally rheumatism confined me to my room. It was quite difficult and I could not go outside until the beginning of the eleventh month of the year.

At that time Ganden Jangtse Tridag Rinpoche came to my room repeatedly performing ritual cleansing and ransoming types of rituals for averting negativity and again gave me a Wisdom Garuda *jenang*⁹⁵. As he advised me that it would be good if I could do a retreat, I did the retreat for a month. One night I dreamt that I myself was transformed into an elder Garuda about the size of a sheep and flew down on top of my room. Also, there were a lot of frogs poured onto a plate. I covered it with a cloth and caught the tips of the cloth and held them together underneath the plate with my left hand. The frogs on the plate caused the cloth to bulge up with their jumping. When I raised the edge of the cloth slightly with my right hand to look underneath, two frogs jumped out, but all the rest of the frogs had been squashed. They were sticking to the cloth, and there were red sores on their backs. I took it as a sign that some harm of demons had been pacified and with the combined care of Shelkar Doctor Jigme and the teacher physician of Chagpori, Kälzang-lag, the cause of the illness was gradually cleared up. I just missed getting called by the lord of death's messengers!

Tri Dagpo Ngawang Tashi's incarnation, Tridag Rinpoche was also greatly learned in both Sutra and Tantra. He not only knew poetry, grammar, Sanskrit and so forth, but he had also mastered the practice of tantric ritual, including the dimensions and colors of mandalas. He had even perfected his knowledge of such things as tangka painting. He had received many initiations, transmissions and instructions from many holy beings such as Serkong Dorjechang and Kyabje Dorjechang Pabongkapa, but he was never bloated with pride thinking, 'I am so great! I am a great scholar!' and never acted like an ordinary lama showing off what little knowledge he had by waving flags from the top of the mountain! He was one who kept the lamp of his wisdom hidden inside the vessel. Indeed, Rinpoche and I had very pure samaya with the same guru, and were together a great deal. I knew that Rinpoche had a great deal of oral instructions of the Ganden Ear-Whispered lineage that he had received from Serkong Dorjechang, However, just like the metaphor of the old woman who comes to Lhasa but cannot see the Jowo Buddha statue, just as I was thinking that I must ask him for instructions on the oral lineage, Rinpoche fell ill and passed away. It was extremely regretful.

My attendant Lhabu's father named Tashi Döndrub who had served Dechen Pur Labrang as an administrator with pure altruism for many years, also took ill and died in the year of the earth snake, and in his last will, said that his youngest son Paldän Tsering, should likewise serve as a member of the labrang so, at the end of autumn that year, he came to my residence from the nomad lands with some livestock and escorts. I taught him how to read and recite and not long after, while he was still young, had him become a literature student with Lhaje Rigzin Lhundrup in east Nyarong at Lhasa. As is said,

Not spoiled when you are very happy,
Nor escaping when you are very sad,

⁹⁵ *ye she kyung tra' rjes gnang*

On what sort of karma can you rely?
The mind of love is your highest servant!

Having served well as my attendant in the past, and continuing to serve me with altruism oblivious to fatigue of body, speech, and mind, it is this Paldän Tsering who has become this old man's sole supporting 'walking-cane' in my old age.

When I was thirty-one, in the year of the iron sheep, I went to practically every teaching, great or small, that Lama Dorjechang gave, whether at Chuzang Retreat or Tashi Chöling Retreat, and also received, from *Tsänzhab* Tagdrag Dorjechang, great initiations of Guyasamaja, Jnanapada's system Manjusri Vajra, and Atisha's system Lokeshvara, and quite a few reading transmissions such as the *Ra* and *Päl*⁹⁶ volumes of teachings on Vajra Bhairava, the 'mother text' of the Mahakala collection, and the 'son text' about *Hala Nagpo*—black Ganesh.

That year at the end of autumn, delegates from the Chatreng Monastery and region, the officer of the general assembly Pag Ge Lozang Yeshe from Upper Chagong, and Butsa Gelong Tänpa Namgyäl from Pagpo, Treng side, came to invite me back to the monastery.

When I was thirty-two, in the year of the water monkey, the Chinese army arrived out of the Ba area of Domä. The government forces protecting Domä were not able to hold them and lost lands in Markam up to the mouth of the Bum pass, and so forth. There was great danger of the conflict reaching the capital, so our government had to get the British government to give us arms.

I spent most of the summer at Chuzang Retreat, receiving many teachings from Lama Dorjechang, such as commentary on the wheel of four activities of Vajra Bhairava. During that time and in break times, I also performed several Yidam Deity mantra recitation retreats.

In the tenth month of that year, the Ganden Tripa Sera Je Lawa Kangtsän's Lozang Gyältsän passed away. Although I did not receive any special invitation from his manager and so forth, I was called to assist by decision of His Holiness the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama from the Norbulingka Palace. When I arrived, Kuchar Tubtän Kumpul Pebgo, the Dalai Lama's chief assistant, had been told that I must go to prepare and wash the reliquary body and perform the cremation rites for the Ganden Tri Rinpoche who had passed away the previous day.

I hurried to the throne-holder's residence at Purchog Labrang. When I arrived there, the Namdrä Lobpön Kuzhab Sönam-lag had also come with a message from the Great Dalai Lama that since he and I knew the procedures for performing the rites for the reliquary body, that we should do it, and that Purchog Tulku Rinpoche, must pay good attention in order to gain experience of the traditional methods for the future. When I thought about this injunction later on, I believe it was the special clairvoyant insight of His Holiness the Thirteenth Dalai Lama seeing that he would pass away the following year, and that Purchog Rinpoche and the two of us would have to be the ones to come and do the same for his own precious remains.

In accordance with his intention and command, we offered the bathing ritual for the throne-holder's remains the entire day before his cremation, performed self-initiation and so forth, and cremated the holy body at Pabongka Retreat. I acted as vajra master and performed the ritual according to Tukän Chökyi Nyima's text. Purchog Rinpoche also came and very carefully watched the entire process from the offering of the bath onwards, beginning to middle to end.

When I was thirty-three, in the year of the water ox, after Prayer Festival, during the Tagtsä practice session at Ganden, the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama came to Ganden. Not daring to remain relaxing in Lhasa, I went directly to Ganden and joined the Bhairava ritual being performed at Shartse. During that period I received a private audience with His Holiness in the Clear Light residence throne room. He asked me some questions about the teachings and about offering of practice at Ganden, etc., and I reported on what I knew of the previous tradition. After his visit to Ganden, the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa.

When I was at Ganden, my debate partner for training in reasoning had been Pukang Geshe Ngawang Lozang, one of the best students out of all of the three monastic universities. He and I had

⁹⁶ (*rwa*) and (*dpal*)

the same samaya bonds for many years. He fell ill in his room in Lhasa, while I was still at Ganden this time, and died before I arrived back in Lhasa. I felt extremely great disappointment and regret that I had not been able to see him again before he died. After that I dedicated a great deal of virtuous roots on his behalf.

At the end of the summer session, I invited Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa to my room at Chuzang Retreat to give the seventeen Mahakala *jenangs*. As that was happening, a special messenger from the Norbulingka Palace brought word that I must come to the Norbulingka early the next day.

When I arrived there, Kuchar Kunpel Gyükay Pebgo had received a petition from Chatreng Monastery and the people of the area. The lay and ordained people of Kham were asking for advice to help alleviate the upheaval in spiritual and temporal affairs that had occurred since I had left Kham so suddenly. Also there was some information obtained by spies that had to be conveyed concerning the bad intentions and preparations to invade from the side of the Chinese. They were also asking for extensive and detailed advice concerning what rituals should be performed. Since there was no way that I could prepare to go that year, I asked permission to postpone traveling to Kham until the following year, and received answer that I should prepare to do that.

There were three more *jenangs* and the secret Mahakala instructions that had been left over to receive from the Mahakala teachings. Later I received them from Nalenda Kyabje Zimog Rinpoche.

Although I intended to go to Kham and had sent Chatreng general assembly's Lozang Yeshe to India to gather necessary items, that year, on the thirtieth day of the tenth month, the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama passed into the sphere of dharmadhatu⁹⁷. The support of the teachings, Purchog Jamgön Chogtrul, *Tsänzhab* Tagdrag Drojechang, *Tsänzhab* Sera Mey Kongpo Gyälwang Tulku, Sera Je Hardong Keutsang Tulku, Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, myself, and two young monks from Namgyäl Monastery, had to go provide the necessary services such as the rituals to be performed to accomplish the precious relics. For this reason, my trip to Kham was postponed. We performed the ritual for accomplishing the precious remains in the Servant⁹⁸ Palace's top floor Sizhi Pälbar residence, performed the reliquary body ablutions, and began the weekly offerings of salt and so forth.

Then, after some days had passed, at Norbulingka Palace, all of the high attendants such as Kuchar Tubtän Kunpel and the doctor Jampa, came from the Great Assembly of Tibet to ask many questions concerning the sickness that had caused the Dalai Lama's passing and the medical treatment that he had been receiving. Finally some officials were imprisoned and Tubtän Kunpel Kongpo and a few others were expelled to faraway places in different directions.

In the twelfth month, the precious relics of the Dalai Lama were brought to the Ganden Illumination residence on the eastern side of the Potala. From that time on until the golden stupa had been built to house the relics, for about a full year, the rituals for accomplishing and making offerings to the relics and so forth naturally had to be done every day. The dimensions for the reliquary stupa and all of the preparations for the blessed items to be placed inside were all done by orders given to us by the new regent Ratreng Rinpoche and the political minister Yabzhi Langdun Gung.

Accordingly, when the dimensions for the stupa were marked on the base cloth, it was made a cubit taller than dimensions inscribed on the cloth under the golden stupa of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama in the broad eastern side of the Potala. Later on, when Ratreng Rinpoche obtained the juniper wood for the life pole that sits vertically in the stupa, spontaneously, without any pre-planning, it was exactly the right length to run from the top, inside the stupa, down to the lotus seat upon which the vase of the stupa rests.

Concerning life axis poles for stupas in general, although they must reach the 'lotus of the ten virtues', when performing the ritual for putting in the life axis pole for the mandala of the 'Two

⁹⁷ His Holiness the Dalai Lama

⁹⁸ (*spyan bsal*)

Stainless Ones', the mandala is placed at the level between the vase cushion and lotus and the base of the life pole must rest on top of that; it was that system that was followed.

When I was thirty-four, in the year of the wood dog, as I was doing services for the precious relics, on the sixteenth of the second month of the year, my house manager Rigzin suddenly died of a stroke. All of the responsibilities for pujas and arrangements had to be handled by myself and my attendant, Lhabu. As I mentioned earlier, my deceased manager had been of little intelligence and his luck had been bad. He had been very poor in grain, money and necessities and sometimes even had to go into the village to borrow tsampa from neighbors, and the herder, lacking enough for the whole year, had to get an advance from the nomads around the end of the spring season. The under-managers had a lot of dung for fuel, empty butter flasks and kindling, so we had it rather difficult for several months. However, even though Lhabu and I did not do anything because we had little power to clear blockage or summon good fortune, by the blessings and power of the Three Supreme Jewels of Refuge, things gradually improved year by year and began to be very pleasant. I also had the opportunity to do more and more accumulation practice, offerings and Sangha distributions, as if I had a well that continued to pour forth more and more water.

That year Tshipön 'Finance Minister' Lungsharpa Dorje Tsegyäl and Kalön Trimönpa Norbu Wangyäl had uncontrolled arguments over control of the government, and many lay and ordained supporters on both sides were urged to fight over various issues. Finally Tshipön Lungshar's was arrested and thrown in prison and, on the eighth day of the fourth month, at the punishment room beneath the Potala Palace, his two eyeballs were torn out from the roots, and he was sentenced to life in prison. Some of his colleagues were also banished to far distant outposts.

When the Dalai Lama had been alive, by his virtuous means, Tshipön Lungsharpa and the Dalai Lama's personal attendant, Kuchar Thubtän Kunpel, were both very powerful. At the time, government officials of high, middling, and lower level had to all seek Kuchar Kunpel's approval in particular, and even some of the government offices had to petition him for his consent. Yet, as it is said in the Vinaya scriptures,

In all times and circumstances products degenerate,
fall, are scattered and destroyed.

The unbearable things that so suddenly happened to those two, their relations and families, and many events that occurred in the preceding and following years showed the suddenly fluctuating nature of samsara from pleasant to unpleasant and youth to old age. It greatly increased my feelings of disillusionment and renunciation.

That year I went to the Potala every day to do rituals accomplishing the relics and, of course, renewing the offerings every week. After they were removed from the cremation structure, beginning from the time that the site for the reliquary stupa was appropriated, as stages of the construction were finished we began putting the blessed contents inside.

In regard to the filling of stupas, there are many mantras from well-known printings for the purpose published at the time of Desi Sangye Gyatso but, we used those known as the 'Secret sealed printing of mantras behind the backdoor of the Potala Palace'⁹⁹. Everything was done without mistake in accordance with these two sources.

In addition, following the index in the Great Fifth Dalai Lama's *Golden Trunk Sole Ornament of the World*, we placed treasure vases of Golden Tzambala, White Tzambala, Vaisravana, Vasudhara, the Goddess of the Earth, and the Five Buddha Families inside the sub-base mountain foundation. **Inside the facing golden throne, in the center and at the four sides are housings for Six-Armed Mahakala, Dharmaraja, Paldän Lhamo Magzorma, male and female Yaksha, and the Five Families of Gyälpo King Spirit Guardians.** Inside each of the structures were placed outer, inner and secret bases of the respective Dharmapalas such as their life crystal, life

⁹⁹ These included the five great dharanis that were placed inside at the lower, middle, and upper levels, and protection wheels of male and female Yakshas; from the Great Fifth Dalai Lama's *Illuminating Sun Clearing Mistakes in Filling Mantras*, and *The Crystal Mirror*, from Changkya's teachings.

wheel, and bases of body, speech, and mind. In addition, the thread constructions, substances, and mantras, request of aims and consecrations were all done in a fully qualified manner as explained in the collected works on each of those Deities.

Inside the tip of the stupa, such as inside the sun and moon, we placed peaceful, increasing, and controlling Migtsema wheels, a wheel for the summoning of Sangha, White Umbrella Deity's environmental protection wheel, *Flow of the Ganges*—essential words for summoning the three realms from the very sacred *sadhana* of Venerable Kurukula:

1) First of the three controlling goddesses among the Thirteen Golden Dharmas of the Glorious Sakyas. Also, following the textbook of Dagpo Tashi Namgyäl *Source of Siddhis*, there was the wheel of powerful nature, the wheel for powerfully summoning the three realms, and the wheel for accomplishing all purposes. Following the *Wish Fulfilling Tree*, the precious text explaining how to accomplish the four activities by means of the secret heart wheel of Great Red Ganesh;

2) Second of the powerful deities, the increasing and controlling wheels with each having three stacked wheels of earth, sky, and the space between. Then there were nine-fold stacked wheels for above, below, and the space between, such as male and female wheels and sun and moon point-striking wheels as explained in *Luminous Blazing Jewel*, the *sadhana* of the wrathful Deity Kagchöl Sumbaraja;

3) Third powerful deity, with the making of the base for drawing all of these, the substances with which to anoint them, the time to draw them, the accomplishment of them, and so forth, all done in unmistakable order in accordance with the treatises of the particular deity and the writings of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, *Touching and Seeing the Bouquet of Red Utpala That Unravels Difficult Points of the Three Red Ones*, and the explanation of wheels, *Hooks Summoning the Three Realms*, which are very detailed in regard to invoking and requesting the Deity to remain, as found in the index of *The Great Golden Trunk That Grants Virtue And Goodness*. The Regent Ratreng Rinpoche, the minister Silön Yabzhi Langdun Kunga Wangchug, Kalön Trimön (the reliquary stupa official), and four of the Dalai Lama's ordained entourage, together we all gathered in the Dalai Lama's Potala residence, Ganden Yangtse, to roll the blessing mantras to put inside the reliquary stupa and perform the services for creating the stupa. There were fifty large boxes of sacred objects from the government. We opened each one of them finding wondrous inexpressibly precious objects holding the blessings of holy beings of India and Tibet of all traditions such as relics, pieces of clothing, strands of hair, bones and other objects. We prepared some from each of these and offered them inside the stupa at whatever was the appropriate level. Those of us who were serving the precious reliquary body at that time also had the good fortune to receive gifts of a bit of some of the blessed objects. I kept them as a most special treasure of rare precious things along with other blessed objects from indisputably reliable sources that I happened to receive at local monasteries in central Tibet and Tsang when I later went on pilgrimages to the places such as Lhoka listed below. The Tibetan year was 2600. When I escaped from the oppression in Tibet and came to India in the year of the earth boar, 1959, I brought it with me and have some of it in this very room. The majority, however, I offered to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, along with a list of its contents, so that it may be preserved as a field of merit for living beings. Once it was determined that the moisture of the holy body was mostly dried up from having applied salt to it over and over again, the flesh became tightly drawn against the skeletal structure, and on the lower back starting from about the thirteenth vertebrae, an image of Lokeshvara with head, arms, legs and lotus cushion about six inches tall could be seen bulging forth. This magnified our awe-felt devotion.

When I was thirty-five, in the third month of the year of the wood boar, all of the upper and lower sections of the golden reliquary stupa were filled except for the vase. We performed the ritual for putting the victory banners into each of the gold and copper victory banners at the peak of the temple by means of White Umbrella Deity and Migtsema. We performed the rituals for placing blessed bases such as of Paldän Lhamo, Chamsing, and so forth in the hearts. We offered the

mantras also into the tip of the gilded pagoda roof and during auspicious days of the waxing side of the moon cycle of the month of *Saga Dawa*, placed the three Dharma robes on the precious reliquary body as well as the clothing of the Sambogakaya including the Five-Buddha family crown. As we were doing this and placing the body on the cushion and inside the vase, the government offered an elaborate auspicious ceremony. Then, with the regent Ratreng Rinpoche leading the complete assembly of monks, we performed extensive consecration for three days by means of Shri Varjabhairava.

After that, the government gave a banquet in the ‘Sizhi Puntsog’ the great meeting hall of the Potala Palace to celebrate the completion of the golden reliquary stupa ‘Geleg Döjo’ – Wishfulfilling Virtue. The reliquary stupa official Zhabpä Trimönpa, the construction official Ngolä, the artisans, and all who helped take care of the holy remains were given presents. I received a complete set of clothing including lower (*zän sham*) robe, upper (*tö gag*) robe, Dharma (*chö gö*) robe, *nam jar* robe, a *tse zha*, feather-stitched monk’s hat, shoes, plus a box of fine tea and other things such as silver, silk and fabric. From first attending to the holy reliquary body to offering the mantras inside the golden ‘Geleg Döjo’ stupa and performing the consecration for the container and contents, it had taken about a year and a half. I didn’t mind the tiring work that had been involved and I thought it was my supreme good fortune to have had the responsibility to provide this pure service.

During summer retreat I went to Ganden. Requested by Ganden Jangtse Para Kangtsän, in the assembly hall of Ganden Jangtse, I gave Guyasamaja Akshobya vajra initiation, including the additional preparatory day, to a vast Sangha of both Ganden Jangtse and Ganden Shartse. I went to Para Kangtsän for a week to institute a Guyasamaja practice session. Because I was not able to go personally to the small local Chatreng Monastery, my representatives, Pawo Butsa and Gelong Tänpa Namgyäl went back. With some money sent from Dong Dratsang from their general fund to cover expenses and the addition of contributions of some Chatreng people in Lhasa, I sent enough resources to Chatreng Sampel Ling Monastery to have artists create a fine brocade patchwork tangka, over three stories high, principally, of *Ganden Lhagyäma* (Je Tsongkhapa’s *Guru Yoga*) merit field, with the two previous Ganden Tripas, Dharmaraja and Trinlā Gyälpo–King of Activity.

When I was thirty-six, in the year of the fire rat, at the beginning of the second month, Gän Rinpoche Lozang Tsultrim, who was sixty-seven years of age and very slender, felt a bit unwell and went to see the Shelkar doctor Jigme-la. He was given medicine, pujas were done, and attendants did everything they could, but at dusk on the evening of the fifteenth of the second month he passed away. It was very painful but there was nothing else we could do. We had to bear up, and I gave his body ablution and so forth, with my own hands. From the time I was seven, with a very young sprout of a body, up to this year, it had been principally been thanks to his kindness tirelessly giving me Dharma advice, that this donkey had entered the ranks of human beings. Moreover, from the temporal side as well, during times such as when my previous and later managers had passed away, he had carried on administrating the labrang singlehandedly, giving me advice in that realm as well, so that the extent of his kindness to me in both temporal and spiritual realms was completely beyond my comprehension.

Because I had always associated closely with Gän Rinpoche it was difficult to practice guru devotion toward him in a completely proper way. Although I had managed to never disappoint him, because guru devotion is so important and potent, whereby in dependence upon even very small good or bad actions directed toward the guru result in extremely beneficial or disastrous results respectively, in the presence of his corporal form I confessed with regret all mistakes I had made. After that we brought his sacred remains to Chuzang Retreat where monks of Gyütö Tantric College and I performed the ritual cremation. At each of the Ganachakras at Gyütö and Gyümä Tantric Colleges, and at the three monastic seats I made public distributions and made as many offerings for his passing as I could to elders such as those at the three *Dharma Wheels*¹⁰⁰ –Lhasa, Samye, and Tradrug–Falcon–Dragon–Temple.

¹⁰⁰ Three principal temples of Tibet

Supreme holy Gän Rinpoche was born in the Domä Nangzang Kongjar household in the iron horse year of the fifteenth sixty-year cycle. He entered Ganden Shartse Monastery and completed study of the five great treatises, becoming supremely learned. In the year of the iron dog, at the Lhasa Great Prayer Festival, he stood for Geshe Lharampa examination and took the award for second place. When the years of the Ganden Shartse abbotship of Känpo Pukang Lozang Kyenrab was over and he asked to retire, in the five years before Känpo Nyagre Lodrö Chöpel became abbot, the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama was considering whether ‘Trijang Rinpoche’s tutor, Lozang Tsultrim’ should be appointed abbot. But when the time that he might become abbot neared, he appealed to those such as Deyang *Tsänzhab* Rinpoche that, because of continued competition for the post and his not knowing about politics, that he be excused from becoming abbot. If it had been someone else, they might have accepted the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama’s appointment with delight, seeing it as the ultimate object of their desire. However, Gän Rinpoche was never pleased by such discussion, and at that time it caused him great concern so that he couldn’t sleep for many days. He became sick with *lung* (energy) imbalance in his upper body that caused his eyes to often fill with tears and he had to ask Chatreng Nyitso Geshe Trinlā for support, etc.

Gän Rinpoche’s daily activity began with rising in the early dawn and performing practices such as *Guru Puja*, *Six-session Guru Yoga*, *Yamantaka sadhana*, *Medicine Buddha*, and various prayers. Then, when he wasn’t doing something like teaching class or studying scripture, he would persevere in reciting Migtsema’s, Maitreya dharanis, or Mani mantra’s and would never spend a moment in meaningless conversation.

When he stayed at Ganden, many students from both Jangtse and Shartse Colleges came to him for classes every day, which he taught without ever showing sign of fatigue or discouragement. The many excellent students he produced had already taught students of their own who, even by that time, had already become Geshe; thus he had left a great legacy of service to the teachings.

To explain just how Gän Rinpoche taught, although he would not endlessly elaborate, he was someone who summarized very difficult and essential points in a few words that included vast meaning yet were easy to understand. When I was studying Paramita for instance, at the young age of about twelve or thirteen, I lacked great interest or ability to understand, but Gän Rinpoche, without using long texts like Je Tsongkhapa’s *Essence of Eloquence of the Provisional and Definitive*, taught me such things as the Three Jewels of Refuge and Bodhicitta with instructions suited to my level on the basis of shorter textbooks, in each case teaching me a reasoning that left me with a deep impression of the meaning of the text. Like the example of a single stone shot from a sling that chases away a hundred birds, it enabled me to understand the beginning, middle, and end of the text, and get a sense of its overall structure.

A bit more than two years had transpired since his passing when we found his reincarnation. As he did not have the title and so forth of a tulku, I took close care of him myself and eventually entered him into study with the general Sangha. By raising him I hoped to be able to return his kindness and I dedicated a ten million mantra Yudrönma retreat called *Pänpo Sengey Gangi Lama* for him. Kyabje Dorjechang Pabongkapa the supreme also, setting a precedent, in answer to a request for a divination regarding his incarnation had written,

At the time of the full moon he was invited
 Onto the tip of a path of white light
 Coming from the heart of Buddha Maitreya.
 Now, in the land of Tushita,
 He resides in the entourage of Aparajita.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Maitreya, Mipam Gönpö, The Unconquerable Protector

The date is not affixed to this ‘seed letter’¹⁰² but, as it stated that when he passed away, at the time of the full moon, he took birth in Tushita heaven, it not only decided that his incarnation should be sought, it also catalyzed and increase of devotion and faith in him.

In the third month, when I went to Ganden to make offerings in commemoration of Gän Dampa’s passing, as requested by Ganden Shartse Lhopa Geshe Ngawang Tashi, I gave sixty-two Deity Heruka initiation of mahasiddha Luipa’s system in the Ganden Shartse meeting hall, to a Sangha, including abbots, lamas and tulkus, of both Ganden Shartse and Ganden Jangtse.

During summer session that year a work party at Ganden Shartse Tratsang began and, in the viewing circle on the four sides of the meeting hall where elaborate offerings were arranged, I offered patch-worked fine brocade tangkas of the Thirty-five Confessional Buddhas amidst garlands and half-garlands of jewels, and door screens of half garlands with images of Setrab. At Dokang Kangtsän for the spaces between the twelve short pillars of its meeting hall I had new assembly banners made of patchwork brocade with head ornaments and twelve incense sachets. Having done that I went to Ganden and, during Ganden Ngamchö, Je Tsongkhapa’s anniversary day, I made offering distributions at Shartse tratsang and each kangtsän’s and arranged for perpetual offerings to be made. Similarly, at Ganden Jangtse Tratsang, I made an offering distribution and offered fifty ounces of silver as capital for perpetual offerings.

When I was thirty seven, in the year of the fire ox, in order to do purification for Gän Rinpoche’s passing and my own obstacle year of age 37, I made reverent offering distributions at the Great Prayer Festival to accumulate merit. At Gyütö Tratsang in addition to distributions I made for Gän Rinpoche’s passing, I started a perpetual offering of one *tam*–fifty ounces of silver–to be made every year on the full moon of the second month.

At the wish of my sister Yangtzom Tsering who was staying with the Lhalu Gatsäl household, in the Lhalu protector temple I offered outer, inner, and secret bases of Lhamo Magzor Gyälmo (the Goddess Queen of War-Päldän Lhamo’s) body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities as well as her *tendö*–thread construction. I also performed seven days of rituals for enshrining bases and accomplishing the thread construction, combining the pure practices as taught in the Päldän Lhamo scripture collection and qualified treatises by authors such as the Great Fifth Dalai Lama and Tukän Rinpoche.

At Chuzang Retreat meeting hall, I received the following from Kyabchog Dorjechang: the ultimate peak essence of all classes of tantra for those of highest faculties, the instructions that enable one to attain the state of Vajradhara in this very lifetime, the completion stage practice of Shri Guyasamaja and a very detailed commentary to *Rim-Nga-Säl-Drön–The Lamp Illuminating The Five Paths*.

At the point he explained about the illusory body he arranged very extensive offerings, tormas, and Ganachakra offerings. With Lama Dorjechang himself generated as the principal Deity of the mandala, we made outer, inner, secret, and suchness offerings and made the prayer requests for the teachings on illusory body according to the tradition of the great secret tantra. At that time when he made those illusory body offerings purely, I also wrote this song in offering:

Lama Dechen Nyingpo, embodiment of all Gurus and Buddhas,
Gave instructions on Shri Guysamaja, pinnacle of tantras,
His melodious speech unimpededly resounding with Dharma;
Not even Brahma and Indra enjoy such good fortune!

Although bliss of the Sambogakaya mandala is inexpressible,
This happy song of joy springs forth from within!
As I offer it to delight the incomparable Guru,
Assist me, O vajra brothers and sisters with pure samaya!

¹⁰² *sa-bön gyi yi-ge*, i.e. a source letter to establish Gän Rinpoche’s incarnation lineage.

Though my intelligence and effort is inferior
By the power of the blessings of Guru Akshobyavajra,
I dance with joy in our good fortune!
We can cross the pass of the swift path of unexcelled great secrets!

In the wheel of mandalas of infinite pure lands,
The rise and fall of the breath itself sounds as secret mantra,
All energy of the winds that emanate the three realms of existence,
Is caught inside avadhuti—the path-void-of-two¹⁰³, what joy!

Clear light of equal taste with the sphere of twenty-four projections,
The primordial innate-born smiling youth,
Is ceaselessly released in illusory clouds of five colored light,
The dancer filling mandalas pervading space

Though appearing as a heap of marks and signs, having a nature of wisdom,
Unobscured wisdom itself, expressing in form,
Goddess of unification, one taste appearing as many,
May we experience gloriously endowed Akanishta pure land!

Thanks to the kindness of the Mahasiddha Indrabhodhi,
Many were liberated without pushing or hardship, it is said.
E Ma! Encountering such an excellent profound path,
I believe what we call ‘Odianna’ must be just like this!

With powerful armor-like patience to liberate mother beings,
By realizing the meaning of the tantra endowed with the vowels and consonants,¹⁰⁴
And purifying all stains of extreme dualistic delusions,
May we sing ecstatic songs of the Ali of space¹⁰⁵!

I was happy to hear the incomparable Guru expressed his delight in hearing it. Yet, spending my whole life amidst the hubbub, I lacked the good fortune to practice as I wished. This was definitely a result similar to its cause stemming from a powerfully negative karmic tendency in previous lives.

At autumn break, a small entourage with Lhabu and I departed from Lhasa to travel in turn to Yarlam Ganden, Mäldro Katsäl, Gyäteng, Chäka Monastery, Pangsa, Rinchen Ling Monastery, and Rutog Monastery. We crossed Täkar Pass arriving at Ölka Tzingchi and Samling. Then, crossing Gyäl Long pass, we arrived at Chökor Gyäl, Lhamö Lhatso, Gyäl Lhatog, the great shrine of Daglha Gampo¹⁰⁶, and Zanglung Retreat. On the return route we came through Ölka Chuzang and Chölung, Gyasog, Lhading, and Nyima Ling, and we spent a few days at the hot springs below the *tzong* at Ölka. Although the bases of body, speech and mind (of Gampopa Dapo Lhaje) at Daglha Gampo were incredible, their small size was a little disappointing. I went to Gampo to meet Gampo Rinpoche thinking to ask him a few questions about the genuine Mahamudra and Six-Yogas Teachings. Perhaps he was bashful but I didn’t get anything more than a nice-sounding short response.

¹⁰³ (*gnyi spang lam*) winds leaving the two side channels to enter the central channel.

¹⁰⁴ the Sanskrit vowels and consonants.

¹⁰⁵ (*a li la mo*) ali is the Sanskrit vowels, lamo means space, mountain, earth or swift. The words modify (dga glu) the song of joy.

¹⁰⁶ A Kagyü monastery founded in 1121 by Gampopa Dagpo Lhaje on a power site, the ‘head of the ogress’, by King Songtsän Gampo and transformed into a terma repository by Padmasambhava.

We crossed Kartag Pass and went to Zangri Karmar, Dänsa Tel, and Ön Ngari Tratsang. We crossed the Tsang Chu River at Nyangpo and arrived in Tsetang. There we went to visit many notable sites¹⁰⁷.

At Sheldrag, when I offered Ganachakra before Guru Rinpoche, the image of Guru Rinpoche became more and more resplendent like his actual form, and I saw the eyes seem to move. It seemed as if about to speak but I didn't hear anything. Yet I felt unusual all day long, with spacious non-objectified blissful awareness that was inexpressible. I realized it was the blessings of the Second Buddha of Ogyän.

Having given whatever teachings that were requested at most of the monasteries mentioned above, and having thus made various Dharma connections, I stayed for a few days at the Kemä lands. At the wish of the Sangha of Riwo Chöling I gave great initiation of Guyasamaja Akshobya Vajra.

The path back took us across the valley of the Tsangpo river, crossing by boat. After long audiences with the elders of glorious, immutable and spontaneously established Samye Monastery I passed successively through upper and lower Chimpu and Yamalung, where I made the thousand offerings, hundred offerings, Ganachakra offerings, and so forth, to the elders as mentioned above. In addition, I provided service for the Sangha communities, generally creating whatever suitable accumulations that I possibly could. As for the characteristics, stories, Dharma histories and biographies of the holy beings and sacred objects of those places, they are explained in the Kyäntse source text so I won't elaborate on them here.

Then, by way of Gökar Pass we arrived back to the rocky ground of Lhasa. During winter session that year, I went to Ganden and made a distribution of offerings and also made any offering of four fine large hand-made banners made with heads of cast gold and copper and a new style of brocade coming out of China that had designs of large dragons with tiger borders to adorn the four tall front pillars of the assembly hall.

When I was thirty-eight, in the year of the earth tiger, the sole protector of humans and gods, Dorjechang Pabongkapa the great, as he had been requested many times before, finally agreed to give the explanatory commentary on the *Great Stages of the Path to Enlightenment in connection with the four great sets of annotations*¹⁰⁸ at the victorious land of Ganden Mountain. I left early for Ganden and made preparations, collecting necessary items to make requests, and so forth. In the meadow next to the river running below the monastery tents were pitched and other preparations were made to receive and greet him. When he and his entourage arrived there, I offered *khatak* and the three symbols of enlightened body, speech, and mind and served as his attendant for the day.

The next morning early, when he came to Ganden Monastery, we and the Ganden Shartse abbot and officials, lamas and tulkus such as Zong Rinpoche Lozang Tsöndru, holding incense, escorted him from near the entrance of the main assembly hall to the teaching throne that had been prepared in the meeting hall of Dokang Kangtsän. The Ganden Shartse abbot and the tratsang's abbot, lamas, and officials sitting in rows were served tead, rice, fried food, fruit and so forth in succession. The tratsang and I offered *khatak* and the three symbols. When the ceremony was over we went up to our rooms and before going to his room, as we had requested, he kindly wafted incense in my attendant's and my rooms and the rooms of the kangtsän teachers.

For several days I made continual prayers to Kyabje Pabongka and his entourage from my room. Then, before the teachings took place, I offered to the precious Guru and his entourage suitable nutritious food that was especially good because of the quality of the ingredients, butter, flour, tsampa, tea, and so forth, things that were offered and did not need to be bought at market. I

¹⁰⁷ Ngachö tratsang, Ganden Chökor, Namgyäl Temple, the Nedong Tse group, Bäntsang Monastery, Tradrug Tsuglakang, Riwo Chöling, Yambu Lagang, some shrines in Yarlung, Lharu Mänpay Gyälpo, Tagchän Bumpa, Tashi Chöde, Rechungpa's cave, Tangpoche, and the tomb of King Songtsän Gampo, some shrines at Chänyä Monastery to Medicine Buddha Rinchen Dawa, mountain shrines to Medicine Buddha Tönpa Tsänleg Yongdrag, Chong Gyä Riwo Dechen, Göntang Bumo Che, Tsäntang Yü Lhakang, the Sheldrag practice cave and Jasa Temple.

¹⁰⁸ (*mchan bzhi sbrags*)

repeatedly checked the quality of ingredients that required it, such as vegetables, and offered them in portions of suitable size.

On the third day of the fifth month, a suitably and astrologically auspicious day, he was invited to the great assembly hall of Shartse Tösam Norbuling Tratsang where his arrival was greeted with *gyaling* (oboes) and incense. We then brought that embodiment of all the Buddhas, the precious guru of all beings of the three realms, to the throne of the fearless Dharma on which he placed his lotus feet.

With his smiling face that was meaningful to set eyes upon, he the abbot of both Shartse and Jangtse, ex-abbots, lamas, tulkus and officers, a huge Sangha assembly¹⁰⁹, as well as lamas, geshe, and renounced ascetic retreatants coming from Sera, Drepung and the Lhasa area, a vast audience of over two thousand came to listen to his teachings¹¹⁰. He gave a very precise explanatory commentary by way of the four great sets of annotations¹¹¹. Taking Pänchen Lozang Yeshe's speech, *Lamrim Nyurlam*, as the basis for experiencing practice of the subjects beings explained, he was very kind to begin the teaching with experiential commentary on the way to practice.

On the first day, for the sake of the auspicious connection, Precious Guru checked our memorization of *Lamrim Chenmo* from the beginning three times, after which I recited it once. I distributed offerings to the assembly that day. From that day onwards, like the first long day, he continued to teach two sessions daily, beginning just after noon and concluding when it got dark. Later on, when summer session was about to start he had to add an extra session of teaching, yet Lama Rinpoche never showed the slightest fatigue. He lived his life in a state of delight, with a loving nature that had abandoned discouragement.

During the teachings, except when there were sponsors who took responsibility to distribute offerings to the assembly, I offered a tea service to the assembly every day. Although the main body of the teaching was not yet completed, on the day of the fourteenth of the sixth month it was the embodiment of all refuges, the supremely kind king of Dharma, Lama Dorjechang's sixty-first birthday. For the sake of the auspiciousness that we would continue to have the stable good fortune for him to remain with us in immutable vajra nature, we prepared extensive Ganachakra and five thousand offerings and, on the day of the thirteenth prepared offerings for Bodhicitta Puja.

Early on the fourteenth, following the system of Shantideva, he kindly gave us both wishing and engaging bodhisattva vows at the same time. When we offered the dakini long-life ritual in connection with the profound path of *Guru Puja* and Ganachakra I sponsored elaborate service for the assembly and made distribution of offerings without being bound by any craving of avarice. Then, I made offerings to the great Lama Dorjechang symbolizing the special characteristics of his thought and deeds. These I offered with praises I had composed that began with the great qualities of his body and his being endowed with five perfect qualities. Then I offered an extensive explanation of the mandala being offered in request for the Guru to remain until the end of existence. I was relieved to hear the Guru praise my explanation of the meaning of the mandala with great delight and, later on, a custom was even made of using the notes of my explanation for that purpose.

From the day after that until the nineteenth of the month he continued on to finish the rest of the discourse and on the last day offered mandala, the three bases and some small symbolic offerings. I also offered service to the entire assembly. As a summary to wrap up the successful completion of the discourse, Lama Rinpoche quoted Buddha for those attending, 'I have shown you the liberating path, but liberation depends on you!' and he explained how just listening to Dharma

¹⁰⁹ Including such renowned holy sustainers of the teachings as Sera Je Dragri Chogtrul Rinpoche, Sera Mey Kongpo Shartrul Rinpoche, the first great master of the newly established Chabdo Tsän-nyi Tratsang Sera Je Tsawa Geshe Jampa Tayä, etc.)

¹¹⁰ He gave an explanation of that teaching system which comprises the essential precepts of all Buddha's teachings, the system of the two path blazers, Nagarjuna and Asanga, the sole door of entrance for fortunate beings that is endowed with four greatnesses, which is especially exalted by way of three characteristics, that lamp which illuminates the three realms, *Lamrim Chenmo*.

¹¹¹ (*mchan bu bzhi*)

teachings is not enough but must always be inseparably conjoined with contemplation and meditation. Otherwise, if our study is directed outwards, we will only look for faults to expose in others and, like a god falling to the level of a demon, there is a danger that Dharma practitioners could be carried off by ghosts! He quoted from *Heart of the Middle Way*,¹¹²

O Nectar of speech, better than sandalwood!
That pacifies the extreme torment of beings,
Caused by the fire of delusions in their minds!

Thus, he bestowed upon us in great detail and abundance his most precious nectar of essential advice. Auxiliary to that, Lama Dorjechang made a prophecy saying that Gomang Kangsar Rinpoche and I were the most precious amongst his disciples, and that if the two of us lived for a long time, nothing would stop the increase of enlightening activities. Dagpo Lama Rinpoche said,

‘The son will surpass the father, the grandson will surpass the son, and the great-grandson will surpass the grandson!’

He said that since that was certain to happen, everyone must pray for our long lives. I felt a little embarrassed to be given such high praise amidst the lamas and tulkus that I mentioned before such as Dragri Rinpoche, qualified Geshees who were definitely capable of spreading the teachings.

After that for a few days relaxation, we took a vacation to Wangkur Ri Mountain where I offered *sang*, and we made a circumambulation of Ganden Lingkor. As we did this I kept remembering his cheering words, ‘Now, this time, to have had the opportunity to teach and spread the essence of Je Tsongkhapa’s teachings, Lamrim Chenmo, at his own monastic seat; we have been so fortunate!’ I kept the secrets of his teachings as a treasure trove of nectar for the ears! The day I went from Ganden, that morning, Lama Dorjechang had me wear the pandit’s hat that he himself usually wore. In addition to placing into my hands vajra and bell, and a volume of *Lamrim Chenmo* with the first three pages written in gold, he gave me presents of a victory vase and an activity vase of silver filled with vase substances, a golden statue of Tara, an old cup of Lama Dorjechang’s filled with turquoises, corals and precious stones, and a whole uncut bolt of brocade with golden designs of the eight auspicious symbols. He also gave me spiritual advice, saying such things as that I must vastly uphold, cultivate and spread the Sutra and Tantra Teachings of the Protector Manjusri Tsongkhapa. With his frank words he gave me unexcelled comfort. My merit had culminated.

At that time, I thought it would be extremely difficult for someone like me, sinking in a swamp of unceasing distraction, who has no experience of practice and little realization by way of either birth or training, to be able to do anything to serve the teachings’. But because of the Guru’s bodhicitta and the auspicious connection with him, after Lama Dorjechang had passed away, like the metaphor of a donkey who takes control when there is no rooster around, as someone with no foundation in practice with nothing to say, I had to give many teachings – primarily of the *Lamrim* – that were a mirror-image of his, by emanating the Guru’s speech. That must have been what he had intended.

Then, when the great Lama Dorjechang accepted the invitation of Dechen Sang-Ngag Kar Monastery and walked there, I also escorted him on foot. The time that we arrived at Dechen Monastery lands coincided with a festival feast and a sacred fire dance being offered. I also enjoyed the festive display. I saw it as the amazing bliss that was the result of the gradual accumulation of virtue that had ripened from the *Lamrim* teachings having gone so perfectly well from beginning, to middle, to end, without the slightest mistake or inauspiciousness.

From the time Tzöpa Rigtzin had passed away up to this time, Lhabu and I, in the custom of the ‘single jewel embodiment’ visualization, had been taking responsibility for administration of

¹¹² *dbu ma snying po*

the house ourselves. It was at this time that Dokang Kangtsän Muli Lozang Döndrup took over the manager's position.

I had been requested many times by all of the patrons of Dungkar Monastery Labrang to come fill and consecrate the reliquary stupa of Dromo Geshe Rinpoche Ngawang Kälzang who had passed away the previous year. It was after this, in the tenth month of the year that I, Lhabu, Puntsog the cook, and some other monks including Kuzhab Kälzang Wang-gyäl, left Lhasa and went in succession to Gampala, Paldi, Nakartse, Ralung, Gyältse, Pagri, and other places, finally arriving at Drotö Dungkar Monastery. There I offered the mantras and so forth into the reliquary stupa, but we postponed performing the consecration until the coming new-year's celebration.

In the meantime, because we had already come as far as Dungkar, seeing that it would be very auspicious if we could go on pilgrimage to Nepal and India, we decided to make our way there. By way of the Jaleb pass, Rongling, and so forth, we went as far as Kabug by horse and donkey, where we spent a few days at Dromo Labrang of Tharpa Chöling Monastery. Then, with a translator accompanying us, we went to Bodhgaya, Vulture's Peak, Nalanda, Kushinagar, Shravasti¹¹³, Varanasi, Lumbini, and, in Nepal, we made a thorough pilgrimage to all of the sacred sites such as the three great stupas. The day we visited Namu Buddha¹¹⁴ we rented a bus which took us up the pass to the stupa, but on the way down the other side of the pass the engine broke down and the vehicle could go no further. We all had to continue on foot and it was eleven that night before we arrived with great difficulty at the inn by the stupa. There were some elders there in whose company we offered Ganachakra and made other offerings to the best of our ability.

In Bodhgaya at that time, we met a Ladhaki lama named Ngawang Samtän who was staying at the Bodhi Center guesthouse. It was already decided that he was going to buy some land to build a new Tibetan monastery in Bodhgaya, so he asked me to perform a site ritual there. At that time, the land around the great stupa was actually owned by the King of Dzvaki, so we had to secretly go to the site where, on the bare ground where the Tibetan Monastery of Pelgyä Ling would later be built. At moonrise of the full moon of the eleventh month of the year, by means of Vajra Bhairava Tantra I performed the ritual request to the Field Protectors and Earth Goddess for the use of the land, took possession of the site, established protection, blessed it and so forth. I also performed the ritual for burying a small treasure vase.

Because permission would have to be requested from the Dzvaki King with offerings of gold to the Mahabodhi society of Bodhgaya, etc. to show him respect, we went to meet him at his residence with a few symbolic offerings. He seated me upon a leopard skin with its four claws and head intact, offered *khatak* and received a hand blessing. He liked me and loaned me an elephant for our pilgrimage to Silwatsäl and horses for my attendants. Because I had never ridden an elephant before, it was quite novel and pleasant at first but because I was jostled so much on the way it caused me suffering of dizziness and such.

At the foot of the Bodhi Tree there was quite a number of Tibetans on pilgrimage with whom I created a brief Dharma connection by giving them transmissions of *Kabsumpa*, Je Tsongkhapa's praise of Lord Buddha, his *Praise of Dependent Arising*, the three great prayers and others.

At that time India was under control of the British and none of the current day progress was there, so once we got off the train we had to walk or take a horse cart to get to the individual pilgrimage sites. After our pilgrimage we arrived back at Kabug where, as requested by the Public Welfare Society, on the field in front of Tharpa Chöling Monastery, I gave the great initiation of the Great Compassionate One to over a thousand lay and ordained people.

We also made a brief trip to Calcutta and Darjeeling in order to experience the auspicious nature of those places. On the way to Darjeeling, at the old Goom Monastery, as requested by

¹¹³ pg 202 line three, in error has Shravasti spelled as 'gnyan yod,' in Tibetan, pronounced nyän yö It should be spelled 'mnyan yod' with the same pronunciation.

¹¹⁴ (*stag mo lus sbyin*) *tagmo lujin*, "Body Given To Tigress" Where the future Buddha, as the bodhisattva, gave his body to the starving tigress and her cubs. The tigress later became the Maid who offered Buddha the refined milk porridge after his austerities and before demonstrating enlightenment, and the cubs became Buddha's first disciples.

Gadän Chöling, I went there and made a brief Dharma connection. At Darjeeling there were quite a few people from the former attendant of the Dalai Lama, Legdän Babü's household to whom I gave long-life initiation.

When I was thirty-nine, in the year of the earth hare, at Tibetan New Year's, I was sent to Kashang Tashi Chöling Monastery where. At the wishes of the sponsors there, on New Years' day, I composed a propitiation of the Kashang Guardian Näsung Gyälpo. On the way back from Kabug by way of Rongling, Tzaleg, and so forth, we arrived at Dungkar Monastery where I performed extensive consecration of the reliquary stupa for three days. After that, as requested by the lamas, monks and old benefactors of the monastery such as Pajo Dönyö of the Bönpo Kunga Ling-gang family, I gave fifteen days of commentary on the *Swift Path* Lamrim concluding with Bodhicitta Puja, great initiations of Guyasamaja, Yamantaka, Gantapa Five-Deity Heruka and the Great Compassionate One, *jenangs* of a few Dharma Protectors such as Mahakala and Dharmaraja, Sindhura Blessing of Vajrayogini with commentary on the generation and completions stages, and a commentary on *Guru Puja*, in a series of teachings that eventually extended to about three and half months. This was done in the meeting hall of the monastery, to over two hundred ordained and lay people.

I left Dromo and stayed with Tsongpön 'Master Merchant' Tsechö of the Pangda family in their shrine room in Pagri. While there, I visited monasteries such as Dragtog Gang, administered by Gyütö Tratsang, Richung Poto Monastery, administered by Ganden Shartse, and upper and lower monasteries of Tashi Chöling, going to each for a day and making very brief Dharma connections. For a large public gathering in Pangday Rakor, I gave great initiation of the Great Compassionate One in the Pälmo system.

Then I went to Pagri Kambu Hot Springs for the sake of my health. The preparation and arrangements were all handled by Tsongpön Tsechö. I stayed about two weeks. Tashi Lhundrub Ngagzur Ta Lama Rinpoche arrived there and I went to meet him. On the way back, I spent a day at Kambu 'Apricot' Monastery founded by the great Tantrika Damchö Yarpel. There were a great many scriptural texts there and when I took a look in several volumes I found some hand-written prophecies with the pages out of order in one. Although I may not be perfect in my memory of it, it went something like,

'Powerful Avalokitesvara will have the name 'Tubpa-the Muni.'

All of his deeds will be like those of Rahula.

Lightning will strike his minister, 'Garwa-'The Smith'...

And,

'All his activities will be finished in the year of the cock...'

And when I checked to see if the words of the prophecy had been accurate, I saw that it spoke very majestically of the previous Dalai Lama and placed blame upon Demo Rinpoche. It also prophesied that the conflict with the Chinese army would break out in the year of the water rat, and I found a clear, definite prophecy that, for the sake of others, the Dalai Lama would pass away in the year of the bird.

I left then, intending go through Pagri to visit elders in the region of Tsang. I then traveled to 'Tratsang Do'— a nunnery founded by Rva Dharma Senge, as well as to Dotra Monastery, Chilung and so on. On the full moon of the fifth month of the year, we crossed the Drongdu Pass and arrived at glorious Sakya Monastery. In the Sakya tradition, some of the deities of the area would be invoked through mediums. However, on that day in the villages surrounding the great Sakya temple, like on the day of Tzamling Chisang¹¹⁵ celebrated in Lhasa, some of the deities, having entered their mediums, were acting drunk among the rows of people. I stayed in one of the

¹¹⁵ An incense offering made to all protective deities of the world in general.

Sakya government official's home where the subordinate official Majawa performed an offering of scent, burning barley tsampa and oats known as *Zur*.

In the guest-house there were some monks reading some of the various hand-written texts that were there. Within these texts, subjects like *Pramana*, *Paramita*, and *Madyamaka* were debated and answers given based on scripture. I noticed that apart from a few slight differences (such as in style), the various discussions and the way the extensive prayers were arranged were very similar to the explanations of debate and prayers at the three monastic seats of Ganden, Sera and Drepung. From this, I could get a sense of how the system of study and contemplation from the Sakya College of Dialects had spread into to the Gelug system of Father Je Tsongkhapa and his disciples.

In that administrative office there was quite a lot of spirit activity so the next day we had to pitch tents and stay in a field next to the river.

At that time Puntsog Podrang's Dagchen Rinpoche was indeed the official representative of the Sakya throne. However, when I had to go there to meet him for tea, went to his residence, bowed with respect and asked him a few questions about some practices of the Sakyas all he said, 'Speak with the two descendant son tutors' and I did not receive any sort of detailed advice. He gave me quite a lot of blessed nectar pills.

I went to visit the sacred sites above and below the temple at the same time that he sent me elsewhere to see the hereditary tutors as teachers. Then, I met extensively with elders such as Jamyang Garzigma, Chödung Karpo Gyangdrag, and Sebag Nagpo Purshe of Gorum Monastery and made extensive series of offerings, distributions and service for the Sangha. In doing so, I heard various accounts of the hereditary tutors' instructions. Those I spoke to were well familiar with their Sutra teachings, but they did not seem to be greatly familiar with the ear-whispered Sakya lineages such as that of the Golden Dharmas.

From Sakya, I went on pilgrimage to the Devi Protector Chapel at Marlam Samling and to the supreme site of Glorious Four-Faced Mahakala, Kau Dragzong. I then crossed the pass called, 'Atro Pass' into the lands of Charong, proceeded on to Lhunpo Tse Monastery, Tropu Jamchen, and Gangchen Chöpel Monastery and finally arrived at Glorious Nartang Monastery. There we saw a great many holy objects and in one temple there was a complete model of the sacred site of Bodhgaya, India, made of sandalwood, said to have been made back in the time of Buddha's enlightenment. It was so perfectly complete and well-made that I could see that it was just like the Ghandola Stupa and Bodhi Tree at Bodhgaya, and I found myself feeling even more certainty that the holy site of Bodhgaya in India was the actual site of Buddha's enlightenment.

Although I had a strong wish to go on pilgrimage to Jangchen Retreat and Shvalu, time did not allow it, so it had to be left for another time.

When I arrived at the monastic seat of Tashi Lhunpo in upper Tsang, an official of the labrang government presented me with a very beautiful set for making *zur* smoke offerings. I stayed at a newly constructed residence, 'Pände Kang,' in Yongzin Lochen Rinpoche's labrang that had been prepared for me.

At that time, that one endowed with great compassion that sets the faculties of sentient beings in peace, Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa Pälzangpo Chog, had been specially invited by Tashi Lhunpo Labrang to give a transmission of the commentary of *Lamrim Chenmo* to many thousands of attendees at Dechen Podrang. Thanks to the peerless kindness of the Father Guru I had the good fortune to take the dust of his feet to the crown of my head¹¹⁶, meet like father and son once again and hear his delightful voice in abundance.

Because the all-knowing Kunzig Pänchen Rinpoche had not yet returned from Gyasog he was not in residence but, following the ancient custom, I went for audience to offer prostration, receive tea and make offerings, including *khatak* offering and the three bases of enlightened body, speech, and mind. Before the throne of the great Kunzig Rinpoche in his 'Podrang Gyältsän Tönpo' upper residence at Kadam Podrang, I had tea, rice and fried food with Kyabying Tzasag Lama

¹¹⁶ In Buddhist traditions, a sign of great respect for one's teacher is to place the lowest part of his body (his feet) upon your head. This is a mark of great humility and demonstrates one's submission to his teachings and guidance.

Lozang Rinpoche, and when I left he presented me with very beautiful offerings including blessing pills, handmade tsa-tsas, incense and enough patchwork wool for a *zän* robe.

At the back of the bed was a sealed Protector house and inside the bedroom there was a volume of scripture that you could see which was reputed to be the Ganden Emanated Scripture¹¹⁷. His incarnations had resided there for a long time, ever since the time of Pänchen Lozang Chögyän, and because it was the residence of one who had performed such great service on behalf of the Teachings, the place had become extremely blessed. With great devotion and joy I made strong prayers in connection with seven-limb prayer.

There were also reliquary stupas of the successive Panchen Lamas, a large Maitreya statue and many other large temples. I made extensive visits throughout, making offerings, distributions in the main Tashi Lhunpo assembly hall and so forth, to gather much merit. Together with Kyabying Tzasag and other major officials we opened the labrang government's box of blessed bases, which was filled with many very blessed objects. They were very kind to give me the good fortune to see these. One day I offered the three enlightened bases to Lama Dorjechang where he was teaching in Dechen Podrang, and respectfully offered service and made distributions to those who were attending the teachings. For reasons of auspiciousness, I also attended one session of his teachings that day, again having the good fortune to experience the nectar of his speech and his all-encompassing kindness.

Since I was attending teachings every day while I was staying at Tashi Lhunpo, many of the best monks would come to my room to ask to receive transmissions, commentaries and so forth, on various practices in which they were interested, such as *Guru Puja* and *Ganden Lhagyäma*. As soon as one Dharma session ended, the next one began. The young incarnation of the previous Lochen Chogtrul Rinpoche was there. He requested me to give him the general Lord of the Three Lineages Je Rinpoche *jenang*, and I fulfilled his wish.

I left Tashi Lhunpo and went to Gadong Monastery in Panam and also met the Gyältse Pögang group. Both had many holy objects including such things as a tangka of Hevajra mandala that was used for meditation by Naropa, clothes of Kache Pänchen, Indian scriptures, and so on, which I saw.

I went on to the Karka Kashö settlement who had invited me there and gave the people of the area there a long-life initiation. At Gyältse they gave me a golden bed to sit on and I had an informal meeting with the elder of the Pälkor Dharma community and gave a commentary on the short *Guru Yoga* of Je Tsongkhapa, *Ganden Lhagyäma* at Zhinä Tratsang.

At Ralung Monastery, Pökya Retreat and the other places mentioned above, at all the monasteries on my path, I made distributions of offerings, gathering positive energy. Going by way of Karo Pass, Nakar Tse, and so forth, we crossed the Tsang River by boat and spent a day at Nyetang where I saw the speaking Tara statue that is the principal holy object at the Tara Temple and the 'No Separation' Stupa¹¹⁸ that was used for meditation by Lord Atisha. I finally arrived back at Lhasa at the end of the sixth month of the year.

In the autumn, supreme Dorjechang Pabongka came to Sera Tantra Dratsang and gave explanatory instruction on the Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion, great initiation of Guyhasamaja Akshobyavajra. At Sera Je Hardong Kangtsän, he gave great initiation of Vajrapani Great Wheel. At that time, I also received the blessings and the nectar of the river of the initiations.

The Protector of the Land of Snows, Emanation of the Arya Subduer of Beings who holds the hand symbol (mudra) of the pandarika flower, His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama was invited from Domä and, at the end of the eighth month, he very kindly came to the Lhasa capital, On the Gangtö Dögu field where the government had pitched a large tent to greet him, I went to greet him together with the lamas and tulkus of Sera, Drepung, and Ganden. I drank the nectar of liberation by seeing the mandala of his marks and signs.

¹¹⁷ (*dga' ldan sprul pay glegs bam*) *Ganden trulpay legbam*

¹¹⁸ (*'bral med mcchod rten*) *dräl me chötän*

When I was forty, in the year of the iron dragon, in the spring at the Norbulingka¹¹⁹, from Lord of the Hundred Families Yongzin Tagdrag Dorjechang I gratefully received quite a lot of initiations and *jenangs*¹²⁰. I also received the *Ocean of Siddhis* explanatory instructions on Guyhasamaja generation stage from Kyabchog Lingtrul Dorjechang.

During Summer Retreat I went to Ganden. As requested by Ganden Jangtse Para Tulku, I gave an experiential commentary on the *Guru Puja* and *Mahamudra* in the Para Kangtsän assembly hall, for over five hundred Sangha including the abbots and officers, lamas and tulkus of Ganden Shartse and Jangtse.

One day that winter my root Guru Dorjechang Pabongkapa, the supreme, sent his attendant, Namdag-lag to Lhasa especially to inform me that it had been confirmed that he would begin giving a commentary on the generation and completion stages of *Cittamani Tara* starting the next day. He said that since it would be difficult for me to receive this teaching later, it would be good if I came this time and that I definitely must attend. I could even stay right at the retreat labrang, so I left quickly for Tashi Chöling.

At these teachings, I received the generation and completion stage instructions on the basis of the root scripture of the *Cittamani Tara sadhana* from Tagpu Dorjechang's vision and Rinpoche's own written commentary on the generation and completion stages. **Also, I received instructions on the *Cittamani Tara activities* (Letsog Charbeb) and, at the end of that, transmission and instructions on the approach, accomplishment, and activity teachings of Gyalchen Dorje Shugden.** Then, saying it was for the sake of auspiciousness, he also gave transmission and extensive instructions on practices of extending our life which rely upon energy-wind vajra-recitation and are connected with the practice of *White Long-Life Heruka*. As I mentioned before, I had been engrossed in performing ritual services in Lhasa, and Rinpoche knew that. Had he not called me, I would have forever lost the opportunity to receive these profound instructions. The massive kindness of being lassoed by the Father Guru's compassionate affection is as heavy as ten million Mount Merus!

Starting the previous year, Kyabchog Dorjechang had been having many disturbing types of omens in dreams and he had been saying that he wished to go somewhere else far away as if he was troubled and uneasy. Some of us among the lamas and tulkus, including Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, Demo Rinpoche, Dragri Rinpoche, and Kongpo Shartrul discussed the need for immediate stabilizing, protective rituals. We requested permission to offer a long-life puja and, in the Tashi Chöling assembly hall, all of the lamas, tulkus and geshe who had attended the teachings as well as the bikshus who were staying in solitary retreat offered an extensive long-life puja by means of the *White Long-Life Heruka practice*¹²¹. We repeatedly made the request¹²² for him to remain until the end of existence, that his body, speech, and mind may remain immutable, in the nature of the indestructible vajra, blazing with magnificence of blessings, benefit and bliss, as a great sustainer of the life of Buddha's undying teachings in general and particularly those of Je Tsongkhapa.

He said in response, 'Many of my disciples gathering together this time to perform long-life puja of Stopping the Dakinis' Invitation has definitely dispelled all types of obstacles that can be cleared!' With Vajradhara himself taking on that appearance and saying it was sufficient, it seems that he was speaking with provisional meaning in mind for the sake of easing our concerns.

I was forty-one in the year of the iron snake. In the twelfth month of the previous year, the Regent Ratreng Rinpoche had suddenly resigned from his responsibilities and Yongzin Tagdrag

¹¹⁹ The summer palace of the Dalai Lama.

¹²⁰ These included initiations and *jenangs* of Five Deity Tsugtor Drime (Ushnishavimala), Five-Deity Özer Drime (Prabhavimala) and Long-Life Amitayus of the Machig Drubpay Gyälmo-system, multiple peaceful Deities, multiple wrathful Deities, and nine white Deities that Rächungpa had brought back from India.

¹²¹ Ganachakra Long-Life Puja of Stopping the Invitation of the Dakinis by means of White Long-Life Heruka practice: when a puja is done to 'stop the invitation of the dakinis' it is to request the dakinis (celestial beings) not to invite the Lama to pass away from this world and take rebirth in another world. In more general terms, it means to clear obstacles to the Lama's life and to him being able to remain on this earth, thus prolonging his life.

¹²² *phur ts'ugs*. Literally, 'putting in the purba', the 'stake-driving-like' request, one example of which is the 'You are Guru, you are Yidam, Dakini and Protector...' request in *Guru Puja*.

Dorjechang had been enthroned as the new regent. Accordingly, on the first day of the year his actual grand enthronement was held at the great Potala Palace. For preliminaries in the morning, I was called by the Labrang Private Office to go to the Lhasa Samantabhadra Temple for in-house auspicious long-life ceremonies. I offered an explanation of the mandala, offered the auspicious signs and substances, etc., recited the words of truth for an auspicious enthronement and so forth. Everything went smoothly.

That year at the Great Prayer Festival in Lhasa supreme Kyabchog Dorjechang Pabongkapa made public distributions and served the assembly. Since I was also making public distributions, we both arrived before His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the same time one day, in the course of making the distributions. In the great assembly, lines are arranged by tulku ranking, so I was to precede Lama Dorjechang, but I started to shrink back behind him. Lama Dorjechang said, ‘There are exceptions, you must stay!’ I had to stay ahead of him but it was dreadfully uncomfortable.

At the concluding puja of the Prayer Festival, thinking about the incident, I visualized a separate image of Lama Heruka right next to where the Lama was actually benefiting beings in person as the recipient for the tenth day-tzog offerings. However, this made it difficult for when I was invoking the wisdom beings in my prayers. Instead, I visualized the root Guru as the embodiment of all refuge, and his channels and elements in the nature of the viras and dakinis, actually present in the holy body-mandala, receiving the offerings¹²³. I thought that making the offering in this way was so meaningful that on the twenty-fifth of the first month I invited sole Kyabchog – Supreme Refuge – Dorjechang and his entourage to my residence and cultivated merit by offering them a feast.

Relaxing joyfully, every syllable of each word of the nectar of his speech, emanating from holy Dharma, quenched my thirst with a festival of a hundred different flavors of supreme tastes of excellent meaning. One of the things he said was that if the present Dalai Lama did not have obstacles to his health he would definitely become similar to the supreme seventh Dalai Lama Kälzang Gyatso and that, when the time came I must serve him and that I should do so with special altruism. Later on, when I was serving as the Dalai Lama’s *Tsänzhab*¹²⁴ and gradually came to bear the title *Yongzin*, Tutor, it seemed to me that Kyabje Pabongka had been prophesying with foreknowledge the high Dharmic respect that I would receive many years in the future.

For some years, Yangzom Tsering had been requesting Kyabje Pabongka Dorjechang for outer, inner, and secret bases and thread construction for the Protector temple at the Lhalung Gatsäl residence. Lama Dorjechang told me to make the necessary preparations for that in accordance with his instructions on making bases and thread construction, so I prepared everything that I had been gradually gathering from before.

This year, directly following the Prayer Festival Great Ganachakra, he came to Lhalu Gatsäl with eight Tashi Chöling monks to assist him and engaged in extensive construction of bases and thread construction I attended the rituals. The Lhalu Tsipön (Finance Director), Gyurme Tsewang Dorje, my sister and I also received the Dorje Shugden Life Entrustment *Jenang* together at that time.

Lama Dorjechang came from Lhalu to give Lamrim teachings at Dagpo Shedrup Ling, visiting the Chagsam Tenth-Day Practice Community on the way. I came the night before the teachings were to commence and offered brocade *namjar* robes with flower and fine pearl garland design, mandala, the three bases, and *khatak*. With this, I requested mainly for his long life as the Protector of the Teachings and all beings such as myself, and also to thank him for the compilation of the complete ritual activities of Gyalchen Dorje Shugden including thread construction reliance, fulfillment, and averting rituals; tormas averting ritual, fire pujas, and prosperity ritual.

¹²³ It is a powerful meditation to visualize your root Guru as the embodiment of all enlightened beings (all refuge). In this, instance he visualizes his Guru’s body as a mandala, the celestial abode of a deity. Within this body-mandala, the elements and energy channels of this body are visualized as celestial beings (viras and dakinis) who receive the offerings he makes during the ritual and prayers.

¹²⁴ Dialectical instructor or debate instructor

Saying, 'It is unlikely that I will be able to finish that compilation. Taking what you remember with certainty and your notes as the basis...' he advised me regarding details of compiling the rest. Then, he told me, 'Now, taking what I have said as your foundation, filling out the other rituals in a similar way as suitable, you make a good compilation text of the ritual activities! Actually I am asking you because you were there for all of my work related to this Dharmapala.' I assumed that this was Lama Rinpoche's command because he knew that the vastness of his activities would not allow him to have the free time to do it. I later regretted not realizing that it revealed his intention to demonstrate his final deed of passing into nirvana. It was similar to that time in the past when, although Buddha said three times, 'If the Tathagatas wish, they can even live for eon upon eon!' Ananda was so oppressed by mara that he did not realize what Buddha was saying, and did not request him to extend his life.

After that, one day there came an urgent summons from the Norling Shözim Chung-gag for Trijang Tulku and Sera Mey Gyälrong Geshe Kyenrab Gyatso to come. When I arrived, the Regent Kyabgön Sikyong Rinpoche told me at the information office that I, Trijang Tulku, was being promoted to the status of *Yongzin*, Tutor, to take the place of Zhabdegpa *Tsänzhab* Ling Rinpoche. There was a temporary need for an additional *Tsänzhab*. If Sera Mey Gyälrong Geshe Kyenrab Gyatso was to be appointed as the *Tsänzhab*, then the Trijang Tulku's seat was to be at the head of the line in the path that Ling Rinpoche had taken. Thus, as decreed, on a virtuous astrological juncture, I went for confirmation meetings with the lay and ordained officials of the Tibetan government.

After that, on the fifteenth of the fourth month, I went with Geshe Kyenrab Gyatso to the anteroom of the Sunlight Residence at the Norbulingka Palace for morning tea with His Holiness and patrons in our first meeting as His Holiness's new *Tsänzhab*s. He made the traditional offering of the three bases, *khatak*, symbolic rice and monetary offerings. Afterwards, as ordered, I sat with those having breakfast tea. That day, I received well-wishers such as the in-house patrons who made auspicious offerings at my room.

There were several days of attending morning tea with His Holiness and additional ceremonies like the general officials of the Potala. Afterwards, during a period when the Regent Yongzin Tagdrag Rinpoche was dealing with political affairs and Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche was not free, I was told that I must listen to His Holiness's reading and memorization of recitations. Accordingly, by order of the Regent Rinpoche, at an auspicious time, I went for three base and *khatak* offerings, and to offer my initial greetings of *tashi deleg* to His Holiness.

From that time until it was decided that there would be two tutors, I served in an uncertain capacity, and my living residence was also moved to one of the *Tsänzhab* rooms at the Norbulingka. The attendants acted as if I was a very hot-tempered person and, as a result, His Holiness was a little shy towards me at first. Following advice of the Regent Rinpoche, I also acted like I was reserved and unsmiling at the beginning. Because of his young age, his skill in memorization of scripture was not perfect. However, if I just scowled slightly at his older brother, Losang Samten, as if I was accusing him of it being his trickery, that was enough; I never had to use anything like a harsh word towards the young Dalai Lama.

The pervasive lord of all mandalas and families, the glorious excellent Dorjechang Pabongkapa came from his Lhalu Gatsäl residence to Chagsam Tenth-Day Practice Community in Marlam Chushu. He then went on to Dagpo Shedrup Ling where he gave an explanatory commentary on *Jangchub Lamrim Chenmo, The Great Stages Of The Path To Enlightenment*. It was after that, on the first day of the sixth month, that I heard the news that was like thorns to my ears: that he had taken rest in the expanse of great peace of Dharmadhatu, and I was separated from my kind supreme Guru. Experiencing that unfortunate time of grief, the results of previous karma suddenly befell me. With torment that was difficult to bear, I made prayers for his passing and as many offerings as I could, such as at the Lhasa Trulpay Lhakang.

His manager Trinle Dargyä said that I must come so that they could ask me any questions regarding preparation of the precious relics and conducting the cremation. Accordingly, I went to Tashi Chöling. The Retreat and Labrang all appeared to me like a disappointed person who had lost

his luster of youth. This and Lama Dorjechang's residence looming so empty brought tears to my eyes and, as I wept, I offered a dough-ball divination before the principal image in the temple, a statue of Dagpo Lama Rinpoche. This indicated cremation for the reliquary body. I instructed Tashi Chöling's resident Lama Lozang Chöpel in the precise details of the practice of serving the precious reliquary body and sent him to Dagpo.

The Kyabgön Regent gave an instruction to the Zhöl Kagyur Printing House to carve new printing blocks of the collected works of Tuken Chökyi Nyima, Gungtang Tānpay Drönme, Je Sherab Gyatso and other texts that were rare in central Tibet. He appointed myself and Sera Me *Tzänzhab* to head the project and we served in that capacity for several years.

When the government made new replacements for the two old and worn appliqué tangkas displayed for Ganachakra processions, there came a command that I was needed to supervise the measurement of the dimensions of the Deities' forms, the meditations that the workers should do, and to check the dimensions during the actual work of production. Accordingly, I supervised this project from beginning to end, checking fastidiously and making necessary corrections, so that it was all done without mistake.

Around these years the people I met who presented themselves as my close relations, aunts, sister, nephews, grandnephews, etc., gradually grew in number. Even Ane Yangtzom who had hated my mother and her daughter acted respectfully toward me and affectionately toward my mother, and so forth. As the saying goes,

One without uncles has acquired uncles!
Material wealth, I bow to you!

It was like in that example of someone sarcastically bowing to his bag of silver that had attracted many new 'friends' and 'relatives'. And as Protector Manjusri Sakya Pandita has said,

When you are wealthy, all are friends.
Yet, when wealth declines, all are enemies.
Having long gathered at the jeweled island,
Once the lake dries up, all will abandon it!

Similarly, some people seemed to act in coarse ordinary ways during my ups and downs of fortune, befriending or abandoning me, respectively.

In the year of the water horse I turned forty-two. On the twelfth day of the first month, at the Lhasa Trulnang Cathedral when the Regent Tagdrag Rinpoche gathered together the abbots and masters to offer intermediate and novice ordinations to the young Dalai Lama, I acted as the *Drogdenpa*, the Assistant, who helps the Sangha take ordination.

As soon as the Ganachakra was concluded, it was the inner tradition for the new Sangha of Gyume Dratsang who had received lay or complete Pratimoksha vows to draw from their general fund to sponsor distributions, make an offering to the capital fund, and to sponsor initiations and transmissions at the traditional Dharma celebration. This year, as urged by the new bikshus, I offered the great initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka, including the days of preliminaries. This was conducted at the Lhasa Gyume Dratsang's Changlochen Assembly Hall, for all of the Gyume assembly, the Sangha of Gyutö Dratsang and the three monastic seats who came, totaling a gathering of over two thousand,

During the summer retreat, the Regent Rinpoche commanded that the indexes for the printed and hand-written scriptures of Indian and Tibetan scholars and siddhas, non-partisan, of all lineages, which were kept at the Norbulingka and Potala Palaces needed to be checked; he also advised that new indexes needed to be made for the vast numbers of additional collected works and miscellaneous texts that were gradually accumulating. Accordingly, I worked for over two months arranging detailed indexes, inserting titles and classifying texts as complete collected works; miscellaneous texts of Sutra such as *Madyamaka*, *Paramita*, *Vinaya*, or *Abhidharma*, etc.,

Dialectics, Lamrim or Lojong; or Tantric texts such as rituals of the various tantra sets of the old and new translation schools and Tantric commentaries; biographies, Dharma and general histories, Grammar, Poetry, Medicine, or Astrology.

During the eighth month at the isolated abode of Tashi Chöling, Kyabchog Dorjechang's manager Trinle Dargye took the responsibility of constructing a new reliquary stupa for his sacred remains. When it was well completed we offered mantras inside and finally, with myself acting as vajra master together with the renounced bikshus, we performed extensive consecration by means of Vajra Bhairava for three days, doing nothing the 'easy way' and everything worthy of doing, precisely and perfectly. As I was instructing the sponsors during the concluding part of the consecration ritual I remembered the Guru's kindness and sang a request for the swift return of the supreme emanation as a *doha* called the *Long Sad Song Of The Child Wandering On The Plain*.

As said in the part of the Kalachakra Root Tantra called "*Fully Seizing The Guru's Qualities*",

Whatever virtue is created for the deceased,
By close relations they have left behind,
It will ripen and follow them wherever they are
Like a calf following after its mother.

Likewise, if disciples with faith and devotion,
Remember with certainty the anniversary
Of the Gurus' passing, and make offerings,
They will fully perfect his holy intentions
And equal the life deeds of the Guru.

And Geshe Potowa said,

Drom did funeral services for this old man nineteen times!
He's hoping he'll meet with it in future lives!

Accordingly, I established a capital fund for offerings and distributions to be made to the general assembly of Tashi Chöling bikshus every year on the first day of every month with *Guru Puja Ganachakra* in connection with Self Entry Into The Heruka Chakrasamvara Mandala. This year, at the end of the festival, at the urging of Kenchen Dönpälwa (or Tashi Lingpa Kyenrab Wangchug, as he was known), I gave an explanatory commentary for a gathering of about three thousand lamas, tulkus, and Sangha in the Lhasa Meru Dratsang assembly hall. This time, I taught on the *Swift Path (Nyurlam)*, *Jampel Shel-lung (Teachings Of Manjusri)* and *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment teachings*, extensively, including the *Bodhicitta Puja*.

When I was forty-three, in the year of the water sheep, in the third month, at the insistence of Pabongka Labrang's manager Trinle Dhargyā, for an assembly of about 3500 lay and ordained people at the Lhasa Meru Dratsang assembly hall, I gave an experiential commentary for about a month on the combined *Swift Path* and *Teachings of Manjusri* Lamrim Teachings. This also included the Bodhicitta Puja in the Meru stone courtyard at the conclusion of the teachings.

After that, at the urging of the Chant Leader of Namgyäl Dratsang, Trimön Chötzä Thubten Desheg and the Ritual Assistant Kälsang Wangyäl-lag I offered further teachings at the Namgyäl Dratsang Secret Mantra Gatsäl Assembly Hall in the Potala Palace, for a gathering of over seven hundred. I gave a fifteen day commentary on *Lamrim Delam (The Blissful Path)* and, at the conclusion, gave great initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka, Yamantaka and the Great Compassionate One and *jenangs* such as those of Mahakala, Dharmaraja, Paldän Lhamo, Vaisravana, Four-Faced Mahakala, and Chamsing.

During summer retreat, at Norbulingka Palace, I performed the ritual deeds of a resident lama before going on to Kyishö Yab-pü Ratsag Hermitage and spending three days there. Before

the statue of Vajrayogini, blazing with magnificent light of blessings that the great Pandit Naropa had used in support of his meditation, I made offerings in connection with the Vajrayogini Mandala Practice Offerings and Ganachakra. I also made distributions to the Sangha there and offered a capital fund to sponsor monthly Practice Offerings on the tenth day of the waxing moon.

Requested by the sponsor, the nun Kyenrab Lhamo, for about a hundred lay and ordained people including the residents and others from the area, I gave the Four Initiation Sindhura Blessing of Vajrayogini. I had several good dreams at that time but I've forgotten what they were now.

For that matter, during my youth and later on as well, I would sometimes hear in my dreams prophecies of varying lengths spoken to me by Deities, Lamas, or beings with ordinary appearances, or I would be shown scrolls of written prophecies. If I told someone about it the next day, I would immediately forget about it. If I didn't tell anyone about it, I would not forget and, like the example of a 'pig's head feast,' it would seem real, yet, apart from a few times here and there; usually it would be faulty and would not occur, seemingly colored by obscurity created by *kor*¹²⁵ or degeneration.

In the fall, having excused myself to the Dalai Lama and Regent, with a small entourage including my attendant Lhabu, Paldän and Gyume Trehor Ngagram Tsultrim Dargyä, I went on pilgrimage to the sacred sites in Penyu in central Tibet, so blessed by the early great Kadampa masters. We took the *Go* pass to Penpo arriving at Langtang (seat of Geshe Langri Tangpa) Nalanda (the seat of Omniscient Rongtönpa), the Reliquary Stupa of Patsab Lotsawa, the Gyäl (Victory) Temple built by Nanam Dorje Wangchug, an emanation of Maitreya, Ganden Chökor in Tangsag, the Reliquary Stupa of Geshe Sharawa, and so forth. Through the auspiciousness of Patsab Lotsawa having translated the *Tsedo* (Longevity) Sutra, if one circumambulates the Patsab Stupa it was renowned to dispel obstacles to longevity, and there were many people circumambulating. As it was this Lotsawa who translated *Glorious Chandrakirti's Madyamakavatara* (Guide To The Middle Way) into the Tibetan language, which caused the *Prasangika* view to flourish greatly in Tibet, I also circumambulated, accumulating a moderate number of rounds with aspirations for realizing the highest teachings – the profound view.

Zimo Dorjechang Jampa Kunga Tenzin Päl Zangpo was a bearer of a treasury of instructions of the close lineage of training in Secret Mantra of the Sakyas coming through the previous great Pabongka Kyabchog Dorjechang. Zimo Rinpoche knew that there existed *jenangs*, transmissions, and oral instructions for the seventeen expressions of Mahakala. However, when he first came to Nyangdren Chuzang Retreat and met Kyabje Pabongka, appearing aged and senile, he acted doubtful and left these aside, not taking interest in any of it. On the night before Zimo Rinpoche was to leave the next day, he dreamt of a great throne upon which was a terrifying pile of an old man's white hair, mustache and beard. It was such a wrathful sign of Mahakala's displeasure at his not receiving the Mahakala instructions that he requested the complete initiations, transmissions and instructions the next day. I had heard about this from Lama Dorjechang himself, and about how he had then gradually given him all of the instructions, so I had faith in him. However, because Zimo Rinpoche had always remained permanently in Penpo, this visit was the only that I ever met him.

At this time, I went to visit Nalanda Zimo Labrang with all of its holy objects and I had the good fortune to meet Rinpoche in person. I also requested profound Dharma teachings from him. He happily accepted and gave us an abundant feast of food and drink. Also, as I invited by Chogyä Labrang near the same area, I went there and enjoyed an informal meeting with the present Chogyä Trichen Rinpoche.

I offered transmission of *The Foundation Of All Good Qualities* to the Sangha at Tangsag Ganden Chökor. There was also a scripture of *Drelpa Dönsel* (The Clear Illumination Of The Meaning Commentary) of Guyhasamaja that had been used by the glorious Chandrakirti that I saw there.

¹²⁵ Inappropriately used offerings of the faithful.

Although the emanation of Ganden Trichen Jampel Tsultrim, predecessor of the present day Kamlung Tulku, and his elder brother by the same father had both passed away, I went to Kamlung Retreat, seat of the great Kamlungpa, at the insistent invitation of his attendants. I spent three days there and visited the Kamlungpa Reliquary Stupa. Unfortunately though, because some of the abodes and hermitages of the early Kadampa masters such as Geshe Neuzerpa were scattered about in various mountain caves, there was no way I could visit them all.

Invited by the aristocratic family of Töger Lhading of central Tibet, going by way of Pända Jeri Tagtse, I arrived at the Lhading settlement. Since it happened to be the tenth day of the month, I offered Ganachakra in connection with Vajrayogini Self-Initiation together with the Gongmo Lhading family. At the request of the sponsors, I also sang this doha:

Up in pure Keajra, Akanishta's realm,
Beautiful maiden, graceful Mother of Conquerors,
With a display of countless emanations,
Acts as the fortunate's guide to Kechari.

In the sixty-four "E-sphere" Dakas' city,
Supremely beautiful smiling Chandali,
Agilely, playfully, dancing like lightning
Enjoys sport of EVAM spontaneous with bliss.

Mind 'midst the eight petals in avadhuti,
Free of all projections, Clear Light's Bliss Goddess,
Magical Lady of Five Lights' beautiful play
Puts on show of inconceivable Union!

How pleasant, this profound, most secret swift path!
How blissful, this gathering with pure samaya!
In glorious Ganachakra's blissful Union,
This connection transcends meeting and parting!

I stayed there a few days and gave a Vajrayogini blessing for a large number of people including the aristocratic family and monks of some of the hermitages. I also gave Avalokitesvara *jenang* and Long Life Initiation for the local people.

I was invited to Tangkya Monastery, so I went there and offered great initiation of Thirteen Deity Yamantaka for the Sangha. From Lhading, at the wishes of the Marlam Pagmo Chöde Sangha, I went and performed consecration of their temple, etc., and then, by way of Dromtö, arrived back in Lhasa. At the previously mentioned spiritual centers I made as many offerings and public distributions at the monasteries, as I could.

I turned forty-four in the year of the wood monkey. In the fourth month, at the behest of Kunling Tatsag Hotogtu Rinpoche, at the Kundeling assembly hall, for a gathering of over a thousand, I offered explanatory instructions on *Lamrim Chenmo* for a month.

In the summer, at the urging of Taiji Shänkawa Gyurme Sönam Tobgyä, I gave great initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka Chakrasamvara and Vajra Bhairava, including preliminary days, to an assembly of over three thousand, at the Lhasa Meru Assembly Hall, for five days. This was to generate merit for the sake of his deceased son Dechen Gaway Wangchug.

In the eighth month, I went to hot springs in Tölung as a treatment for my health. Because this time coincided with the glorious Gyume Dratsang monks taking the spring waters in the late summer in Lung, I was invited by the abbots, lamas, and officers to the Yarlam Tantric Center,

where I went to offer some transmissions and teachings¹²⁶, and public distribution to the assembly. I stayed at the hot springs two weeks for the treatment. While there, I met some people from the house where my previous incarnation was born in Tölung Ragkor and made some small gifts to them.

On the way back from Tölung, at the spontaneous request of Tsering Drölkar, (the sister in the Bayer family who stayed at the Mäntö residence), I gave approximately one month of experiential instructions on the combined *Lamrim Nyurlam* and *Jampäl Shälung* texts including Bodhicitta Puja at the Lhasa Shide Dratsang assembly hall. I offered this to a gathering of about 2700 Sangha, including lamas, tulkus, geshe and trainees from each of the Three Monastic Seats, Gyume and Gyutö Tantric Colleges, and each of the meditation retreats.

I sent offerings to the local monastery Chatreng Dratsang of four fine large quilted brocade pillar assembly banners to decorate the four tall pillars in the assembly hall. These were with tiger skin and a large dragon design fabric with cheppu-shaped banner heads. I also offered a complete *Kangyur* with scripture covers to be offered to the Dongsum Rig-nga family.

Whenever scholars do not give up pride of name and position to speak with eloquence, it is difficult for the river of realizations to flow upward to the peak of pride. Therefore, that winter I invited one of the masters from the Lhasa Mäntsikang (Medical College), from Tölung Yangpachen, Gelong Paldän Gyältsän, to my office on the upper floor of the school of culture in the Potala Palace. Together with Ganden Shartse Tzemä Tulku, I received from him various teachings and instructions¹²⁷. As I was hoping to complete the illustrative examples, other factors distracted us and some were left over.

That year, in the tenth month, the residents of Lhundrub Tzong in Penpo, the fortress of Kändrung Chöpel Thubten got into hand-to-hand combat with the loan collectors from Sera Je Dratsang because of a disagreement over the amount of grain owed in interest on loans, as a result of which some of the residents died. Kändrung petitioned the government in the name of the Regent who ordered six secretaries to conduct a thorough investigation. When the ringleaders were about to be summoned and investigated, it coincided with the wood bird year's Great Prayer Festival and Tsemön Ling Hotogtu's examination assembly to which the Gyälwang Rinpoche – The Dalai Lama – had been invited to preside. With the abbots, officers, and the assemblies of both the Sera Je and Tantric Colleges present, the Great Prayer Festival and the public tea service, etc., had been held off for three days.

After the government high official council had delivered an edict clarifying who was innocent and who was at fault in the matter, the Great Prayer Festival could at least begin as usual. However, when the great prayers and Ganachakra were completed, the specific verdict came down that the abbots of Sera Je and the Tantric College were both expelled and that some of the officers and the interest collectors were expelled from the assembly and banished far away to some castle fortresses. This resulted in many of the Sangha of Sera Je and Tantric Colleges denouncing the Kyabgön Regent Rinpoche and so forth. The actions of one or two bad individuals thus resulted in the worst kind of heinous karma.

At that time, as well as at the time that Ratreng Rinpoche demoted some of the government monk officials from their posts, whenever we began rituals when there had been a breaking of sacred bonds between gurus and disciples, it was unbearable to me. However, no matter how much I honestly and altruistically offered preventative suggestions to Tagdrag Rinpoche's manager Tänpa Tharchin, I couldn't stop it from happening. As the saying goes,

¹²⁶ These included the Sangha reading transmission of two of the three uncommon text-books of glorious Gyumä Tantric College on Guyhasamaja known as the Three Dolagyuma (Lineages Passed Down Hand-To-Hand: the Guyhasamaja Instructions On The Five Stages Dolagyuma) and the Explanatory Dolagyuma.

¹²⁷ These included illustrated 'pointing out' instructions on composition and poetry based on the Sarasvati Grammar Sutra and the Grammar Commentary Hundred-Fold Sunlight by Getse Pandita Gyurme Tsewang Chogdrub up through the fifth chapter. Also, the root text, Mine Of Composition by Pandita Rinchen Jungne Shiwa and its commentaries by Mindroling Lochen and Lama Lhagsam.

No matter how much you try to stop the waterfall,
You can only wish that the water would run backwards!

In the year of the wood cock when I turned forty-five, the supreme government ordered vast renovations of the Drepung Ganden Podrang as it was many years old and quite dilapidated. During this time, old sections of the western peak of the palace were to be torn down and rebuilt. Because the sealed shrine room of the Goddess Paldän Lhamo near the door of the Dalai Lama's residence was creating inauspicious problems, and because some people who took *khataks* there to offer had become sick and other inauspicious signs had occurred, the Regent Rinpoche ordered that I should perform a ritual to move the sacred objects.

Accordingly, after the conclusion of the Lhasa Ganachakra I went to Drepung with ritual monks of Namgyäl Dratsang such as the chant leader and masters and made Paldän Lhamo offerings and propitiations for several days. The night before we were going to move the shrine I dreamt of a huge assembly hall filled to the brim with effigies, many large old and new tormas, and many other things so that, not finding a place to step, I could not find any way to pass! At that moment a beautiful young lady came and, with a smiling expression, showed me a way through. I took it as a sign that the Goddess was delighted that her shrine was being moved.

When we actually moved it the next day, with the Lord Chamberlain there to represent the Dalai Lama, opening the door to the Protector Shrine at first rendered all of the others incapable of approaching or handling any of the objects. I did not have any confidence of the view or skill in meditation, but because I had at least completed Paldän Lhamo retreat with mantra recitation and felt confidence from the dream of the previous night, I picked up several of the *khataks* and representational objects and moved them to the Sunlight Residence, while reciting the mantras of the Yidam and the Goddess.

After that, the other participants in the ritual, chant leader, masters, construction official Känchung, the Lord Chamberlain and so forth all took out the huge amount of representational objects, visual offerings, weapons and armor, and so forth that had gradually accumulated over many years. After that, there was a supporting base for the silver human-adult-sized principal statue of the Goddess that consisted of an ocean of blood, a mule, and a backdrop of fire that was about a full story high, plus two statues of the *Dongchen*-headed-entourage that were about the size of eight year old children. When the statues were originally made they had been made separately, however, so it did not seem that it would be very difficult to move them. When we separated the statue, mule, and ocean of blood and brought them to the eastern residence, I had the Namgyäl monks perform the extensive invitation chants with the ritual music. All those in charge of the moving – such as myself, the palace renovation official Känchung Ngawang Zöpa and the Lord Chamberlain, with some of the best Lamas, Tulkus, and Geshes of Drepung's four Dratsangs – arranged extensive offerings and tormas with which we offered *Kangso* (a Fulfillment and Restoration Ritual) and Ganachakra, as the statue was brought out and reassembled at the Residence.

There was a large box of various tangkas in the Protector Shrine room which we opened to find an ancient tangka representing Ra Lotsawa's meditational Deity Vajra Bhairava with stacked heads painted in accordance with the Ra Lotsawa's Kadro Nyengyu (Dakini Oral Lineage) instructions, as well as a copy of it that the Supreme Fifth Dalai Lama had his tantric assistant Trinlā Namgyäl paint. So both the original and the copy were there. There was also a tangka representing Drogön Chögyäl Pagpa's meditational Deity, Gönpo Gur (Tent Mahakala) painted standing straight up on both feet, as well as many tangkas depicting amazing stories, like one of the Rishi Vishnu painted by Zurchen Chökyi Rangdröl. There was also a tangka representing Tent Mahakala, the meditational Deity of the early great Sakya masters and several images of Pälgön Zhäl, Glorious Face Mahakala.

Inside a torma box there was a series of several prayers and propitiations composed by the Sixth Dalai Lama Tsangyang Gyatso and two or three requests to the Protector Lamo Tsangpa (Brahma Of The Pass) for prophecies on various temporal matters, along with the answers that had

been given. I also saw a collection of various interesting and amazing scrolls such as some writings given to Gesar on awareness in conduct of life-style. The hand-written composed verses, of moderately good calligraphy, gave a good impression.

At the same time that the palace renovation was proceeding, the Gyälway Podrang (Victorious Palace) of Gepel Retreat was also being renovated. I therefore went to Gepel Retreat and performed consecration, building ritual and ritual for moving the devas and nagas. During all of these activities neither I, nor any of the other workers, experienced the slightest kind of disturbance. I think it could only have been accomplished through the enlightening influence of the Three Supreme Jewels and Protectors.

Later, when the Drepung Palace renovation was well completed, I went there with the Namgyäl Dratsang ritual monks and, for the principal image of Paldän Lhamo and the object-bases, as we had done before at the Door Threshold Protector Shrine in the Potala, we invoked Her presence and, for seven days, performed extensively thanksgiving offerings and Ganachakra. Although there did not seem to have been a thread-construction in the previous protector room, a new one had been ordered. Accordingly, I created a complete new thread construction and performed an extensive thread-construction ritual.

That summer, as requested by the Tse Potala Namgyäl Dratsang's Kusho Tserab-lag for the sake of his deceased mother and benefactor's merits, I gave an experiential Lamrim commentary on the basis of the combined texts of Lamrim Nyurlam and Jampäl Shelung. I offered these teachings to a gathering of over a thousand including the complete assembly of Namgyäl Dratsang at the Jarag Lingkay Assembly Hall where the Namgyäl Dratsang Sangha were enjoying the opening of the boundaries at the conclusion of their summer retreat. At the end, on the day of the Bodhicitta Puja, the Lhasa Darpa Dharmapala Jowo Chingkarwa, invoked into his oracle medium, praised me, congratulating me on the *Lamrim* Teachings I was conducting. Further, he gave a prophecy to the Namgyäl Dratsang officials that, from year to year henceforth, they must take responsibility to request teachings such as *Lamrim* and instructions on the generation and completion stages of Guyhasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka, one after the other, without any break.

At the end of autumn that year, requested by Tsering Drölkar, the lady of the Bayer family I have mentioned before, I gave extensive commentary on a combination of the profound path of *Guru Puja* and Mahamudra at Lhasa Zhide Dratsang, for over two thousand Sangha. These had already received great Yidam initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka and Yamantaka, including lamas, tulkus and geshe of Sera, Drepung, Gyütö and Gyümä Tantric Colleges,

In the winter Kyabgön Regent Rinpoche appointed Gomang Gungru Gyatso Ling Tulku as an additional *Tsänzhab* and he received the Kände Cheka seat. I was promoted to the title of *Darhän* next in line to the rank of *Tzasag*, *Ta Lama*, and *Taiji*, etc. In accordance with previous tradition, I went for audience with the Dalai Lama and Regent in the new capacity, with all the ceremonies going auspiciously without mistakes.

When I turned forty-six, in the year of the fire dog, during the Great Prayer Festival in Lhasa, at the ancient Meru Castle the great Dharmaraja Nechung was invoked into his medium. The Dharmapala offered mandala, the three bases and *khatak*, and with a delighted expression said, 'At this time, when the Peerless Guide, Son Of Suddhodhana's precious teachings have so greatly fallen into decline, it is extremely good that you, Lord, are so extensively teaching the nectar of the vast profound Dharma to fortunate disciples!'

After the Prayer Festival was over, the Dalai Lama's actual study of dialectics and reasoning was to begin, as by tradition, in the Drepung Kungarawa (Debate Courtyard) Garden. But as a further elaboration of the preliminaries, an auspicious commencement ceremony was held at his Tse Potala Ganden Yangtse residence. His Holiness sat in the center while the Regent Tagdrag Rinpoche, Yongzin Ling Rinpoche and I, Gyatso Ling, and Sera Mey Geshe Kyenrab Gyatso sat in rows to the left and right. We recited together the *Ka Nyam Ma* (Equal To The Sky) and *Expression Of The Names Of Manjusri*. Because Gyatso Ling and Sera Mey Geshe-lag's voices were so dissimilar, one high and one very low, it was so cacophonous that Yongzin Ling Rinpoche burst out laughing. That made His Holiness laugh and then I, too, could not keep from laughing and the

recitation was almost completely disrupted! This made the Regent Rinpoche scowl, yet even while his wrath was frightening, there was no way the laughter could be repressed and all who were there, including the attendant, chamberlain, ritual assistant and steward also started laughing. That uncontrollable laughter was actually an auspicious sign that His Holiness's study would reach the highest level of mastery.

From that time onwards, except for breaks such as on days when we attended government functions, the three of us *Tsänzhabs* took turns every afternoon going to discuss *Dura*¹²⁸ (Collected Topics) with His Holiness. We could also be excused in special cases when we had our own affairs we had to attend to, such as giving teachings and so forth.

Regarding the supreme incarnation of the peerlessly kind, sole supreme father Dorjechang Pabongkapa, Nagshö Tagpu Rinpoche's visions, pronouncements of the Panglung Gyalchen Dorje Shugden oracle and Gadong Dharmapala, and my own many repeated checks all coincided and he was definitely found. The thus identified young incarnation, born in Ütö Drigung, was brought to the remote Tashi Chöling hermitage. When he was enthroned upon the seat of his predecessor, during the waxing moon cycle of the second month, I also went especially for the occasion and made the series of offerings that began with the oceanic pure land mandala array.

In the waxing moon of the third month, as requested by the group of newly ordained bikshus of Gyume Tantric College, I offered five days of great initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka with preliminary days for a large gathering of Sangha at Gyume Dratsang's assembly hall. These included primarily monks from Gyume and Gyutö Tantric Colleges. Also, I gave a commentary and transmission of the Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion.

The Regent Sikyong Tadrags Dorjechang decreed certain texts and rituals¹²⁹ needed to be recompiled. I accomplished this. Likewise, since there were many discrepancies between the previous hand-written text for the *Dharmaraja Vajra Arrow Si-Spirit Suppression Ritual* composed by Dragkar Ngarampa and the small practice book that the Gyume Tantric College Sangha were using, they petitioned the Regent Rinpoche for a new edition. He did not have the time to do it because of his other duties, so he commanded that I should do it. Accordingly, using the general Yamantaka texts and relying particularly closely upon the chapters of Dragkar Ngarampa's teachings, I compiled the *Dorje Rirab Tsegpay Trulkor (The Emanated Stacked Wheels Of Vajra Mountains)*, ritual recitation for the suppression of *Si-Spirits*.

In the early summer, as requested by a resident of Lhasa who stayed below the meat market, Män Lhamo Tsering, to dedicate roots of virtue for the deceased Tsewang Norbu, a practitioner with lay ordination, I gave twenty-five days of instructions on *Lamrim Nyurlam (The Swift Path Stages Of The Path To Enlightenment)*. This was given to a gathering of over three thousand, under a tent canopy pitched in the Namgyäl Dratsang's Jarag field. And at the conclusion of that, at the request of the Namgyäl Dratsang General Assembly, for over a thousand who had already received great initiation of Vajra Bhairava, I gave fifteen days of profound instructions on the generation and completion stage yogas of Thirteen Deity Yamantaka and instructions on the three dimensional mandala.¹³⁰

Although Namgyäl Dratsang certainly had fine traditions of painting and sand-painting, they did not have a tradition of transmitting instructions on the construction of three dimensional mandalas. After discussing the situation with Kuchar Chöpön, Känpo Lozang Samten, Lobpön Tänpa Dhargyä and others, we instituted transmission and instructions for the construction of three dimensional mandalas of Heruka, Guyhasamaja, and Yamantaka. Responsibility for being the first teacher was shouldered by Gyume Trehor Ngarampa Tsultrim Dargyä. Accordingly, about eight

¹²⁸ *bsdus gra*

¹²⁹ The Tagdrag Sangha's general Sutra and Tantra recitations such as the three basic Vinaya rituals, and especially the extensive Geleg Charbeb consecration ritual in the exact procedure of glorious Gyumä Tantric College; the self-generation, front generation, vase and initiation rituals; and fire pujas of Secret Assembly Lokeshvara.

¹³⁰ These were with occasionally interspersed instructions on such things as the visualizations for Great Torma Ritual, Drugchuma (the Dharmaraja Torma), and Fire Pujas, etc and explanations of everything I knew about the practices without concealing anything.

Namgyäl Dratsang monks – including the master and chant leader – completed the study and created new mandalas at Ganden Jangtse and Drepung that were very well made.

That year, during the sixth month, I had an extremely heavy intestinal sickness for about twenty days. At the conclusion of that, I was taken by a water based illness and came very close to death. But I was treated by the head of the great Tibetan Government Medical-Astrological Institute, Känchen Kyenrab Norbu the Supreme, like Yutogpa, the King of Medicine, and His Holiness's doctor Känchung Thubten Lhundrub. On the basis of that, with ritual services being done, and not being lax in taking care of my health, I finally recovered in the ninth month of the year and could at last go outdoors again.

In the winter, at the request of Trehor Zhitse Gyapon family ritual master named Ngawang Dorje, one of the best instructors at Sera Je, and his brother Döndrub Namgyäl, I began giving a Lamrim Nyurlam experiential commentary to about fifty at my office at the Norbulingka. After a few days, because there were several Sangha students from Sera Je among the attendees, the chief steward Känchung Thubtän Legmön came to my residence one day and said that my giving Lamrim teachings at the Norbulingka was like the metaphor of locking a thief inside the house¹³¹, and that it would be good if I took a break for a while. As a result, I moved back to my room at Lhasa and finished the rest of the Lamrim commentary for about a hundred aspirants. Because it went to the Regent Rinpoche, although he did not exhibit any concern, it must have been the steward's own timid narrow-mindedness anticipating possible problems.

In the year of the fire-boar when I was forty-seven, there was conflict between the parties of the ex-regent Ratreng Rinpoche and the acting regent Tagdrag Rinpoche. Although they were both undisputed great beings who had attained high abandonments and realizations, to subdue trainees in accordance with their needs, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas will display whatever sort of illusory emanation will subdue the the trainees, whether pure or impure, even of demons or rakshas. Although there is one ultimate reality, in order to appear to common trainees, it is as Protector Manjusri Sakya Pandita said,

One who always strives to be divisive
Will separate even stable friends;
Will not stone boulders be cracked
If they are always struck by water?

For Tagdrag Rinpoche there were those such as his manager Tänpa Tharchin, steward Thubten Legmön, and Kändrung Ngawang Namgyäl; and for Ratreng Rinpoche there were those such as his brother the Tzasag, Zhide Nyungnä Tulku, Sera Je Kardo Tulku, several attendants who fabricated a schism and through various conditions such as many distorted petitions both early and late, it became as if the minds of these great lamas were not of one vessel.

The first ritual they performed on behalf of Ratreng Rinpoche, which, on the contrary, brought ruin upon themselves, was one which had an aspect of seeking to harm the Regent Tagdrag Rinpoche's body¹³². The Regent and Kashag therefore took joint action on the evening of the twenty-third of the second month and, with Kalön Zurkangpa Wangchen Geleg, Lhalungpa Tsewang Dorje and a rather large contingent of officers and soldiers from the Drazhi (Four Corner) Army Camp, suddenly brought Gyälzur Rinpoche to Ratreng.

This situation did not come to light until the next day, around midday. I was staying at my room in Lhasa at the time so the Kalön and Lama Rampawa Thubten Kunkyen sent me a secret message that it would be best if I came immediately to the Potala. Since the Kalön and Lama themselves had to stay at the Potala for several days they said that I should prepare to stay there also, and I went immediately.

That night, by order of the Kashag, Ratreng Labrang and Yabzhi Punkang Castle were locked and sealed shut and Ratreng Tzasag, Lüzur and Punkang Kazur Gung Tashi Dorje, father

¹³¹ Evidently the steward felt Kyabje Trijang Dorjechang was taking monks away from Sera Monastery!

¹³² This "rituals" refers to some form of black, harmful magic.

and son, were summoned to the Potala. The two officers and their assistants were simultaneously exiled and taken into custody in the prison in the eastern great turret of the Potala. The next day the houses of more partisans of Ratreng Rinpoche including Kardo Tulku, Zhide Nyungnä Tulku, and Trehor Sadu were shut down and locked. Kardo Tulku and Sadu Gyurme were also taken into custody at the great eastern turret. When Nyungnä Lama was about to be arrested he secretly escaped and took his own life with a gun.

On the twenty-seventh of the second month, Ratreng Rinpoche was taken into custody and, taken in a counterclockwise direction around the Potala Palace by way of Pelpogo La Pass, in front of Sera Monastery and the Tsesum field, and brought through the eastern door below the Potala into the great eastern turret. Large forces were stationed to stand guard. In order for Ratreng Rinpoche to be questioned before an extensive gathering of the Tibetan Assembly he was brought under heavy guard up and down the eastern Deyang steps of the Potala. I saw him from my office in the Potala. To see that great lama authority, who had before traveled in such magnificence with an entourage of many public and private attendants, to be now subjected to the strife of having to undergo trial and be judged by the assembly every day without even one attendant, surrounded by soldiers, made me unhappy, but all means to help had been exhausted.

The night of the seventeenth of the third month we heard the news that Ratreng Rinpoche had expired in prison. The previous day, the assembly convening to decide Ratreng Rinpoche's appeal had not been able to come to agreement, so I wondered if Rinpoche had passed on with conscious free will, out of fear that he would receive a heavy sentence. I had no other idea what else could have caused him to pass on so suddenly. Later on, there were many rumors that he had been secretly murdered by the prison wardens that kept him in custody. Ratreng Rinpoche's brother the Tzasag and Kardo Tulku were chained and held in the outer and inner jails at the Norbulingka bodyguard military camp and given heavy sentences such as life imprisonment by all of the major and minor officials who again met in fully assembly. At first Pungkang Kazur father and son and Sadu Gyurme were imprisoned just on suspicion of their heavy connection with Ratreng Rinpoche, but they were later cleared of complicity in the black magic and were released from prison to continue comfortably as before.

At that time, most of Sera Je Dratsang officials had no power over policies and many of the Dratsang such as Tsenya Tulku gathered to demonstrate at the seat of the government. Because it created quite a disturbance, the army threatened to raze Sera to the ground. They were urged to do so by Lower Kalön Chögyäl Nyima, Magchi Tzasag Kälzang Tsultrim, Kändrung Ngawang Namgyäl, Tsipön Ngapöpa Ngawang Jigme and Namlingpa Päljor Jigme who went to the Four Corners Army Camp. This caused the Sera Je Sangha to show respect so that, at least, the fighting did not become extremely widespread.

At Ratreng Monastery, because the Labrang attendants killed seventeen of the Four Corner Army Camp soldiers that had been sent to lock down the labrang, the government sent a very large force with the Commander in Chief Kälzang Tsultrim and Northern Commander Zhakaba Losäl Döndrub. Their shelling of the Ratreng monastic seat and temple was very effective. The Ratreng Labrang belongings, which rivaled the treasury of Tzambhala¹³³, were seized and carried off by the soldiers, and, at the wishes of the government, the labrang was completely annihilated.

Thinking about this unstable nature of samsaric happiness and sorrow, endlessly and constantly fluxuating as fast as lightning, made me want to forcefully renounce the essenceless things of this life and immediately go into the mountains like an injured deer, to soak myself in the nectar of the three isolations¹³⁴ and stay with the Four Orders of the Aryas, striving for full attainment in this very lifetime through actual training of body, speech, and mind in practice of the three isolations. But because of being tightly bound by the insistent appearances and attachments of this life, I was unable to sever that continuum of activities that distracts oneself and fails others, and I had to leave it aside.

¹³³ *rmug 'tzin dwang po' bang mtzod*

¹³⁴ Isolation of body, speech, and mind, high realizations of the generation and completion stages of highest yoga tantra.

Because of the situation just described, many ordinary beings on the side of both the Regent Rinpoche and Ratreng Rinpoche blasphemed and denied one of these lamas. However, if you consider it in terms of being a display for the sake of trainees and the powerful karma being dealt with, there is no certainty that those ordinary beings actually created the karma of forsaking the guru. Similar events occurred in the lives of Arya Maudgyalyana, the Arhat Charka, the sovereign Tri Rälpächen and others, and it is the kind of situation in which one needs to be very careful not to impute fault or pass judgment upon the actions of holy beings. Again, as said in the *Gathering Of Friends*¹³⁵,

If those who have done no wrong,
Rely upon others that act harmfully,
It will rouse suspicion even upon them
And bad reputation will spread.
Those who rely upon the unsuitable
Will be faulted for that mistake.

As said, Kyabgön Sikyong Tagdrag Dorjechang the supreme, the Regent, was a great Tantric Master, a ‘*Turner Of The Wheel Of Dharma*’ of the sacred ocean of mandalas. The ex-regent Ratreng Rinpoche also, even at a young age, when he was living in Dagpo, drove a wooden stake into a stone boulder and left imprints of his feet in stone. The artifacts of those miraculous deeds were kept in the main Ratreng shrine room for anyone to see with their own eyes.

Both clearly displayed signs of being holy beings, generally speaking. However, because of the lesser merit of living beings, and because of the previously mentioned bad attendants of Tagdrag Rinpoche and Ratreng Rinpoche and those who followed their leads had their hearts intoxicated by mara, with mistaken bad actions daring to destroy happiness of this and future lives, they became involved in an unbearable mass of negativity towards very powerful beings and, in particular, towards the Guru and Three Jewels. Thinking about how the excellent deeds of such a great guru who is a friend to all living beings can be misinterpreted in the eyes of ordinary beings and polluted by their bad attendants, it seems to me that it disparages even Lord Buddha who, thinking of the welfare of beings in pure and impure worlds, in many sutras spoke of the need to purify samsara.

In the summer, requested by the benefactor, Trehor Sadutsang family, at the Jarag Linga field in front of the main assembly hall of Namgyäl Dratsang, for an assembly of over three thousand people, I gave commentary on the *Guru Puja*. This was on the basis of the root text and the great commentary by Kachen Yeshe Gyältsän. Further, on the basis of the Panchen Lama Lozang Chökyi Gyältsän’s Mahamudra Root Commentary, I also presumed¹³⁶ to give extensive commentary on the Ganden Tradition of Mahamudra.

After that, I received commentaries and transmissions from Kumbum Minyag Rinpoche of various sacred practices¹³⁷.

In the autumn of that year, His Holiness the Dalai Lama the Supreme, following tradition, entered the Dharma at the monastic seat. And, in order to begin his study of logic and dialectics, he went to Drepung with extensive ceremony. I went in the entourage and stayed in an office at the Kungarawa Dharma courtyard. Following previous tradition, the Regent Sikyong Rinpoche also appointed *Tsänzhabs* from the seven dratsangs of the three monastic seats, at this time appointing, in addition to the previous three of us, Loseling Gyälrong Geshe Lozang Döndän, Deyang Geshe

¹³⁵ *mtza bshes kyi tsoms*

¹³⁶ The word *bskul*, translated as “pretends, presumes”, etc. in this context, as elsewhere, indicates Kyabje Trijang Dorjechang’s humility.

¹³⁷ Je Tsongkhapa’s *Essence Of Eloquence On The Provisional And Definitive, Illuminating The Intention Of The Middle Way*; Kädrubje’s *Tongtun Kälzang Migje (Short Writing On Emptiness To Open The Eyes Of The Fortunate)*; Gungtang’s *Commentary To The Praise Of The Meaningful; Mind-Training Rays Of The Sun; The Eight Verses Of Mind-Training*; and *The Wheel Of Sharp Weapons*.

Chöpel Gawa, Sera Je Hardong Geshe Ngödrub Chogyne, and Ganden Jangtse Serkong Tugsä Thubten Tobjor.

On the actual day of the great ceremony, in the Kungarawa Dharma Courtyard, with a full assembly of all of the lay and ordained government officials and abbots, lamas, and tulkus of the three monastic seats, after the Dalai Lama and Regent, Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, and we seven *Tsänzhabs* had recited the *Ka Nyam Ma (Praise of the Six Ornaments and Two Supreme Ones)*, and *Expression Of The Names Of Manjusri* up to the words, ‘The victory banner of Dharma Pratimoksha ordination being well planted...’ the Regent Rinpoche sat for an examination that entailed memorization from the beginning of Paramita.

After the Dalai Lama and the old and new *Tsänzhabs* had recited together, the Dalai Lama sat for examination with each of the *Tsänzhabs*, beginning with myself, offering a point to be debated from the beginning of Paramita. At the conclusion, I recited words of auspiciousness and, following tradition, an extensive celebration was held. Then I accompanied the traditional procession for the great ceremonies at each of the main assembly halls, four Dratsangs, Namgyäl Dratsang, Tashi Kangsar, and Gepel Retreat. Having finished the grand ceremonies at Drepung, the Dalai Lama went to the Marlam Nechung Castle to invoke Emanated King Of Dharma Dorje Dragden where I witnessed the Dharmapala secretly displaying the bases of leather mask, mule, and so forth before the Dalai Lama.

Then I accompanied the procession to Sera Tegchen Ling on Pari Mountain. I stayed on the upper floor of Dänma Kangtsän near the back of the main assembly hall at Sera. I also accompanied His Holiness when he went to the Sera Monastery main assembly hall, its three dratsangs, and Hardong Kangtsän. During His Holiness’s traditional trip to Pabongka Retreat, I made a trip to Tashi Chöling Retreat where I saw Kyabchog Dorjechang Chogtrul¹³⁸ Rinpoche and offered him long-life initiation and several Dharma transmissions. After the ceremonies were concluded at Sera and His Holiness went to the Potala, I also went and stayed there.

The Sumdän Great Vajradhara Gyälrong Geshe Lozang Samdrub Rinpoche said I must come to help consecrate the two-story high statues of Je Tsongkhapa and his two disciples that had been newly built in the statuary of Drakang Changlochän assembly hall of glorious Gyume Tantric College in Lhasa. Together with all of the Sangha of Gyume Dratsang I performed the extensive Geleg Charbeb consecration by means of Guyhasamaja with preliminary, main body, and concluding sections of the ritual. On the concluding day of the ritual when the names of Geshe Rinpoche and the renovation official Taiji Shänkawa were listed among the sponsors, I made prayers and mentally emanated as many offerings as I could, making offering of the eight auspicious substances and so forth.

At the end of autumn, after His Holiness had gone to the Potala, the Regent Kyabgön Sikyong Rinpoche ordered that the Potala Palace’s residential library on the upper floor, a vast number of texts used by the previous Dalai Lamas, should have their indexes finished and detailed because those that Sera Mey Tsawa Kangtsän Tritrul Rinpoche had made for the previous Dalai Lama were only roughly completed. He ordered that I should take charge and finish the job with the help of all of the *Tsänzhab* Geshe and I accepted the responsibility. In the upper library of the north side at the top of the red palace there were about three thousand scriptural volumes that we brought out and organized, wrapped in cloth covers with the help of about fifteen Namgyäl monks. For many days we seven *Tsänzhab* Geshe on the three levels of the Potala residence carefully checked the existing indexes, reordered pages that were out of order, and arranged new indexes in a very fastidious manner.

Among the scriptures was the Stacked Jewels Sutra from the house of Jetsun Milarepa’s birth; texts used by Omniscient Butön with notations in his own hand; and scriptures that had been studied by many early famous qualified scholars and yogis such as Kädrub Norzang Gyatso, Shvalu Lochen, Chökyong Zangpo–Dharmapala Bhadra, and so forth, many written and annotated in their own handwriting. Among the collection of texts of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama were some he listed

¹³⁸ Chogtrul is a title which means “Supreme incarnation” and refers to highly revered incarnated Lamas. These are Lamas who are respected for spending all their time to spread the Dharma.

as the practice of the 'Crazy Laughing Tantrika of Zahor.' I checked and it was very extensive. Thus, there were many texts hand-written by the Great Fifth, some annotated by the hand of Desi Sangyā Gyatso, and so forth. In summary, there were scriptures which recorded the words of Buddha; Sutra and Tantra commentaries on their meaning written by previous scholars and masters of all traditions and tenet systems without partisanship; Dharma and general histories; and texts on outer and inner conventional fields of knowledge, and so forth. It was completely mind-boggling and inconceivable. There were many very rare texts that I had never seen, with titles that I had never even heard of, but it was only a time of hard work, and there was no time to examine those texts at leisure. Continuing on when that was finished, there was another very extensive collection of scriptures in the northeast Great Sunlight Ganden Nangsäl residence of the Potala for which we also made detailed indexes. In the lower library there was an extremely vast collection of scriptural volumes were supposed to be indexed within a stipulated time but we eventually never got around to it.

In the year of the earth rat I was forty-eight. When the Ganachakra was over, during the waxing of the moon of the third month, I gave great initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka over the course of five days including preliminary days. This was urged by the representative of Gyutö Tantric College's abbot, Drepung Loseling Minyag Kyorpon Lozang Yöntän which was done in the Dharma courtyard of the Lhasa Ramoche Gyutö College, for an assembly of about four thousand such as the entire Sangha of Gyutö, I also offered great initiation of the Great Compassionate One dedicated as roots of virtue for the deceased Kashag Edrung Trätse at the request of Tsedrung Lozang Gyältsän. It was at this time that the sole Protector, peerlessly kind Dorjechang Pabongkapa's incarnation who was referred to then as Chogtrul Rinpoche first started practicing the highest Tantric Yogas.

At another time, the Sangha of Dagpo Shedrub Ling of the east arrived to offer a long-life puja in celebration of His Holiness entering the Dharma at the monastic seats. At the Sangha's officials' request, I offered an initiation of the Great Compassionate One at Zhide Dratsang for about five hundred attendees, mainly the Sangha of Dagpo Dratsang. After that, for the sake of generating merit for the deceased attendant of Kälän Tsering (His Holiness, Kenchen Tsedrung Lozang Kälzang's brother), I gave a Vajrayogini Four Initiation Blessing and instructions on the two stages for eight days at the assembly hall of Lhasa Tsemön Ling Dratsang.

The year the government had completed the renovation of the main assembly hall of Ganden, I had to assist the Regent Sikyong Tagdrag Rinpoche in consecrating it as he was too exhausted to perform the peaceful and wrathful fire pujas. This went on for three days with the Namgyäl ritual monks. To commemorate the renovation of the main assembly hall I offered public tea, good rice soup, and made distribution of offerings.

After the Regent had gone ahead to Lhasa, at the urging of Taiji Shänkawa Gyurme Sönam Tobgyäl (the official in charge of the workers' assembly hall renovation), I offered Je Tsongkhapa Long-Life Initiation for the Sangha of Ganden Shartse and Jangtse and the workers in the Dharma courtyard of the main assembly hall.

Every year during the latter part of the summer Dharma session at Dragyerpa, the Sangha of Gyutö Dratsang would study the drawing of mandalas, principally Guyhasamaja, Heruka, and Yamantaka, and be examined by the abbots, lamas, and chant leader. But because there was no written commentarial tradition in regards to three-dimensional mandalas apart from some questions and answers that had been written down, it was difficult for those of lesser intelligence to understand it precisely on the basis of the written words. Therefore, through discussion with the abbots, lamas, and officers, we instituted a yearly training in the practice of actual construction of three-dimensional mandalas that would be engaged in from that year onwards without break.

During this period, at the Norbulingka and Potala Palaces, together with the Dalai Lama, I received from the Regent Sikyong Tagdrag Dorjechang¹³⁹, all of the initiations into the secret visions of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama.

¹³⁹ A title that refers to the fact this lama has attained the same state of mind as Vajradara – which means he is fully enlightened

I was forty-nine in the year of the earth bull. In the spring, as requested by the new monks of Gyume Tantric College, I offered great initiations of Guyhasamaja, Heruka and Yamantaka; Ngagtu *jenangs* of Guyhasamaja, Heruka and Yamantaka; *jenangs* of Mahakala, Dharmaraja, Lhamo, and Vaisravana; and for about a thousand who took a commitment to recite the *sadhana* of Solitary Hero Yamantaka daily, I also offered great initiation of Solitary Hero Yamantaka at the Lhas Gyume Dratsang assembly hall, for a large gathering of Sangha which included abbots, lamas, and monks of the Gyutö and Gyume, and lamas, tulku, and monks of the three monastic seats.

To dedicate merits for the deceased and clear misfortune during my ‘obstacle-year’ of forty-nine, in the month of *Saga Dawa*, I sent my attendant Paldän with a party to the Ölka country, Samyä Monastery, Traduk Temple¹⁴⁰, Bhutan, and other pilgrimage sites to the south to gather the merit of making offerings. During this time I offered instructions on grammar and the use of diacritical marks to the Dalai Lama.

During the fifth month, as requested by the household of the resident of Lhasa Jeti Ling, Sönam Rinchen, for the sake of accumulating merit for the deceased humble Lozang Drölma, at the Zhide assembly hall, for an assembly of over a thousand, primarily lamas, tulku, and Sangha of the three monastic seats, I offered the *jenang* of the assembly of Deities as explained in *Rinjung Gyatsa sadhana*.

While staying at Norbulingka palace during a summer retreat, on the twenty-fifth of the sixth month my old intestinal sickness reemerged and I suffered very heavy diarrhea, and on the second of the seventh month, when all the lay and ordained attendants, had to attend the opening ceremony of the Lhas Summer Opera Festival at the Norbulingka, my diarrhea went on for one hour till I had extreme abdominal pain. Because of the exceptionally bad diarrhea, the pain was so intense that I couldn’t move and I had to lie down right where I was, in front of my bed. The heat of my body declined and I lost consciousness.

Through the care of my attendant Paldän who burned Agar Thirty-five *lung*–energy wind–medicinal incense mixed with tsampa, and warmed my head and face with the palms of his hands, I made it through that night. Early the next morning the Tibetan Government Medical-Astological College’s elder master Ku-ngo Kyenrab Norbu and the younger abbot Känchung Thubten Lhundrub came to visit. When they examined me and checked my pulses, my pulse for elimination seemed to lack all life, so the two doctors kept taking turns coming back from the Opera Festival to check my pulses. Thanks to their intensive treatments, the power of blessings of extensive pujas that were done to clear hindrances, etc., and because it seemed that my fortune to be sustained by the offerings of the faithful was not yet exhausted, the pain in my stomach subsided slightly. On the evening of the fourth, the Dalai Lama sent his chief attendant, Känpo Jampa Chözang, and chief chamberlain Palha Thubten Ödän with His Holiness’s palanquin for me to use, and they brought me from the Norbulingka to my room in Lhasa. After the diarrhea ceased it still took about three months for me to recover my fluids and strength.

New statues for the local Chatreng Monastery, a statue of Buddha Amitayus made of gold and copper about two and one half stories tall, and two over-life sized statues, one of White Tara, one of Namgyälma, were intended to be made in Kham for the most part, but the faces were being made in Lhasa to insure that they would be especially beautiful. Once they were made I arranged for the jewels to adorn the statue and the mantras to offer inside, and then sent them on for their journey to Kham. On my instructions, people in the Chatreng Monastery area also made statues of the three Kayas Buddhas and built a new Buddha Amitayus temple to the right of the dratsang’s assembly hall.

In the winter, as I was staying at the Potala, the Dalai Lama said that he needed to have all new outer, inner, and secret base substances¹⁴¹ made for super secret *Dugri Nagpo Dharmaraja*. Accordingly, I rewrapped those base substances that had been wrapped in cloth from the shroud of

¹⁴⁰ The ‘Falcon-Dragon’ Temple, earliest of Tibet’s geomantic temples after the Jokang, reputedly built by King Songtsen Gampo.

¹⁴¹ These base substances are various objects, sometimes models of animals, which are blessed as offerings and act as receptacles or bases for the presence of a Dharma Protector.

the previous Dalai Lama. On the particular prescribed day, determined by astrological configuration, the head artist sculptor Päljor Gyälpo received Yamantaka initiation and kept practicing the *sadhana* continually during the time of construction.

Visualising himself as the Deity, he then proceeded to prepare the base substances, in accordance to the rituals and in a fully qualified manner.¹⁴² As soon as these and the previously mentioned bases were finished, they were generated as the Deity and consecrated, etc., again, everything being done in a fully qualified manner. With all of the bases except for the tangkas collected inside their box, we brought them into their place in the Dalai Lama's Narim residence in the Potala.

At the time we were first gathering these objects there were repeated loud banging and clattering sounds in my room at night such as never before; the day the new tangka was offered to the great Dalai Lama, his chief attendant Känpo Kyenrab Tenzin suddenly had a stroke; and one day going to my room in Lhasa I was thrown from my horse. Various such disturbing manifestations arose. As this super secret Dharmaraja, great guardian of Manjusri Tsongkhapa's teachings, is extremely secret and strict, these were signs that the protectors were gathering at that time.

Again, just as I finished that, the order was given that new base substances should also be made for Lhamo Magzorma, which I proceeded to prepare¹⁴³. This was all done in a qualified manner in accordance with the Dalai Lama Gedun Gyatso's presentation of *Lhamo Lä Sum (Three Activities of Lhamo)*, the *Son* writings of the Sealed Secret Visions of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, and so forth. After the generation of the bases, consecration and so on were well completed, they were sealed inside the black laquered box with wrathful designs on it, and invited to remain in the presence of Paldän Lhamo in the bedroom of the Potala residence.

¹⁴² With himself generated as the Deity, after having whitened the base-cloth, he placed the seed syllables on the sense organs and the circle of mantra at the heart and then painted over those, thus making the base objects in a fully qualified manner. There were speech bases of an iron knife with a placard inscribed with the life-force mantra and another with the mantra wheels of the male and female yamas; and a mind base of a club made of sandalwood with a sharp purba-dagger at its root. There was a base of the mother that was a three pointed iron knife adorned with black silk with mantras written on it. There were bases for the entourage of rakshas that were thirty-two iron swords with poisonous blood poured on their blades; a base for Vishnu of a copper arrow in a sheath made from the horn of an uncastrated red bull; a outer bases in the shape of a buffalo and a long-haired shaggy yak with apricot mantra placards around their necks; inner bases painted on black silk with forms and mantras painted with blood, sindhura, padmarakta, ghiwam, and musk; secret bases of two skulls, one male one female, with male and female yama-faces naturally protruding from their backs, with the images painted to further bring out and clarify them, and inside the joined union of the skulls, Dharmaraja's form painted on a shroud; calfs and so forth, filled with wrathful mantric substances and dharani mantras and sealed.

¹⁴³ For the body base, there still existed a 'speaking' tangka that was the Dalai Lama's meditational support in the Narim residence, so there was no need to make a new one. For the speech base I painted a golden gilt tangka of Dakini Meche Barma—Blazing Flames, for mind base, a mirror with BHYO painted on it, for activity bases, a sandalwood vajra-club adorned with mantra inscribed black silk and and the skull of the son of an unmarried woman filled with mantric substances, various bloods and medicines. The outer base was a crow made of black silk with, inside the stuffing of grain and medicines, a consecrated image of Lhamo painted on human skin. The inner base was an illegitimate child's skull fabricated from black silk with, inside the stuffing, a life axis of a trident made from wood burned in a cremation fire anointed with poison and blood wrapped in a shroud inscribed with Lhamo's long calling-crushing-killing mantra written in blood and an illegitimate child's heart filled with leaves that had been carried by the wind but had not touched the ground upon half of which was written Lhamo's mantra and, facing it on the other half, Lhamo's form and anointed, and also filled with different types of bloods, grains, and extended mantras.¹⁴³ There was black silk on the body, victory banner placed in the hand, and tuft of a peacock feather stuck in the head. The secret base was the illegitimate child's heart in a shape with the three channels intact with, inside it, pebbles taken from Lhamo Lhatso that had never been seen by human eyes and large four-sided black stones with BHYO written on them in *padmarakta*—lotus blood¹⁴³; and an arrow made from seven jointed wild bamboo grown among black boulders and adorned with crow's feather, with the Seven BHYO Mantra¹⁴³ written, one syllable atop the next, on up to the feather and, from the base of the feather, the Yidam's mantra and Lhamo's calling-crushing-killing mantra with the extensions on the mantras, set with an iron point dipped in poison and blood and adorned with tiger cloth, leopard cloth, the crossed hairs of embarrassment¹⁴³, black silk with mantras, mirror, shells, drapes and so forth. There were also iron swords and daggers. In one sitting the sculptors made a sun of gold, a moon of silver, colored ball of thread, the red mule, the black and white die, and so forth.

Around that time, together with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I also received great initiation of Seventeen Deity White Umbrella Deity from Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche on the basis of the *Läkyi Shöpa* textbook.

In the year of the iron tiger I was fifty. In spring, for the sake of dedicating merit to the deceased Tsamkung nun, Anni Puntsog, I was requested by her followers to give several initiations to over a hundred aspirants at the Lhasa Tsamkung Nunnery. I gave, in succession, great initiations of Gandhapa Five-Deity Heruka and Gandhapa Body Mandala, experiential commentary on Gandhapa Body Mandala generation and completion stages, Vajrayogini Four Initiation Blessing and instructions on Vajrayogini generation and completion stages.

At the behest of Sera Je abbot Trehor Thubten Samten, at Sera summer retreat, in the Sera Je Känyän Dratsang's assembly hall, for most of the Sangha of Sera Je, Me and Tantric Colleges, as well as many monks commuting daily for the teachings from Lhasa and Drepung, a gathering of almost five thousand, I gave experiential *Lamrim* instructions on the basis of the three combined *Delam*, *Nyurlam*, and *Jampel Shälung* scriptures, instructions on the *Seven Points Of Mind-Training*, and instructions on *Six-Session Guru Yoga* for over a month. In the midst of an ocean of so many enlightened masters of the vast scriptures, my giving these teachings was like a braying donkey wearing a leopard skin! Among the attendees at the time was Drepung Loseling Geshe Yeshe Lodän, one of the best scholars of the three monastic seats, who came to my residence, one day after the *Lamrim* teachings were finished, and expressed to me his delight at the way I had taught the path without high-sounding words but in conjunction with direct experience. Although I had not the slightest practice upon which to rely, and was only acting as a messenger, repeating and mimicking the words of the peerlessly kind father guru, he appeared to be insatiable for this Dharma teaching which explains a thousand tastes of meaning.

In early summer of that year, to the south of Lhasa level with Bumpa-Ri Mountain, the bad omen of a comet appeared in the sky for about a month. Also, while teaching lamrim at Sera, one evening just after dusk, from the direction of the Four Corner Army Camp to the south of Sera, we suddenly heard a noise like that of many guns being fired. Right after that an extremely strong and prolonged earthquake struck and the copper and gold *gangeria* ornament on the roof of Sera Je Dratsang and the bells on the victory banner made jingling sounds all on their own. Because I was staying in the residence on the upper floor of the dratsang building I was quite afraid at first, but when I considered carefully, I felt confident in the karmic principle that one will never meet with the consequences of actions one has not committed oneself. There were many sounds of gunfire from the sky and earthquakes all over Tibet at that same time. It appeared to be a bad sign that the barbarian Red Chinese Army's poisonous breath was approaching.

Trehor Beri Getag Tulku Rinpoche went to Chamdo to try to prevent the destruction of Tibet by the evil design and cunning of the Chinese Communists and, without ulterior motives, went to the site where discussions were being held between the Chinese and Tibetans. Getag Rinpoche had received many teachings of Sutra and Tantra from the regent Sikyong Tagdrag Rinpoche. He also had a long-standing close guru-disciple relationship with me and was always showing me genuine faith and loyalty. He had always acted with altruism to the best of his ability and there was never even the slightest suspicion of mistake or wrongdoing on his part. Yet, like an obstacle to us all in common, through the actions of some who saw ghosts where there was nothing but shadows, our own government confined Getag Tulku under suspicion and he ended up dying in Chamdo, it was rumoured through poisoning or some other means. I regretted not having the chance to see him again but there was nothing to do about it.

On the eighth of the ninth month, the Red Chinese Communists' Army suddenly arrived in Chamdo and the Tibetan Army did not stand fast and gradually lost ground. The situation became more and more desperate when the Governor of Kham, Kalön Ngapö Ngolä, his commanders, and a large crowd was seized from Drugu Monastery in Chamdo by the Red Chinese Army, put in prison and as a result the two Kyabgön Chöyön-Ritual Masters, the Kashag, and the Secretaries went together to invoke Great Dharmaraja Nechung at the Norbulingka Swirling Sunlight Residence as well as the Gadong Dharmapala Shingjächän. The Gadong Dharmapala, after making

full-length prostration before the Dalai Lama said, 'The time has come for the Dalai Lama to take over responsibility for the political affairs of Tibet!' Again, Nechung decreed the same thing.

Accordingly, the Kashag, Secretaries, and the Assembly of the Tibetan government immediately conferred and unanimously requested His Holiness the Dalai Lama to take control of all political and spiritual affairs and received his acceptance. On the seventh day of the tenth month, Kyabgön Sikyong Tagdrag Rinpoche withdrew from his position as regent and on the eighth with great celebration, in Sizhi Puntsog main assembly hall of the great Potala Palace, the golden wheel, symbol of two-fold political and spiritual authority over Tibet, was offered to His Holiness and the great enthronement ceremony was held. That day, with broad-mindedness, he granted amnesty to all prisoners being held throughout Tibet, including Ratreng Tzasag, Kardo Tulku, Tsenya Tulku, and Kalön Kashöpa.

Soon after that, as the Red Chinese Army became more and more aggressive, His Holiness appointed Kuchar Känche Lozang Tashi and Tsipön Dekarwa Tsewang Rabten as dual substitute Regents. On the tenth of the eleventh month, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Sizur Tagdrag Dorjechang, Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, ministers, secretaries, all of His Holiness's attendants and entourage, secretly left the Potala in separate groups by way of the Norbulingka and made their way to Domo at the border. I went with a small entourage that included Lhabu, Paldän, and Gyume Ngag-ram Trehor Tsultrim Dargyä. We left Lhasa in the morning and stayed at the residence in Nyetang Tashigang. In the Nyetang Tara Temple there we got to see such sacred objects as a speaking Tara image that Lord Atisha had relied upon for his meditation and the reliquary 'Inseparability Stupa'¹⁴⁴ of Suvarnavipa.

The next day as we were traveling through lower Jang,¹⁴⁵ the Sangha of the three monastic seats who had gone to winter session there heard a rumor that the Dalai Lama and his entourage were traveling through and there was a huge gathering of Sangha waiting on the path. But because His Holiness had worn ordinary clothing he had already slipped by without anyone noticing. When Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche and I arrived there many monks crowded around us and threw offerings of *khataks* and money from the right and left, weeping, taking hold of our horses reins and trying to stop us from leaving and made it very difficult for us to pass. We told them we would see them again before long and to ease their anxiety. Because we left the large amount of money the monks had strewn at us right where it fell, the villagers that lived near the path there must have attained a bit of the 'siddhi of money'!

That night we stayed in the house of a family in the village of Chushul but because many monks of the three monastic seats thronged to us there as well, we again left for the meeting place. Having gotten off the Chagsam ferry, we met elders of the mahasiddha Tongtang Gyälpo's tradition at the Chuwo Ri practice hermitage. Then gradually, through Gampa Pass, Yardrog, Karola, Ralung, Gyältse, and Pagri, etc., we reached lower Domo. His Holiness was staying at the Chubi Domo High Ministers chambers while my entourage and I, the Dalai Lama's mother, Tagtser Rinpoche and others of the Dalai Lama's immediate entourage stayed on the top floor of the Chubi Dratsang building where each of us had been given sleeping quarters. For that period, His Holiness and his entourage temporarily resided at Domo out of consideration of outer and inner circumstances, from where he conducted peaceful talks with the Chinese Communists.

Because it seemed an obvious course of action to seek assistance in the form of support from other countries, I sent Paldän along with the merchant Lozang Yeshe as his companion on pilgrimage to India and Nepal because he had never been to the sacred pilgrimage sites. Because I sent with him quite a few offerings to make at the sacred sites, I had the opportunity to make rather extensive offerings. Myself, Lhabu, Gyume Trehor Chabril Tsultrim Dhargyä and others stayed right where we were.

When I turned fifty one at Losar, in the year of the iron hare, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, myself and the attendant monks of Namgyäl Dratsang offered the periodic tormo to Paldän Lhamo, while all the Government servants that were there such as the Kalön-

¹⁴⁴ 'bral med mcchod rten

¹⁴⁵ ljang

Ministers performed a simple new years ceremony at the Domo main chambers after which I went for auspicious new year audience with the ex-regent Kyabgön Tagdrag Dorjechang where he was staying Domä Jema.

After the new year's ceremonies of the third I accompanied His Holiness on pilgrimage to the Domo Kagyu Monastery and spent two days there. His Holiness and his entourage then moved their quarters to Dungkar (White Conch) Monastery in upper Domo. We also went to stay in the monks' quarters of Dungkar Dratsang, at the residence of Ngawang Tsöndru of Böntsang Dratsang.

His Holiness, in addition to keeping me at the rank of *Tsänzhab Darhän*, felt that it was inappropriate for me to sit in a position at the end of the row of government lay ministers and promoted me to a rank at the head of the ministerial row where I was offered *khatak* and held a simple symbolic first audience in that new capacity.

Requested by Katsab Lama Tashi Lingpa Wangchug for the sake of accumulating merits for his brother Chagtzö, I gave about fifteen days of commentary on the Swift Path Lamrim and the bodhicitta puja at the end as well as many as about three hundred listeners inside and outside of the assembly hall of Tashi Chöling Retreat, part of Upper Domo's Dungkar Monastery were present.

Since the time of the deceased grandfather, Tupa Dönyö of the Galingang Bonpo family from upper Domo, I had a strong connection with his descendants as disciples and patrons and so, I accepted their invitation to come and perform Yangdrub at their house and gave long-life initiation and other teachings. I stayed for a few days. I had an extremely strong connection with the previous Domo Geshe Rinpoche Ngawang Kelzang, a great being who was highly renowned and had a previous guru-disciple relationship with the Sangha of Dungkar Monastery. I therefore made a distribution of offerings and also had four banners made with cat-shaped appliqué head ornaments to offer as ornaments for the four tall pillars in the assembly hall.

On the eighth of the third month when, in accordance with tradition, a simple Eighth-day Torma ceremony was held, I asked my attendant Palden to meet the new Tsekor Officer. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama performed approach retreat of Solitary Hero Yamantaka root mantra, approach retreat of Pälmo system Great Compassionate One, and inner Dharmaraja, I went to assist with the rituals.

Representatives of the Tibetan Government who were sent to China, including Kalön Ngapö Ngawang Jigme, Kemä Tzasag Sönam Wangdö, Kändrung Thubten Täandar, and Känchung Thubten Legmön, were forced into the so-called Seventeen Point Agreement, following which Ngapö and some of the other representatives returned to Tibet by way of Kham while Tzasag Kemä and Kändrung Thubten Tendar came back by way of Hong Kong and India and came back through Domo at the same time that the Communist Chinese representatives sent to Tibet, Trangchin U and Alo Butrang arrived in Domo. In meetings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with slick sweet-talk, they spoke about developing the country through 'peaceful liberation' and 'establishing the public in happiness' and insisted that His Holiness and his entourage must return to the Lhasa capital immediately. Considering the possible benefits versus risks, it was decided that we should return so, as the fifth month began, we left Domo and traveled by way of Pagri, Gyältse, Nakartse, Yardrog, Samding, Taglung Monastery, Pöldi, Nyasog, Zä Chökor, Yangtse, Nyetang Ratö, Tagdrag Retreat, and so forth, where our government escorts pitched yak hair tents in the fields. Then we went by Kyitsäl Luding where the main government escort brought us with elaborate ceremony to the Norbulingka Kälzang Palace, traveling together in unfixed order, depending on the circumstances. Along the way, at the wishes of the Sangha of the Nyingma Monastery at Gyältse, the local Gyältse Dratsang, and the Sangha of Chökor Yangtse, I offered instructions, just outlines, making Dharma connections with each.

The ex-regent Kyabgön Tagdrag Dorjechang had left Domo ahead of us and I went to pay my respects to him while he was staying at Tagdrag retreat.

As soon as we had arrived in Lhasa, the jeweler Kälzang and his daughter the nun, Anni Ngawang Chötzin, who were resident at the new Drepung Gomang house, invited to come and, at the same time, institute Vajrayogini Self-Initiation practice at the nunnery of Nechung Mountain. Accordingly, I went to Nechung Mountain and gave the nuns the great initiations of Five-Deity

Gandhapa Heruka and blessing of the Four Sindhura Initiations of Vajrayogini, staying there a few days.

Accepting an invitation arranged at that time by the ordained members of the Samling family of Bombor Kangtsän of Sera Monastery in Marlam, I went there and made distributions at the family gathering and made a small offering as principal to fund a yearly celebration at the conclusion of summer retreat.

After that, specially invited by Ganden Para Chogtrul Rinpoche, I went to Ganden. For three days, at Para Kangtsän, I gave great initiation of Guyhasamaja with the day of preparation, for a large gathering of abbots, lamas, and Sangha of both Ganden Jangtse and Shartse Dratsangs.

At Chatreng Samling Monastery, a new two story tall statue of Manjusri Tsongkhapa and over-life-sized statues of Gyältsabje and Kädrubje were to be constructed of gilded gold. As the actual bodies of the statues were to be made in Kham, I sent the faces of the three statues, which had been specially made in Lhasa, along with the offering mantras to Kham. Afterwards, the local monastery constructed the main bodies of the statues and a new Tsongkhapa temple as per my instructions.

In the year of the water dragon I was fifty-two. In the third month His Holiness the Dalai Lama received great initiation of Kalachakra in the great assembly hall of the Potala Palace from Yongzin Lingtrul Dorjechang, at which time I gratefully received it again as well. From the tenth day of the fourth month onward, for nine days, at the wishes of Dawa Dhargye of Kundeling Labrang, in the Shide temple of Lhasa, for a large gathering of aspirants, I presumed to give blessing of the Four Initiations of Vajrayogini, the mantra Ngag-tu *jenangs* with instructions on the generation and completion stages in accordance with the tradition of the masters of secret mantra.

During that period, at the wishes of Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, I offered him the great initiation, with preparation day, of Sixty-two Deity Luipa Heruka Chakrasamvara.

At the urging of Tsering Drolkar of the Chambayer family in upper Män, from the tenth of the fifth month, at the Shide assembly hall, for a gathering of just under a thousand listeners, principally a Sangha of lamas, tulkus, and geshe I gave Gandhapa system outer Five-Deity Heruka Chakrasamvara great initiation, great initiation of Heruka Body Mandala, instructions on the practice of the two stages of Gandhapa Body Mandala, and experiential commentary on the Six Yogas Of Naropa, teaching for about twenty days.

After the summer retreat was over at the Norbulingka, I went for my health to the Tölung hot springs. As was their tradition in late summer, the glorious Mägyu Dratsang in Yarlam Chumig country were staying there for three days at the beginning of their Dharma session, so I made offerings of distributions. The Tantric practitioners were beginning chanting practice and, at their invitations, I made a brief visit to each of the kangtsäns. In the throne room I also saw the small huts where lamas such as Kunkyen Jamyang Zhäba and Longdöl Lama Rinpoche lived.

Then I stayed at the hot springs for about two weeks for my health. At that time the Tibetan government Medical Astrological Instructor Känchen Kyenrab Norbu, and Gongkar Tulku Chögön Rinpoche of the Bhutanese system's Dechen Chökor Monastery and his entourage also arrived together two days afterwards, both of whom were close acquaintances with whom I had pure samaya. Chögön Rinpoche was profoundly well versed in both Dharma and politics and spoke loquaciously and the Medical College abbot was also very learned in all ten fields of knowledge and spoke about scriptures and told stories of previous times, etc., so that our moments spent in leisurely conversation in the hot springs passed by very pleasantly, without our even noticing how much time had elapsed!

After the hot springs treatment, as invited by Tölung Dingka Rinpoche, I went to Dingka Monastery and gave Vajrayogini Four Initiation Blessing and, as invited by Chusang Monastery, the seat of Je Tsongkhapa's direct disciple Dromtsön Sherjung Lodrö I offered great initiations such as Thirteen Deity Yamantaka and Kunrig for the Sangha. Then I returned to Lhasa.

At this time, in conversation on the subject, His Holiness said that I should have new fully qualified tangkas painted as supports for his meditation with images of Solitary Hero Yamantaka, the Five Kings, and the Five Families of Gyalchen Dorje Shugden. Accordingly, since the head

artist Päljor Gyälpo had already received great initiation of Yamantaka, I considered that sufficient and newly conferred upon him **Life Initiation of the Five Kings**. Then I generated the artist as the Deity, blessed the material and tools and so forth. **As explained in each of the respective tantras and scriptures such as the Beu Bum–Small Compendiums, each of the canvasses was prepared, the mantric syllables arranged, on the backs of the Five Kings and Dorje Shugden tangkas the life wheel mantras, life mantras, and aspirational prayers were written, and so forth, accomplished and consecrated at a time when the eight spirit forces were moving, everything from beginning to end was accomplished properly.**

In the year of the water snake, when I turned fifty-three, as requested by Metra Chötzä Gyatrug, in the Meru assembly hall, I offered great initiation of Five-Deity Gandhapa Heruka and Thirteen-Deity Yamantaka with the days of preliminaries to over a thousand people.

During summer session, in connection with a construction project to enlarge the north side of the Kagyur Printing Office in the lower part of the Potala Palace, inside a new temple, His Holiness the Dalai Lama wished to have three new three-storey-tall statues made, one of Yamantaka, one of Kalachakra, and one of the Goddess Kurukulla. I instructed the artists in regard to everything to be accomplished from beginning to end, from blessing the materials for the statues, generating as the Deity, checking the shape and measurements, and offering the mantras inside when they were finished. During three days of extensive consecration ceremonies when they were finished, His Holiness the Dalai Lama came and tossed the flowers of consecration.

On the occasion of the Chatreng Sampel Ling Monastery Gutor¹⁴⁶ Projectile-Throwing Enthronement ceremony I had made and sent a display of statues, principally, Dharmaraja Yab-Yum, Je Rinpoche, Yamantaka, Trinle Gyälpo, and Dorje Shugden, about three and a half stories tall, with fine quality garments draped upon them.

In the autumn, as requested by Drepung Gomang Gungru Geshe Yeshe Gyatso, in the assembly hall of glorious Tashi Gomang Dratsang, for an assembly of almost four thousand people, principally Sangha such as abbots, officials, lamas, and tulkus of the three monastic seats of Sera, Drepung, and Ganden, I offered twenty-three days of *Lamrim* commentary based upon the combined texts of *Delam (The Blissful Path)*, *Nyurlam (The Swift Path)*, and *Jampäl Shälung (The Words Of Manjusri)*. Like a parrot saying Manis I strove to give my rough explanation in the midst of that ocean of intelligent scholars. This was the first time that the sole refuge Dorjechang Pabongkapa's incarnation, Chogtrul Rinpoche listened to teachings of *Lamrim*. Requested by Ön Gyälsä Chogtrul Rinpoche, I also offered the assembly Mati System White Manjusri *jenang*.

At the beginning of the tenth month, representatives of the Kashag and Secretaries, Kalön Zurkangpa Wangchen Geleg and Kändrung Chöpel Thubten came to where I was staying at the Norbulingka. In connection with praising Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche and myself for how well our contributions to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's studies had gone, they said that in gratitude for His Holiness taking full ordination vows the following year, Yongzin Ling Rinpoche was to be promoted to the rank of senior tutor while I was to take on the responsibility of junior tutor. The Kashag and all the Government officials had together proposed this to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness had agreed to it, and so it was definitely confirmed. Auspicious ceremonial first audiences were to be held as soon as possible. They made offering of mandala and three bases with *khatak* in a manner as to say that I must give His Holiness the Dalai Lama all of the profound and vast initiations, transmissions and instructions of Sutra and Tantra, like filling a vase. They requested this with strong insistence, thus, as it is said in *Abhisamayalankara (Ornament Of Realizations)*,

Keeping the mind free of discouragement and so forth,
Causing identitylessness, and so forth, to be revealed
While discarding what is harmful, the opposite of these,
In all times and situations, that is the *Yongzin*–the Tutor.

¹⁴⁶ *dgu gtor*

Though I had not a hair's-breadth of such qualities for an inner or outer tutor, shamelessly, this old dog had the audacity to join the ranks of the lions, and I accepted.

Before long, on the actual day of the symbolic *khatak* of command and first audience ceremonies, in the morning I made thousand-fold offerings before the Lord Shakyamuni Buddha statue and other supreme objects at the Lhasa Trulpay Tsuglakang–Emanated Temple, the sealed Ramoche temple, and the Arya Temple in the Potala, after which I went to the Norbulingka Palace and, in the Jangchub Gakyil–Enlightenment Bliss–Swirl–residence on the upper floor, I first prostrated before His Holiness the Dalai Lama, then offered mandala, the three bases, and *khatak*. His Holiness gave me the three bases and *khatak*, and a blessed bronze statue of Venerable Manjusri. Beckoning him to approach, I offered him a brief preliminary explanation beginning with the benefits of generating bodhicitta and transmission of the root text of the Fifty Verses Of Guru Devotion.

After that, in the well lit large Sunlight meeting room off the residence, the government arranged an auspicious first celebration feast at which I bowed to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, great leader of all samsara and nirvana, like the glory of millions of suns on the fearless lion throne, blazing with magnificence illuminating all things, and made my actual first-audience offering of the three bases. The government also gave me a high award after which, as was the custom, I accepted congratulatory *khataks* from the Kalön–Ministers and His Holiness's attendants, from the head attendant and abbots to the lay and ordained secretaries and officials.

After the proceedings at the Norbulingka were concluded, lined up at my door in Lhasa, in a long line with gifts when I arrived were many people, great and small, with whom I had Dharma and physical connections – from government workers of all ranks, from governing councils of the three monastic seats, dratsang and labrang.

This was the first year that Dragyab Chetsang Hotogtu Rinpoche arrived in Lhasa. Along with going for audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Potala he came by to visit me at my room.

During the winter session His Holiness the Dalai Lama performed extensive retreat on the mind mandala of Sri Kalachakra, for which I went to assist, completing the *lärung* (activity qualifying) approach retreat, and the fire puja that makes up for deficiency.

In the year of the wood horse when I turned fifty-four, at the time of the great new year celebration of Buddha's performance of miracles at Shravasti, Kyabgön Chenpo Chog –The Supreme Great Refuge-Protector – His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, had decided to accept the vows of a fully ordained Bikshu at the Lhasa Trulpay Tsuglakang. Prior to that, Dragyab Chetsang Hotogtu Rinpoche had also invited me to the Lhasa Great Prayer Festival Assembly. After the New Year's Day activities were over he went, with elaborate ceremony as was the custom, from the Potala Palace to the Ganden Yangtse Residence above the Labrang on the top floor of the Lhasa Trulpay Tsuglakang. I also went to stay in a room above the Labrang.

On the day of the full moon of the first month, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Supreme, performed the supplementary actions in the presence of the Jowo Shakyamuni Buddha, with Kyabje Yongzin Sharpa Chöje Lingtrul Rinpoche acting as *Känlob Dharma* (Combined Abbot and Preceptor), the present Ganden Tri Rinpoche Sera Je Thubten Kunga acting as the *Dü Gowa* (the Time Instructor), myself acting as the *Sangte Tönpay Lobpön* (the Secret-Revealing Preceptor), the ex-Ganden Tripa Drepung Loseling Minyag Tashi Tongdü Rinpoche, the *Jangtse Chöje*, the *Tsänzhabs* and so forth.

In the midst of an assembly of ten bikshus, His Holiness received the *labdom* (precepts and vows) of a bikshu that contains the basis for all trainings, purely and perfectly, without any faults in the ritual, cultivating the great deed that would enthrone him as the crown jewel of all who bear the vinaya. When I asked the Secret-Revealing Preceptor's questions, it was incredibly daunting to ask the Great Dalai Lama, the Spiritual and Temporal Lord of the entire Tibet, 'Are you not a *Thirtika*? Are you not a bandit or a thief? Have you not killed your father?' and so on, but because that is the practice as it is intended in the Vinaya, I gathered up my courage and asked the questions.

