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MOON IN WATER

Recollections of Accompanying My Guru to
Southeast Asia in 1995



Compiled by

KHENPO SODARGYE

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FOREWORD

Time flows swiftly—thirty years have passed in the blink of an eye, rushing by like flowing water, swift as lightning. Recalling those luminous days, our incomparable and supremely benevolent guru—an emanation of Padmasambhava, a perfect buddha who appeared in human form, bearing the honored name Jigme Phuntsok Jungne Palzangpo for the sake of beings—turned the vast dharma wheel of sutra and tantra at the sacred site of Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy in Serta. For the benefit of all beings endowed with merit and karmic connection, both throughout the East and West and especially among the people of the Tibetan plateau, he performed enlightened activities and guided countless beings along the path of maturation and liberation.

That was a glorious era of complete excellence, a golden age in which the Buddhadharma flourished brilliantly. Just as when the Teacher of gods and humans, Buddha Shakyamuni, walked this world, so too in those days did people from many lands drink deeply of the nectar of noble dharma, and innumerable, inconceivable miracles appeared—like scenes from a pure realm glimpsed in a dream.

Concerning our guru's dharma activities in Southeast Asia, the dharma friend Khenpo Sodargye has now personally authored this work. With clarity and fidelity—neither embellishing nor omitting—he presents *Moon in Water* in a plain and natural voice for those with karmic connection. This work not only allows us to revisit the various manifestations of our incomparable wish-fulfilling guru's enlightened body, speech, and mind, but also provides those

endowed with merit a rare opportunity to generate faith and receive vast blessings. Therefore, I sincerely pray that all faithful ones will read it with reverent care.

Remembering the guru not only perfects the two accumulations of merit and wisdom, but also gives rise to ineffable peace and dharma joy in our hearts, strengthening our certainty in the path and our diligence upon it. For this reason, each time I travel to Southeast Asia, I always visit the places where our greatly kind wish-fulfilling guru once conferred empowerments, gave guidance, and imparted instructions to the fortunate disciples in the South—such as The Concourse in Singapore and, on the shores of the Malacca Strait in Malaysia, the Wah May Hotel and the Karma Kagyu Dharma Society. At these sacred sites, I recall the guru with my whole heart, offer devout prayers, and make sincere aspirations.

Respectfully written by

Tsultrim Lodro

Thirteenth day of the second month, Wood Snake Year

March 12th, 2025

PREFACE

This book, *Moon in Water: Recollections of Accompanying My Guru to Southeast Asia in 1995*, chronicles the remarkable journey of my revered teacher, Chojé Yidzhin Norbu Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche, as he traveled to Southeast Asia in 1995 to share the dharma. During this transformative period, I had the profound privilege of accompanying him, bearing witness to countless moving and unforgettable moments.

Over the course of his life, Chojé ventured abroad to teach the dharma on three occasions. His first journey, in 1990, took him to Nepal, India, and Bhutan—a pilgrimage I recounted in *Memoir of Dream and Dust*. The second, in 1993, brought him to the United States, Canada, and France, as described in *A Journey to the West*. The present volume documents his final overseas dharma tour, which led him to Singapore and Malaysia, now gathered here as *Moon in Water*.

The completion of these three memoirs represents a remarkable confluence of causes and conditions. I had originally intended to begin writing while Rinpoche was still with us, but circumstances intervened, and the project was repeatedly delayed. Even after his parinirvana, I continued to aspire to set these memories down to paper, making several attempts, yet never quite succeeding. Unexpectedly, each of these three journeys has now been recorded and published exactly thirty years after each journey occurred—a timing not of my own design, but rather the natural unfolding of auspicious circumstances.

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was also present throughout this journey, both as a witness and a participant. I once encouraged him to record this history himself, but he graciously declined, instead urging me to undertake the task and kindly offering to write the foreword. Thus, during February 2024 and January 2025, I spent a total of one and a half months completing the writing and revision of both the Tibetan and Chinese editions of *Moon in Water*, including typesetting, selecting photographs, and designing the cover. Although I still have many dharma texts to translate and edit, and my daily responsibilities are many, I made every effort to carve out time for this project. At last, this nearly 100,000-word memoir has come to fruition.

The events recounted in this book span just over a month—from the moment Rinpoche received the invitation, through his journey abroad, to his return to Larung Gar. While this period may seem brief in the context of his vast and extraordinary life, and the available records are relatively limited, I felt it essential to preserve these memories before they faded with the passage of time. I have endeavored to gather written accounts, photographs, and audio-visual materials from that era, and to recall, verify, and organize them with the utmost care and accuracy. Nevertheless, due to my own limitations, I sincerely apologize for any errors or omissions that may remain.

While editing the Tibetan version, I simultaneously prepared the Chinese edition, and subsequently entrusted the International Translation Team with rendering the text into English and Japanese. The simultaneous publication of these four language editions is no small feat, and carries great significance.

This year marks the twenty-second anniversary of Chojé's parinirvana, as well as the thirtieth anniversary of his dharma activities in Southeast Asia. It is with deep devotion that I offer this work to all. Though the words may appear simple, they contain the precious heart-essence instructions of His Holiness. If

you read with a calm and open mind, you will naturally sense his extraordinary wisdom and realization, without need for embellishment or praise.

It is important to note that this book includes accounts of the highest Vajrayana teachings transmitted by His Holiness. For those who wish to engage in these practices in the future, it is essential first to receive the proper empowerments, transmissions, and instructions, in order to practice authentically and gain genuine benefit.

In compiling this memoir, I am deeply grateful to all who provided materials, assisted with documentation, and helped with editing and proofreading. My heartfelt thanks also go to the dakinis and dharma protectors, whose blessings and support have been indispensable throughout. May they continue their protection, bestowing blessings and care upon those with faith.

Life is like a dream, yet when we look back, certain moments remain vivid and unforgettable. To gather these memories and share them with those connected by karma is my heartfelt wish. May this book inspire you to recall the qualities of the guru, and ultimately realize the fruition of the ultimate guru.

Sodargye

Lha Bab Düchen,

Twenty-second day of the ninth month, Wood Snake Year

November 11th, 2025

*In the primordial dharmadhatu, the dharmakaya realm,
Inseparable from Manjushri and Samantabhadra Tathagata,
Vajradhara Buddha, sovereign master of the dharma, sublime guru—
May your blessings, arising from the dharmata, enter my heart.*

*Thirty years ago, in those bygone days,
When youth bloomed like flowers in their prime,
Following my teacher who appeared as the Buddha himself,
I traveled many lands in the East and the West.
My pen never stopped moving,
Recording various notes and journals as they came.
Now I gather these Southeast Asian travel memoirs,
Compiling them in multiple languages to share.*

*Herein are expounded the profound and subtle pith instructions—
May the Dharmadhatu Mistress, Ekajati Buddha Mother,
Along with ocean-like dakinis and dharma protectors, not punish me,
But unseal these teachings for the faithful and fortunate ones.*

December 29th, 1994 – April 29th, 1995

BEGINNING

SCHEDULE

December 29th, 1994

Received an invitation letter from Singapore

April 1995

Departed from Larung, traveled via Dartsedo, and arrived in Chengdu

April 12th

Obtained visa for Singapore

THE INITIAL CAUSES AND CONDITIONS FOR DHARMA REQUEST

In the summer of 1992, Chojé Yidzhin Norbu¹ led the Larung Gar sangha to Dzichen Valley for recreation. They set up tents on the flower-filled meadow, collectively enjoying various Buddhist performances and spending a relaxed and joyful time together.

One day, two Singaporean bhikshus wearing Theravada Buddhist robes, Venerable Kwang Chao and his disciple, came to meet Rinpoche. These two monks not only had deep understanding of Theravada Buddhism but also had great faith in Han and Tibetan



0.1: Chojé enjoying recreation in Dzichen Valley

Buddhism, possessing rich experience in Buddhist study and practice. For many Tibetan monks and nuns at Larung Gar, this was their first encounter with Theravada monks.

Chojé Yidzhin Norbu warmly received these two distinguished guests, personally giving them empowerments, teachings, and bestowing ritual implements such as bell and vajra. Subsequently, they expressed their wish to study and practice at Larung Gar for an extended period and hoped to build their own residences at the academy. Chojé entrusted me with this matter. I selected a location in one of the male practitioners' places of residence called Dögu Künjung Ling and built two wooden cabins for them, ensuring everything progressed smoothly. Finally, the cabins were completed that autumn. These cabins were affectionately called "the Singaporean monks' houses" by everyone

and marked the first time the academy provided accommodation for foreigners. Later, they also built several wooden cabins in the nuns' area. From then on, monastics and lay practitioners from Singapore began to visit Larung Gar frequently for study.



佛教密宗弘法大会



恭请 慈诚罗珠喇嘛莅新弘法

履历：慈诚罗珠喇嘛出生于1962年，现年32岁，1979年出家，1983年于五明佛学院依止宁玛传承大成尊者晋美彭措吉祥贤法王受比丘戒与菩萨戒，并学习藏传显密佛教经论，后考获堪布学位。慈诚罗珠喇嘛现任五明佛学院佛学导师与传戒师。

日期	星期	讲题	地点	时间
11/6-9/4	六	往生净土的因	密教道新加坡大会堂	7:30pm
12/6-9/4	日	密宗修行次第及教理	密教道新加坡大会堂	7:30pm
13/6-9/4	一	(讲题未定)	菩提协会	8:00pm
14/6 - 17/6	二至五	大圆满前行	大众会所	8:00pm
18/6-9/4	六	(讲题与地点未定)		
19/6-9/4	日	(讲题未定)	佛教图书馆	2:00pm
20/6-9/4	一	(讲题未定)	菩提协会	8:00pm
21/6 - 24/6	二至五	大圆满前行	大众会所	8:00pm
25/6-9/4	六	(讲题与地点未定)		
26/6-9/4	日	(讲题未定)	佛教图书馆	2:00pm
27/6-9/4	一	(讲题未定)	菩提协会	8:00pm
28/6 - 30/6	二至四	大圆满前行	大众会所	8:00pm
1/7/94	五	三法印	大慈佛教中心	8:00pm
2/7/94	六	(讲题未定)	Karma Kagyud B.C.	8:00pm
3/7/94	日	(讲题未定)	Karma Kagyud B.C.	8:00pm
4/7/94	一	大圆满前行	大众会所	8:00pm
5/7 - 7/7	二至四	佛子戒	佛教居士社	8:00pm
8/7/94	五	密陀修法	大慈佛教中心	8:00pm
9/7/94	六	大圆满前行	大众会所	8:00pm
10/7/94	日	大圆满前行/灌顶祈福	大众会所	7:30pm

主办单位：大众学佛研究会 People's Buddhism Study Society No. 25 Lorong 22 Geylang S (1439) 746 9352

注：慈诚罗珠喇嘛将于7月3日下午2时假万佛林主持佛理讲座（截稿前安排）

0.2: Khenpo Tsaltrim Lodro's teaching schedule in Singapore, 1994 (for English translation, see Appendix A)

In 1993, I accompanied Choje to the United States. During this period, Khenpo Tsaltrim Lodro taught Han sangha at the academy. Venerable Kwang Chao also came to the academy and, after attending classes for some time, invited Khenpo to Singapore to give dharma teachings. Initially, since Khenpo was focused on listening to, contemplating, and meditating on the dharma and busy with other matters, he was reluctant to leave the academy and therefore declined the invitation. However, after Choje returned from the West and the Singaporean masters came again with their request, Rinpoche agreed to send Khenpo to teach in Singapore.



0.3: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro teaching in Singapore, 1994

In the summer of 1994, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro arrived in Singapore and gave a series of dharma teachings at various Buddhist centers such as the People's Buddhism Study Society, the Singapore Buddhist Lodge, and Tai Pei Buddhist Center. Through this connection, the Singaporean devotees gained a deeper understanding of Tibetan Buddhism, especially the dharma lineage of His Holiness Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche. As a result, they greatly wished to invite His Holiness to come and teach.

In December of the same year, representatives from the People's Buddhism Study Society in Singapore set out on their journey. They flew from Singapore to Chengdu and then after three to four days of bumpy travel, finally reached Larung Gar. For those accustomed to a tropical climate, the freezing temperature of minus thirty degrees and altitude sickness undoubtedly presented enormous challenges.



0.4: Representatives from Singapore



0.5: Chojé reading the invitation letter

After a brief rest and acclimatization, on December 29th, the representatives presented Chojé with an invitation letter, earnestly requesting that he propagate the Buddhist dharma in Singapore. They specifically invited Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro to accompany Rinpoche as a translator. After carefully reviewing the letter and familiarizing himself with the situation, Rinpoche graciously accepted. They requested Rinpoche to bestow empowerments, Manjushri teachings and practices, along with other Dzogchen instructions in Singapore. After thoughtful consideration, Chojé stated that if the visa application could be successfully processed and all necessary conditions were met, he would transmit



0.6: Chojé and representatives from Singapore

the Dzogchen teachings on *Peaceful Manjushri* and *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind* to the devotees in Singapore.



0.7: Promotional poster for Choje's dharma teachings in Singapore

To ensure the smooth progress of Rinpoche's dharma propagation tour, several representatives promptly returned to Singapore to begin preparations. Their tasks included creating promotional materials, arranging accommodations, and setting up teaching venues. Meanwhile, the remaining representatives opted to stay at the academy to continue their study and practice.

PREPARATIONS BEFORE GOING ABROAD

On January 1st, 1995, Chojé privately gathered Lama Södön, Doctor Rigpa, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, and myself to share a special message, “If all goes well, I plan to visit Singapore to propagate the dharma in May this year. This might be the last time I travel abroad in this lifetime.”

Reflecting on our perfect journey to India together in 1990, Chojé wished to bring all the same members again. Since Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro had previously visited Singapore and received an invitation, he would also accompany Rinpoche on this trip. Chojé said in a lighthearted tone, “We’ll go happily to spread the dharma, and the trip shouldn’t be too long. If conditions permit, we might visit a few nearby countries as well. Regarding expenses, the Singapore dharma center has agreed to cover them. Of course, if any of you don’t wish to go, you’re completely free to choose.”

After hearing Chojé’s words, each of us felt incredibly excited, and no one wanted to miss this precious opportunity to travel with him. Lama Södön was especially thrilled to have another chance to accompany Rinpoche abroad. We all expressed our willingness to join.

Chojé then arranged specific responsibilities for this trip. As always, Doctor Rigpa would care for Rinpoche’s health. Lama Södön would manage Rinpoche’s daily needs—although the Singapore dharma center had made arrangements, his role remained indispensable. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and I were to serve as Chojé’s interpreters and assist with daily affairs, including communication with the hosts and scheduling.

Since Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was more familiar with the procedures for traveling to Singapore, he took charge of these preparations. Meanwhile, I began translating the Dzogchen texts on *Peaceful Manjushri* and *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*. During a private discussion, we all agreed that Chojé’s

journey this time was extraordinarily rare and should be documented in detail to preserve these invaluable moments. For this purpose, Khenpo prepared a small camcorder he had purchased in Singapore, while I bought a new high-quality camera. After research and comparison, I chose a Japanese Ricoh camera that was highly rated at that time.

Given my responsibilities managing and teaching the Han sangha, and with the growing number of students, I could no longer leave as easily as before. Therefore, before our departure, I arranged for Khenpo Yeshe Phuntsok to begin teaching



0.8: Ricoh camera

the *Verse Summary of the Perfection of Wisdom* to the Han sangha and assigned other Han khenpos and khenmos to teach *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*.



0.9: Khenpo Sodargye teaching for the Han sangha, with Chinese text on the blackboard

During the intense four-month preparation period, we devoted ourselves completely to ensuring every detail was thoughtfully considered and arranged, eagerly anticipating every moment of the journey with Chojé Yidzhin Norbu.

THE FIRST HUNDRED THOUSAND VIDYADHARA GREAT DHARMA ASSEMBLY

Before departing for Singapore, Chojé made a significant decision: to inaugurate the first vidyadhara dharma assembly at the nuns' dharma hall in Larung Gar. Yidzhin Norbu explained, "The purpose of this vidyadhara assembly is to guide both humans and non-humans toward the authentic dharma and attain liberation. We will hold this assembly annually during the Month of Miracles—the first month in the Tibetan calendar—beginning on the first day of the new year. My hope is that this assembly will become a significant Buddhist event with profound meaning, similar to the Butter Lamp Festival celebrated during Tibetan New Year."

As soon as the announcement was made, it quickly attracted monastics and lay practitioners from around the world. Even high lamas and esteemed masters from major Tibetan monasteries began preparing to participate. Chojé Yidzhin Norbu humorously remarked, "Many venerable masters in our academy are still sitting quietly as if nothing is happening, but I've noticed dakas and dakinis from the ten directions rushing here after learning about Larung's vidyadhara great gathering. This year, the combined number of human and non-human participants will certainly exceed one hundred thousand. Therefore, this assembly shall be named the Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly."



0.10: The first Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly

Given the extraordinary nature of this assembly, Chojé emphasized its merits on multiple occasions. He stated that a successful first gathering would create special auspicious conditions for spreading the dharma and benefiting sentient beings in the future. Accordingly, the academy made thorough preparations based on the available resources, and khenpos of Larung Gar personally welcomed the esteemed masters arriving from various regions.

On the first day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar (March 2nd in the Western calendar), the assembly commenced as scheduled. The scene was truly magnificent, leaving all attendees in awe. Particularly striking were the monks and nuns in yellow robes covering the hillsides; their robes shimmered like gold, so dazzling that even the sunlight seemed dim in comparison.

One day, Chojé said, “In the past, Bodhisattva Manjushri taught the Secret Mantrayana to Indra and others in the Supreme Victory Palace in the world of the gods above, where one hundred thousand beings simultaneously attained realization. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara taught Vajrayana teachings to the Naga King Sagara in the naga’s palace in the world of the nagas below, where another hundred thousand beings attained realization. Bodhisattva Vajrapani transmitted profound tantric teachings to the Five Excellent Ones of Sublime Nobility at the Blazing Fire Mountain, where King Dza and others attained the fruition of vidyadhara. Similarly, I too have this auspicious dependent arising. According to the prophecy in the *Reverberation of Sound Tantra* stating ‘thereafter, the wise one will uphold,’ if I conduct the Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly, together with the retinue of one hundred thousand, we will all reach the ground of vidyadhara.

“Originally, the time for this karmic event had arrived. However, due to the insufficient merit of sentient beings and the strong obstacles posed by demonic forces, the necessary conditions were not fully met at that time—particularly when the interdependent conditions for opening the thirteen great terma doors had been destroyed. Nevertheless, thanks to the compassionate efforts of great Tibetan masters and the support of many individuals, extensive rituals and prayers were performed, and auspicious aspirations were made. These positive circumstances eventually ripen, allowing the Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly to be successfully held this year. The number of monastic participants exceeds 38,000, and together with the visible and invisible vidyadharas, the total indeed reaches one hundred thousand. This is truly a cause for rejoicing and celebration.

“This dharma assembly engages in the magnetizing activities through the profound practice of Avalokiteshvara’s Nine Principal Deities, with the sole

purpose of spreading the Buddhadharma and benefiting sentient beings, especially paving the path to liberation for beings in the Land of Snows. Regarding the duration of the Larung lineage in this world, according to the prophecies of Lerab Lingpa and Dudjom Lingpa, it will continue for about 300 years. While many rituals and prayers could support this, the most important is the Hundred Thousand Vidyadharas Great Dharma Assembly for the profound practice of magnetizing. If this assembly can be continuously and properly conducted, even after I am gone, this Buddhist academy can flourish and spread the dharma for more than three generations. Whether the teachings here can remain in this world for long depends crucially on this assembly. Therefore, everyone must attach great importance to it and actively participate.”

The assembly concluded with great success, with numerous auspicious signs appearing, including miraculous relics descending from the sky. The nectar pills consecrated in that year’s magnetizing mandala were known as the Great Magnetizing Pills of 1995 and became renowned for their extraordinary blessings. Some disciples of Chojé’s lineage who later demonstrated remarkable abilities in spreading the dharma may have been closely connected to this assembly’s blessings.

To this day, the Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly has been held for thirty consecutive years without interruption. Though no longer as grand as it was initially, many beings still connect with it, continuing their journey toward liberation under the assembly’s blessings.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE MAGICAL ILLUSION WEB MANDALA STUPA

After the successful completion of the Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly, Chojé decided to establish a sacred site where sentient beings could do prostrations, circumambulation, and confession. Rinpoche personally selected an auspicious location on the mountaintop northwest of the academy and planned the construction of the Magical Illusion Web Mandala Stupa.

Chojé meticulously designed the mandala stupa's layout based on the root verses of the *Tantra of the Web of Magical Illusion*, its commentaries, and associated sadhanas, after prudent reflection and careful planning. Inside the stupa, forty-two peaceful deities are housed, each possessing an aura of sacred majesty, inspiring deep faith in all who come to worship. Twenty-three halls surrounding the mandala stupa enshrine lineage holders and masters from the Eight Great Sadhana Teachings of Tibetan Buddhism, Han Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism, as well as the Three Roots and dharma protectors. Chojé also concealed numerous sacred objects within the mandala stupa, including one hundred ancient Indian buddha statues and terma statues from his personal collection, treasure chests containing sacred objects, and relics of Terchen Mingyur Dorje who vowed to heal diseases with his remains. These sacred objects imbue the mandala stupa with immense blessings, making it a supreme support for accumulating merit, purifying karmic obscurations, and dispelling illness and misfortunes.

For this great project, Chojé and Jetsunma Mumtso sponsored millions of yuan, dedicating their financial resources and efforts without reservation. Chojé once quoted the teachings from *The Immaculate Confession Tantra*, stating, "Whoever sees this mandala stupa, even if only once, will definitely not fall into the lower realms."

Chojé also explained the four levels of circumambulating the mandala stupa and their corresponding merits:

Lower level: Circumambulating 100 times can close the doors to the lower realms and ensure rebirth in the higher realms.

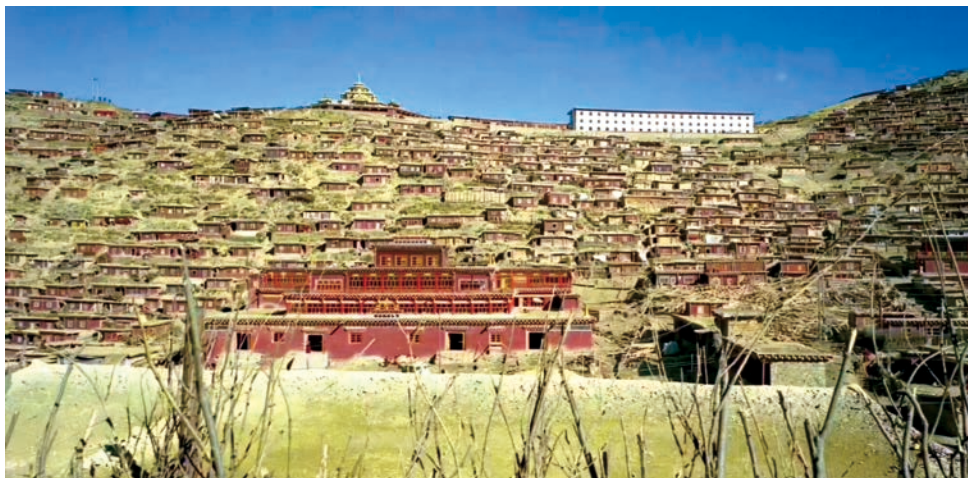
Middle level: Circumambulating 1,000 times can transcend the cyclic existence of the three realms and attain liberation.

Higher level: Circumambulating 10,000 times will lead to the attainment of the bodhisattva fruition in the realm of Sukhavati or other pure lands.

Highest level: Circumambulating 100,000 times will quickly perfect the fruition of buddhahood and achieve supreme enlightenment.



0.11: The Magical Illusion Web Mandala Stupa in its newly completed state



0.12: A distant view of the Magical Illusion Web Mandala Stupa

Chojé especially emphasized that each circuit around the mandala stupa must be combined with prostrations and recitation of the Hundred Syllable Mantra, with the number corresponding to that of the circumambulations. For example, circumambulating one hundred times requires one hundred prostrations and one hundred recitations of the Hundred Syllable Mantra. In this way, each circumambulation accumulates enormous merit and receives immeasurable blessings, making this a rare practice for swift accomplishment. As stated in *The Self-Liberation Empowerment of Profound Peaceful and Wrathful Secret Intent*, “Whoever sees the mandala will attain liberation and fruition of enlightenment within seven lifetimes.”

In those days, Lama Zabsang and I were jointly responsible for the construction of twenty-three halls and other auxiliary buildings, such as the prayer wheels on the lower level, the Mandala Hotel, and so forth. After two years of careful construction, the solemn and magnificent mandala stupa was finally

completed, standing majestically on the mountaintop with extraordinary presence. The surrounding environment, blessed by its influence, became increasingly pure and dignified, like a pure land, instilling spiritual tranquility and strength in all who visited.

Since then, thousands of devotees have come daily to pay homage, their devout footsteps continuing without interruption. Even tourists without religious faith, upon seeing, entering, or circumambulating the mandala stupa, naturally have seeds of liberation planted in their mind streams and form auspicious connections with the Buddhadharma.

HOLDING THE SUKHAVATI DHARMA ASSEMBLIES

At the beginning of the year, Chojé traveled to several places near Larung, consecutively holding several extraordinary Sukhavati dharma assemblies, encouraging the local Buddhists to vow to recite the name of Buddha Amitabha and engage in the pure land practices.



0.13: Dharma throne of Chojé in Khekor Township



0.14: Memorial hall for Chojé in Kangtsa

On March 23rd, Chojé arrived at the Khekor Township in the upper region of Serta and held a three-day Sukhavati dharma assembly on the nearby grassland, where Rinpoche bestowed the Amitabha empowerment and explained in detail the four causes for rebirth in the pure land of Sukhavati.

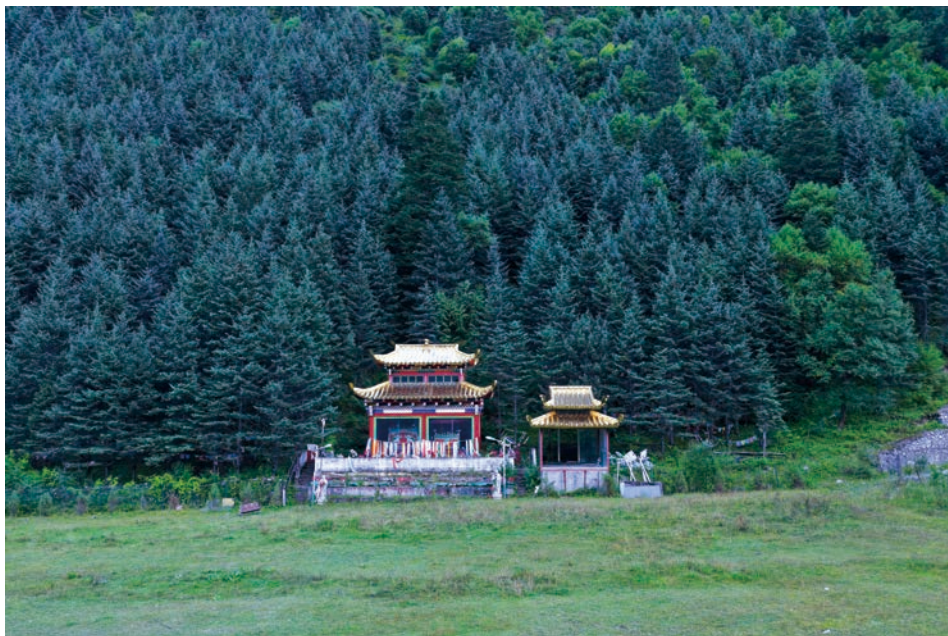
After the dharma assembly, Chojé went to Kangtsa in Serta to bless the foundation of the newly built Tashi Gephel Monastery and made sang offering to the local dharma protectors. Rinpoche recited *Tendrel Nyesel*, as well as the mara-subduing mantra that the Buddha recited at the time of his attaining perfect enlightenment. Additionally, to increase the merit of the local community,

Rinpoche recited the name of Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha numerous times. The people of Kangtsa had previously made many offerings to the Larung sangha, for which Rinpoche expressed his gratitude and gave teachings to the devotees.

Next, Rinpoche arrived in Drakmardo and reunited with his old dharma friend Lingsang Dorje, whom he had studied with in Sershul in his youth. The two shared a meal in a white tent, reminiscing about their student days. Afterward, Chojé gave teachings to the local devotees.



0.15: Khenpo Chadak and Tulku Tenzin Norbu assisting Chojé in ascending the dharma throne at Nenang Monastery



0.16: Memorial hall for Chojé at Nenang Monastery

On March 29th, at the invitation of Tulku Chokyi Nyima and others, Chojé traveled to Nenang Monastery in Drango, where he received a warm welcome with large crowds attending the reception ceremony. Starting the next day, Chojé held a five-day Sukhavati dharma assembly at the monastery,



0.17: Devotees of Nenang Monastery welcoming the arrival of Chojé

bestowing the Amitabha empowerment, the Avalokiteshvara empowerment, and the abbreviated Kalachakra empowerment. He taught the attendees how to purify body and mind through the four remedial powers used in the confession of negative actions.



0.18: Shakya Thang near Mimya Monastery

On April 4th, Chojé arrived at Mimya Monastery, stayed overnight, and gave teachings to the monks and devotees of the monastery. Then, starting from April 5th, Chojé held a five-day Sukhavati dharma assembly on the Shakya Thang near the monastery, where he bestowed the Amitabha empowerment and taught Ju Mipham Rinpoche's *Sun-like Instructions of a Sage*.



0.19: The scene of Sukhavati dharma assembly in Nyarong

On April 10th, Chojé traveled to Nyarong, stayed at Zhiwa Monastery, and gave teachings to the monks and devotees there.

On April 11th, Chojé continued to Thangkya Monastery and held an eight-day Sukhavati dharma assembly on the Thangkya Thang. At that time, monastics from more than sixty monasteries and devotees from the eight major tribes in that area lined up to welcome Rinpoche's arrival, creating a warm and grand scene. Devotees from various regions such as Amdo, U Tsang, and other places also came to participate in the dharma assembly.



0.20: Memorial hall for Chojé on the Thangkya Thang

Chojé bestowed the Amitabha empowerment, explained *Sun-like Instructions of a Sage*, and elaborated on the four causes for rebirth in Sukhavati. He particularly emphasized the importance of faith and aspiration, while also warning everyone to carefully abstain from the negative deed of abandoning the dharma and the five misdeeds with immediate retribution.

Chojé also quoted Changchup Dorje's prophecy, saying that anyone who forms a connection with him will be reborn in the pure land of Sukhavati. He encouraged everyone to sincerely confess wrongdoings, devotedly recite Buddha Amitabha's name, and create the most excellent conditions for rebirth in Sukhavati. Devotees at the dharma assembly made vows one after another, pledging to complete one million recitations of Buddha Amitabha's name to seek rebirth in Sukhavati.

During the assembly, many people witnessed relics descending from the sky, and numerous extraordinary auspicious signs appeared. This dharma assembly was one of the three largest Sukhavati assemblies in Chojé's lifetime, attracting tens of thousands of participants and creating a magnificent, unprecedented scene.

As the sutras say, "Whether it is where the Tathagata sits, where he walks, where he stands, or where he lies down like a lion, we should bow our heads in reverence to these sacred places." Every dharma seat where Yidzhin Norbu gave teachings in various locations has been carefully preserved by local monasteries, along with memorial stupas and halls built to allow future generations to remember the magnificent teaching events of those years. To this day, these places remain sacred pilgrimage sites for devotees to pay homage.

On April 20th, Chojé returned to Larung Gar and spent just two brief days teaching the *Thirty-Seven Precepts of the Bodhisattvas* to the entire sangha. Afterward, he bid farewell to his disciples at the academy, traveled to Dartsedo where he stayed for one day, and then made a brief stop in Chengdu before officially beginning his dharma propagation journey.





1st Stop

April 29th – May 17th

SINGAPORE

SCHEDULE

April 29th

Arrived in Singapore

April 30th

Bestowed refuge vows, bodhisattva vows, and tantric vows, and gave the Vajrasattva empowerment at The Concourse

May 1st

Taught on *The Essential Teachings of Mahayana Sutras and Tantras and the Stages of Practice*

May 3rd

Gave the *Peaceful Manjushri, Guru Dorje Drolu, and Vajrakilaya Gurkhukma* empowerments at the People's Buddhism Study Society

May 4th

Taught the first lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 5th

Taught the second lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 6th

Taught the third lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 7th

Taught the fourth lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 8th

Taught the fifth lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 9th

Taught the first lecture on *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, and visited the Bodhi Association and the Palyul Nyingma Buddhist Association in the noon

May 10th

Performed the deliverance ceremony for the deceased

May 11th

Taught the second lecture on *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*

May 12th

Taught the third lecture on *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, and visited the Singapore Buddhist Lodge in the noon

May 13th

Taught the fourth lecture on *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*

May 14th

Attended the Vesak Day buddha bathing ceremony and the Vesak Day banquet

May 16th

Gave the empowerment of the *Gathering of Vidyadharas* from the *Longchen Nyingtig* cycle at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

May 17th

Gave the *Peaceful Manjushri* empowerment

OFFICIAL DEPARTURE

When Chojé informed us that we would be travelling abroad, the first task was to apply for visas. Since there was no Singapore consulate in Chengdu, we had to go to Beijing to process them. After coordination and communication on various fronts, our visas were approved on April 12th, but we were granted only a short one-month stay.



1.1: Chojé's temporary identity card



1.2: Khenpo Sodargye's passport and one-month visa issued by the embassy of Singapore in Beijing

On the morning of April 29th, Chojé, along with our group, departed from Chengdu Shuangliu Airport, preparing to head to Singapore. After arriving at the airport, two officials suddenly appeared, holding a photo of Rinpoche. They took our passports and conducted a detailed check one by one. Afterward, everyone else's passports were quickly returned, except for Rinpoche's, which was withheld. They stated, "This person cannot leave the country. The others may proceed."

We repeatedly negotiated with them, emphasizing that if His Holiness could not leave the country, our trip would be meaningless. The venues, accommodations, and itinerary in Singapore had all been arranged, and if we couldn't go, it would cause significant losses... Unexpectedly, at the very last moment, they returned Rinpoche's passport, saying, "You may depart now." We breathed a sigh of relief, quickly completed the exit procedures, and hurriedly boarded the plane.

After more than four hours of flight, we finally arrived at Singapore's Changi Airport. This tumultuous experience marked an unforgettable beginning to our dharma journey in Southeast Asia.

NEWLY ARRIVED IN SINGAPORE

As is well known, Singapore is a very small country—its land area is less than one-tenth that of Ser-tar County—and the entire nation consists of just one city. Due to its lack of natural resources, Singapore relies heavily on imports for essential goods such as drinking water, grain, and fruits. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the country demonstrates remarkable development in economic, cultural, and educational fields, establishing itself as a major global business and financial hub, honored as one of the Four Asian Tigers.



1.3: A corner of Singapore in 1995

Before coming to Singapore, I had heard various descriptions about this country, which filled me with longing and curiosity. After getting off the plane, I was struck by how nice the local people were. They were courteous, warm, and friendly. At immigration, many officers displayed ex-



1.4: Airport staff escorting Chojé through customs

ceptional hospitality, even personally escorting His Holiness through customs, making our clearance process incredibly easy and smooth.

As we stepped out of the customs area, representatives from Buddhist organizations such as the People's Buddhism Study Society, the Singapore Buddhist Federation, and the Palyul Buddhist Association (now known as Palyul Nyingma Buddhist Association) were already waiting for us outside. Holding khatas and



1.5: President of the Singapore Buddhist Federation offering a khata to Chojé

flowers, they raised a bright yellow banner with the words "Warm Welcome to Chojé Jigme Phuntsok Jungne Palzangpo and His Dharma Delegation to Singapore" prominently displayed. This grand reception marked the official beginning of our journey in Singapore. Afterward, we took group photos at the airport as precious mementos of this dharma-spreading mission.



1.6: Chojé and his entourage with representatives of Buddhist organizations in Singapore



1.7: Chojé looking at everyone with a gentle smile

We then drove to Khoon Chee Vihara. This is a place with over 30 years of history which, although modest in size, serves as an international hub for Buddhist activities, providing a shared space for Buddhist groups from different countries to propagate the dharma. Over



1.8: Khoon Chee Vihara

the years, it has welcomed monastic and lay followers of various Buddhist traditions, including Theravada, Han Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism. Teachers from Bhutan, India, Korea, Switzerland, the United States, China, Australia, and other countries have all left their footprints of dharma propagation here. During our stay in Singapore, this would be our residence, while dharma teachings would take place at other venues.

When we arrived at the entrance of the vihara, a group of devoted followers had already gathered in neat rows. With deep reverence, they gently scattered rose petals while chanting *Wangdu* in unison. Amidst this beautiful shower of flowers and the melodious chanting, Chojé slowly stepped out of the car, received a heartfelt and warm welcome, before being respectfully escorted to his lodging.

PEOPLE'S BUDDHISM STUDY SOCIETY

The primary organization that invited Chojé to Singapore for this dharma teaching tour was the People's Buddhism Study Society. Comprising mainly lay practitioners, this group has been dedicated to the impartial propagation of the essential teachings of Theravada, Mahayana, and Tibetan Buddhism since its establishment in the 1980s. Many outstanding monastics in Singapore's Buddhist monasteries have received their training and education through this organization. To date, they have supported more than ten men and over twenty women in becoming monastics, with some even traveling as far as the Land of Tibet for deeper studies in the dharma. Notably, both the president of the Singapore Buddhist Federation and the abbot of Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery once studied and trained with this Society.

In its early years, the Society faced numerous challenges, including relocating as many as five times. However, none of these obstacles hindered its growth. Particularly in 1995, when Chojé personally visited Singapore to give teachings, the Society was in its golden period of development. Various departments—such as the videography team, reception team, publicity team, documentation team, editorial team, and dharma propagation division—were operating efficiently with a high level of organizational expertise. Every aspect of Rinpoche's dharma activities in Singapore was meticulously planned and executed by this



1.9: The present-day People's Buddhism Study Society

fellowship, reflecting their professionalism and unwavering commitment to spreading the dharma teachings.

As an overseas dharma center, maintaining substantial daily expenses was a necessity, making it inevitable to implement a fee system for dharma teachings. For the Dzogchen teachings given by Chojé, they set a fee of 500 Singapore dollars for members and 600 Singapore dollars for non-members. This arrangement not only ensured the center's operations but also showed a sense of respect for the dharma.



1.10: The statues of Guru Padmasambhava and Chojé's photograph enshrined in the People's Buddhism Study Society



大衆學佛研究會 PEOPLE'S BUDDHISM STUDY SOCIETY

新加坡1439郵區，哥里門街22號，門牌25號，電話：7469352
No. 25 Lorong 22 Geylang Road Singapore 1439 Tel: 7469352

大圓滿修習班報名簡介

我們都托廣超法師的尋法緣，副會長鈞輝居士的勾提，以及一群法友們的恩請，一切順利的話，晉美彭措法王眷將在今年五月初旬來到我國為我們主持法會及傳授修法，其中一項是——大圓滿——紅教極為殊勝的解脫大法，是我們曾集累過殊特的資糧和善緣，方能有此機會得以聽聞這門教授。

A) 傳法內容：

1. 由晉美彭措法王親自灌頂，講傳承和講解大圓滿修法，其中將是文殊大圓滿，現場由堪布作華語翻譯。本會設法現場錄音特供正行的同學日後有意復習可以依凭。
2. 我們將提供法本作為上課及自修用。
3. 由於傳承和修習次第，本法門屬於不對外公開的教授。
4. 暫定教授日期與時間：

大圓滿灌頂	95年5月3日	上午8時至10時
大圓滿傳承及講解	95年5月4-13日	上午8時至10時

B) 報名修學者的要求：

按照法王的教示，聽學大圓滿修法的學員須備有基本修學的要求如下：

1. 須是曾聽學過94年慈誠羅珠喇嘛所講的大圓滿前行。
2. 修習大圓滿前行所教授的加行，至少也要有少分加行的修持。
3. 曾在其他教派教授下修滿四加行的密乘行者，有意參學紅教大圓滿法，經由本會審核組的同意，也可以參加，但將有人數上的限制。
4. 大眾的理事及本法會籌委將特許入學，然須按照報名規格申請及繳費。

Since establishing a connection with Chojé Yidzhin Norbu, they have frequently invited esteemed masters from his lineage to confer empowerments and teachings, continuously studying and practicing both Sutrayana and Tantrayana teachings. Over time, their scale has expanded significantly, and their center has flourished, now developing into a seven-story building enshrining sacred images of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and lineage masters of both Sutrayana and Tantrayana traditions, including statues of Guru Padmasambhava and Chojé himself.

Furthermore, the Society has actively engaged in spreading the dharma through various mediums. The Buddhist magazine, *For You Information*, has been in continuous circulation for 36 years since 1989, serving as an important bridge connecting the Buddhadharma with the wider community.

In Singapore, the People's Buddhism Study Society demonstrates the unique advantages of lay practitioners in propagating the dharma. They invite outstanding monastics to serve as religious advisors and directors of the center, continuously seeking authentic spiritual teachers to impart Buddhist teachings and provide guidance, while independently managing and maintaining the center as laypeople. This model fully showcases

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灌顶传法吉祥法会

四川色达喇荣五明佛学院院长法王晋美彭措堪布带领随众一行七人于4月29日由南来我国主持灌顶传法吉祥法会。

西藏佛教开山祖师莲华生大士在《文殊根本续》中授记说“其后下流处，名号为我子，持此真智人行200人。”

1980年，法王于四川色达喇荣创建了五明佛学院，并获国务院代表大会副委员长班禅喇嘛的批准，成为全国各地的学僧进学僧人约200人。

1990年，法王晋美彭措应印度德里佛教学院院长邀请到印度传法，先后应邀到德里大学、萨迦、格鲁加哩等佛教大学及印度各地弘法，使藏传佛教在印度得到广泛传播。

1993年6月15日至9月15日，法王应美国、加拿大、德国、荷兰、英国及香港、台湾等地区众多寺院佛教团体的邀请，应邀到美国、加拿大、德国、荷兰、英国及香港、台湾等地弘法，使藏传佛教在世界各地得到广泛传播。

法王晋美彭措不但高深智慧、持戒清净，而且终身到处弘法利生，多年来也开展了许多基于山中的法会，这些法会是莲华生大士为了利益末法时代的众生，而埋藏在地上和山中，经法王晋美彭措的开掘，而法王本人，亦利利生，这也完了二百年前，大成就者莲华生大士的《未来预言》的预言。是晋美彭措如明，利生事业如如山，清静成就十方，殊胜其生世长。

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1.12: *For You Information's* introduction of Chojé

the potential of laypeople in spreading the dharma, helping more people realize that in today's world, studying and practicing Buddhism is not limited to monastic life—everyone can contribute to the flourishing of the dharma, thereby fulfilling the benefit of both self and others.

DHARMA TEACHING AT THE CONCOURSE

Chojé's teaching activities in Singapore were divided into two phases: public teachings and internal teachings. The first two days were public teachings, held on the first floor of The Concourse, a large shopping mall in Singapore. The central open space on the first floor frequently hosts various large-scale events, making it an ideal venue for a dharma assembly.

To prepare for this event, the organizers meticulously arranged the venue. A spacious dharma teaching platform was covered with a red car-



1.13: Exterior of The Concourse

pet, and a dignified dharma throne was placed in the center, becoming the focal point of the entire venue. Behind the throne hung five exquisite thangkas, with Vajrasattva in the center, flanked by Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha and Bodhisattva Manjushri on one side, and Buddha Shakyamuni and Guru Padmasambhava on the other. Above the throne, a prominent yellow banner read, "Auspicious Dharma Gathering for Empowerment and Teaching by Chojé Jigme Phuntsok Jungne Palzangpo." Around the venue, Buddhist flags fluttered in the air, adding to the solemn and sacred atmosphere.



1.14: Everyone respectfully welcoming the arrival of Choje



1.15: Elaborately arranged dharma teaching platform



1.16: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro serving as translator during Chojé's empowerment

On April 30th, Chojé bestowed the refuge vows, bodhisattva vows, and tantric vows upon the devoted followers, followed by the Vajrasattva empowerment. On May 1st, he taught *The Essential Teachings of Mahayana Sutras and Tantras and the Stages of Practice*, while Dakini Mumtso gave the Four-Armed Avalokiteshvara empowerment. This dharma assembly attracted over two thousand participants from different Buddhist traditions, including monastics, laypeople, and even some passersby who were drawn to the event out of admiration for Rinpoche.

The three floors of the shopping mall were densely packed with people. To ensure the smooth proceeding of the assembly, the organizers specially invited eight on-duty police officers to serve as dharma protectors. Additionally, more than a hundred volunteer workers from different regions, dressed in red, were distributed throughout the venue to maintain order. This was the first time such a large-scale Vajrayana dharma assembly had been held in Singapore.



1.17: The grand dharma assembly scene

After completing the empowerment, Chojé together with other masters from Southern, Tibetan, and Northern Buddhist traditions held empowerment blessing objects and distributed them one by one to everyone present. Since this Vajrasattva empowerment belonged to the four-level empowerments of Dzogchen, the blessing object in Chojé's hand was a crystal pillar symbolizing the word empowerment.

Generally, Chojé rarely conferred the four-level empowerments in public. However, to help more people purify their mind streams and eliminate heavy karmic obstacles through the confession practice of Vajrasattva, he made a special exception, similar to the teachings of *Liberation Upon Hearing* in the Tibetan regions. Even some shoppers in the mall, upon developing faith in Chojé, stepped forward to receive the empowerment.



1.18: Masters from Southern, Tibetan, and Northern Buddhist traditions distributing empowerment blessing objects to attendees

At the conclusion of the empowerment, Chojé said, “Many of us may not meet again in the future. But let us reunite in Amitabha’s pure land of Sukhavati. Tashi Delek!”

To this day, although the interior layout of The Concourse has changed, this place still carries the beautiful memories of that dharma assembly. Every time I visit Singapore, I always make a special trip to this building, standing quietly for a while, with palms joined, eyes gradually moistening, silently praying in my heart. As I recall how fortunate I was to receive the nectar-like wondrous teachings from my guru, those warm and sacred moments seem to reappear before my eyes.



1.19: Above: Chojé blessing devotees; below: President Huang of the People’s Buddhism Study Society receiving the blessing



1.20: Chojé holding a crystal pillar

THE THREE REFUGE VOWS FOR LAY PRACTITIONERS

On the afternoon of April 30th, Chojé imparted three sets of vows—pratimoksha precepts, bodhisattva vows, and tantric samayas—to lay practitioners at The Concourse. Regarding the refuge vows, Chojé gave the following teaching.

Generally speaking, lay precepts have many aspects, but today I'm primarily transmitting the three refuge vows for lay practitioners. Please listen attentively.

Anyone who is a Buddhist must take and uphold these refuge vows. As it is said, "The distinction between non-Buddhists and Buddhists lies in taking refuge; the distinction between Mahayana and Hinayana lies in motivation." The difference between non-Buddhists and Buddhists is whether one has taken refuge in the Three Jewels. Therefore, as practitioners, whoever has the refuge vows in their mind stream is a Buddhist; without these vows, one remains a follower of non-Buddhist paths.



1.21: Solemn and dignified dharma transmission scene

To develop the qualities taught in the Buddha's teachings, one must first possess the refuge vows; otherwise, there will be no opportunity

for such qualities to arise. Thus, the refuge vows are crucial. If you do not wish to experience short life, illness, poverty, and misfortune in this life, nor suffer the immeasurable torments of hell realms, hungry ghost realms, or animal realms in future lives, you should take the vows of refuge in the Three Jewels. Without refuge vows, one cannot fundamentally eliminate all suffering; whereas with refuge vows, one will enjoy longevity, health, abundant resources, and fulfillment of wishes in this life, and at the time of death will be reborn in the western pure land of Sukhavati.

It is especially worth noting that the Buddhist scriptures state that those who take refuge vows will be reborn in the pure land after death. All of you present have already taken refuge in the Three Jewels, particularly in Buddha Amitabha, so rebirth in the pure land will not be difficult. However, without the refuge vows in your mind stream, you cannot obtain perfect benefit and happiness in this and future lives.

If you wish to genuinely take refuge, you must make the following unwavering commitment in your heart: “From now

on, throughout all my lifetimes, my only guide is Buddha Shakyamuni, and I will not rely on any other guides; the dharma I practice is solely the teaching transmitted by Buddha Shakyamuni, and I will not practice any other teachings; my companions on the path are exclusively the followers of Buddha Shakyamuni, and I will not associate with those who dislike Buddhism or hold wrong views.” Aspiring to



1.22: Chojé's compassionate gaze

practice in this way is called *causal refuge*. Relying on the Buddha, practicing the noble dharma, and keeping company with the sangha with the ultimate goal of attaining buddhahood is called *resultant refuge*.

In summary, throughout all lifetimes, even at the risk of your life, never abandon the precious Three Jewels. Rely completely on the Three Jewels and sincerely pray to them. Please make this commitment and repeat the following refuge prayer: "I take refuge in the guru, I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the dharma, I take refuge in the sangha. Until I attain enlightenment, I will uphold the three refuge vows as a lay practitioner. Please, Venerable One, accept me." After reciting this twice, when you finish the third recitation and hear me snap my fingers, you will formally receive the refuge vows. At that moment, firmly think to yourself, "From today onward, I have become a Buddhist," and generate this commitment in your mind stream.

(After the third recitation, Chojé said "This is skillful means," and everyone responded "Excellent.")



1.23: Chojé looking at the people below the throne

Now you have received the refuge vows. The precepts of refuge are: From now on, you have taken refuge in the Buddha, so you must pray to the Buddha with faith and devotion every day without forgetting; you have taken refuge in the dharma, so you must try your best to abandon negative thoughts and harmful actions that cause suffering to sentient beings; you have taken refuge in the sangha, so you must avoid associating with those who disrespect the Buddha or the dharma.



1.24: Khenpo Sodargye attending beside Chojé

To reiterate, now that you have received the refuge vows, do not forget that you are Buddhists. Do not be someone who follows Buddhism today but turns to another belief system tomorrow. Instead, you should pray to the Three Jewels with unwavering determination and practice the true path diligently. If you can do this, you will certainly receive benefits from the Buddha's teachings.

Taking refuge is the starting point for upholding lay precepts, which include one part precept, fewer precepts, more precepts, and complete precepts. It is important that you gradually deepen your understanding of them and choose precepts suitable for your individual circumstances.

APPLYING FOR VISAS AT THE EMBASSIES

After arriving in Singapore, Chojé also wanted to take this opportunity to visit other Buddhist countries in Southeast Asia.

Thailand, a world-renowned Buddhist country, had long been a place Chojé deeply yearned to visit. After inquiring with locals, we learned that applying for a Thai visa at their embassy in Singapore was quite simple, with minimal paperwork required. Moreover, there were also invitations from Thailand welcoming Rinpoche. Thus, on the afternoon of May 3rd, we accompanied Rinpoche to the Royal Thai Embassy.

Located on Orchard Road, Singapore's most bustling shopping district, the Thai Embassy stood out as the only embassy in the area. It was said that originally in 1890s, King Chulalongkorn purchased a house and the surround land at this area, which marked



1.25: Thai Embassy

the beginning of a significant diplomatic presence at Orchard Road. At the center of the embassy compound was a two-story white building, which served as the visa office where we planned to submit our application.

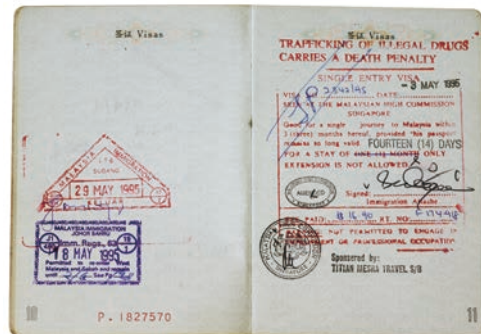
However, upon arrival, we discovered that while citizens of other countries could directly apply for Thai visas in Singapore, China was an exception—Chinese citizens needed to return to their home country to apply. This was somewhat disappointing. But despite the setback, we took a moment to appreciate the embassy’s architecture before leaving.

We then proceeded to the Malaysian Embassy. Though smaller in scale than the Thai Embassy, its architecture had a distinctive style. Since Malaysia and Singapore are friendly neighboring countries, the visa application process went very smoothly, and we quickly obtained a 14-day visa.



1.26: Malaysian Embassy

Chojé had also planned to visit Indonesia, as it was the sacred land where Master Suvarnavdipa practiced and where Venerable Atisha once traveled to seek the dharma. However, due to the longer processing time required for an Indonesian visa—and given that our entire trip abroad was limited to just one month—we had no choice but to abandon this plan.



1.27: Fourteen-day visa issued by the Malaysian Embassy

In reality, if policies had been more open at that time, Chojé might have been able to visit many more countries during his lifetime. Nevertheless, considering the circumstances of that time, it was quite an achievement that Rinpoche successfully obtained visas for certain countries.

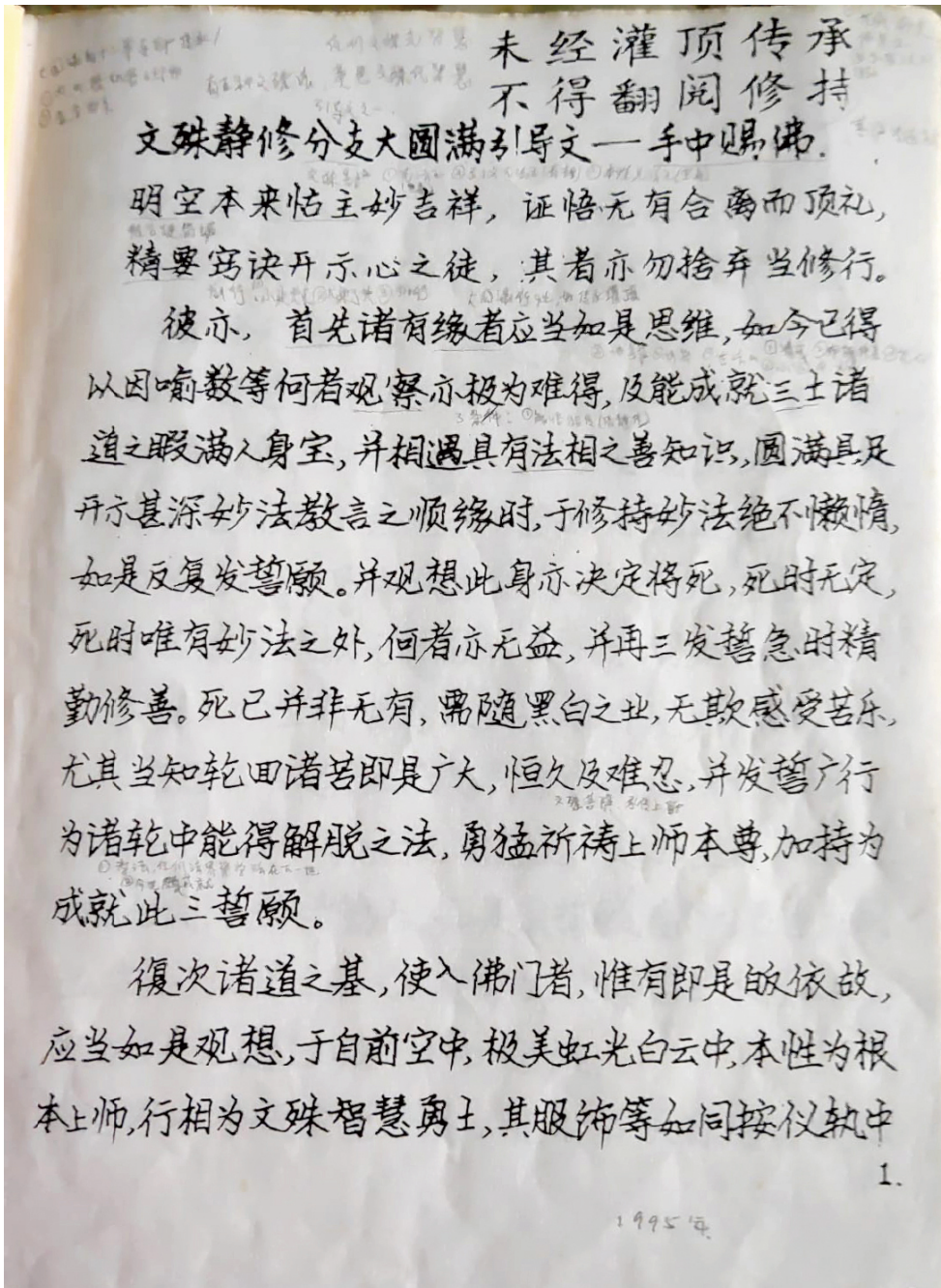
THE PEACEFUL MANJUSHRI: PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

Chojé Yidzhin Norbu once personally stated: “Among my many mind-terma teachings, the profound practices possessing close lineage blessings are the two empowerments of White Manjushri and Yamantaka; the teachings to be most extensively spread are the sadhana of *Peaceful Manjushri* and its practice manual *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*; and the teaching whose auspicious connection has never been contaminated is *Vajrakīlaya Gurkhukma*.”



1.28: Chojé giving teachings on Dzogchen

Among these, the *Peaceful Manjushri* is particularly profound and exquisite in content, yet simple and accessible in practice. Many practitioners have attained extraordinary realization by practicing this teaching. In his early years, Chojé transmitted this teaching to Tibetan practitioners at Larung Gar. Tulku Tendzin Gyatso meticulously recorded the lectures in Tibetan, and I later translated them into Chinese. At that time, Chojé personally approved the transcription and translation as a way to preserve this Dzogchen teaching for future generations.

1.29: Hand-copied text of the initial translation of *Peaceful Manjushri*

In 1993, during his dharma tour in the West, Chojé repeatedly expounded on the essential points of the *Peaceful Manjushri*, tailoring his explanations to the characteristics of Western practitioners. These teachings were compiled in the book *A Journey to the West*.

During this dharma tour in Singapore and Malaysia, Chojé transmitted this teaching primarily for the Chinese Buddhist communities in Southeast Asia. Throughout the teaching process, Chojé provided detailed explanations on many aspects of the practice, including the vajra posture, the postures of the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya, personally demonstrating the correct meditation postures and visualization methods. Due to the specialized nature of these teachings, the sessions were not open to the public, and participants underwent strict selection, with only 94 fortunate individuals from Singapore and 50 from Malaysia able to receive it directly. This teaching holds special importance. In the future, those who have received the Dzogchen empowerment and completed the five hundred thousand preliminary practices will undoubtedly achieve varying levels of realization if they apply these essential instructions in actual practice.



1.30: Left: Dharma listening certificate for Dzigchen practice class; right: People's Buddhism Study Society membership certificate

Remarkably, although Chojé always transmitted the same practice manual of *Peaceful Manjushri*, the pith instructions and style of his explanations varied distinctively according to the regions and the spiritual capacities of the audience. Each time one listened, far from feeling any sense of repetition, it was as if hearing entirely a new dharma teaching.

Perhaps for ordinary people, these instructions may not seem so important, but for those yearning to realize the nature of mind, every word and sentence spoken by Chojé is an invaluable treasure. For the past thirty years, I have carefully preserved these precious materials. This time, I have gone further by collecting more related content from various sources and compiling them into texts. Perhaps someday in the future, those who can taste the profound essence of these teachings will appreciate the effort and dedication I have put into this work.

THE FIRST LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On the morning of May 3rd, Chojé conferred three empowerments: the *Peaceful Manjushri*, *Guru Dorje Drolu*, and *Vajrakilaya Gurkhukma*. After granting the *Peaceful Manjushri* empowerment, Chojé suddenly said, “Today, I will give you the quintessential teaching that encompasses the wisdom intent of all buddhas of the three times. Please pay close attention.” After saying this, he swept his hand from left to right and asked, “Has anyone among you awakened?” This moment, resembling the direct pointing to the nature of mind in Chan tradition, left a profound impression on many people present.

From May 4th to May 8th, Chojé taught *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, the practice manual of *Peaceful Manjushri* at the People’s Buddhism Study Society every morning from 8:00 to 10:00.



1.31: Chojé bestowing blessings upon devotees with his vajra phurba

Before commencing today's teaching, I led you in chanting *Wangdu* three times in the traditional Tibetan manner. The melodious chanting style you use in Singapore is truly delightful and refreshing to hear. Now, I hope those of you with pleasing voices can lead us in chanting *Wangdu* three times again. I will record your chanting to bring back home. I'm sure we will play your beautiful chanting occasionally at Larung Gar. Let us now chant it three times again.

After the recitation of *Wangdu*, Chojé spoke the following words:

I hope you can persist in reciting this prayer, not only during this dharma gathering but also in your daily lives. Doing so will make the entire country of Singapore, and this dharma center in particular, more prosperous, thriving, and successful in every aspect. You will attain whatever you desire, have everything go your way, and achieve accomplishments in the practice of noble dharma. Additionally, the first spiritual connection between the practitioners of Singapore and us at Larung Gar was established through this prayer. This connection is extremely significant and should therefore never be forgotten.



1.32: Choje transmitting *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

It is also worth mentioning that Venerable Kwang Chao served as the first liaison between Buddhist practitioners in Singapore and Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy. He was one of the earliest individuals from abroad who came to our Buddhist Academy seeking dharma teachings. Since his arrival, members of the People's Buddhism Study Society in Singapore have continued to visit Larung Gar. Subsequently, the clear light teaching of Great Perfection—as precious as a wish-fulfilling jewel in this world—began to spread extensively throughout Singapore. All of this stems from Venerable Kwang Chao's kindness. When he first came to our Buddhist Academy, he generously offered tens of thousands of yuan to the sangha. His offering proved to be an auspicious sign, and since then, the living conditions of our entire sangha community have greatly improved. For instance, during this year's Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly, thirty-eight thousand monastics and tens of thousands of laypeople participated, and our Buddhist Academy was able to provide food and refreshments for all attendees. Also, thanks to the favorable circumstances created by Venerable Kwang Chao and others, we are

able to gather today to enjoy the precious dharma. We should all express our sincere, heartfelt gratitude to them.

After reciting *The Praise to Manjushri: Glorious Wisdom's Excellent Qualities* and the *Verse for Requesting the Dharma*, Chojé began to transmit the actual teaching:

Now let us generate bodhicitta. Listen attentively to this sublime dharma and practice accordingly, so that you may bring all sentient beings throughout the universe to the fruition of unsurpassable, complete, and perfect enlightenment—a state endowed with everlasting peace and happiness. Today, you will receive the teaching *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, the practice manual from the terma cycle of *Peaceful Manjushri*.

Although the teaching of Dzogpachenpo was not widely disseminated in the sacred land of India, the birthplace of Buddhism, it later flourished extensively in the Land of Tibet through the dedicated efforts of numerous great masters such as Guru Padmasambhava, the great pandita Vimalamitra, and the accomplished translator Vairotsana. Indeed, the Land of Tibet has perhaps nurtured the Great Perfection more profoundly than any other place in the world. From ancient times until the present day, countless individuals in this sacred land have directly achieved buddhahood through Dzogchen practice—a phenomenon that continues uninterrupted to this day. Despite the vastness of Buddhist teachings, this particular teaching of Dzogchen, which distills the essence of all dharma, remains extraordinarily rare throughout the three times of past, present, and future. Even within the Land of Tibet, this teaching is remarkably uncommon and difficult to meet with.

In the traditions of Manjushri practice, this bodhisattva manifests in two primary aspects—peaceful and wrathful. The practice I am teaching today belongs to Manjushri's peaceful aspect. The requisite empowerment for this practice was bestowed yesterday. Within this terma

cycle exist many rituals, sadhanas, and auxiliary practices, of which this manual is but one component. This particular text bears the name *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, signifying that through its practice, the fruition of buddhahood becomes as immediate as if placed directly into the palm of your hand.



1.33: Chojé leading the sangha on their pilgrimage to Mount Wutai, 1987

Eight years ago, I journeyed with ten thousand Tibetan pilgrims to Mount Wutai in the Han region of China. We were later joined by many Han and Mongolian devotees. Together, we offered prayers to Bodhisattva Manjushri, and each participant experienced extraordinary blessings and auspicious signs from Manjushri in accordance with their individual karmic connections. During this sacred pilgrimage, under Lord Manjushri's blessing, this *Peaceful Manjushri* terma emerged effortlessly from within my mind. Its blessing power is remarkably potent, and the transmission lineage is exceptionally direct. Between you and Bodhisattva Manjushri, there is no intermediary other than myself. Please understand that the more direct the lineage, the more powerful the blessing that flows through it.

*To Manjughosha, primordial lord protector, simultaneous
intrinsic awareness and emptiness,
I pay homage with the realization that you and I are beyond
union and separation.*

The true nature of your mind, the dharmata, is vividly present yet unborn; this is what we call Lord Manjushri. When you truly realize this nature, you directly perceive Bodhisattva Manjushri himself. He neither concentrates inward nor disperses outward, resembling the reflection of a person in a mirror. At the phenomenal level, you can witness the magical displays of Manjushri's enlightened body, speech, and mind manifested through his unobstructed power. Eventually, when you actualize the fruition of buddhahood, you will also possess all these magical displays of his enlightened body, speech, and mind. The key to attaining this accomplishment lies in realizing the nature of mind as it truly is—unfabricated and unrestricted. Here, the homage is paid not through ordinary means, but through recognizing the view itself—the fundamental nature of mind.

*I explain the distilled essence to you, my heart children,
Make sure you never abandon it, but earnestly put it into
practice.*

Placing Buddhahood within Reach is a practice manual that encapsulates the essence of all the 6,400,000 stanzas of the Great Perfection. It is an immensely significant instruction that can only be transmitted to disciples as precious to me as my own eyes and heart. It cannot be taught casually to others. Because all of you here today have completed the five hundred thousand preliminary practice accumulations and harbor a special yearning for the Great Perfection with devoted faith, I have decided to transmit this teaching to you.

Please never abandon this teaching but practice it earnestly. If you merely scratch the surface and are satisfied with a superficial understanding, you will hardly derive significant benefit from it. Regarding the essential meaning of this teaching, you must not settle for a shallow understanding, thinking “it is probably something like this” and then disregarding it. Such an attitude makes it unlikely for you to attain enlightenment through this teaching. Therefore, please fully comprehend the teaching and then engage in actual practice. Remember that to attain buddhahood, you must not neglect the importance of diligent practice.

When the blessings of Lord Manjushri entered my mind stream, all the sentences and meanings of this practice manual appeared to me in Tibetan. Therefore, it is not difficult for Tibetans to understand its meaning through their native language. Now that it has been translated into Chinese, I am uncertain whether you can directly understand it, or how challenging the translation might be for your comprehension. Regardless, the key is to thoroughly understand each word and sentence, grasping the meaning word by word and sentence by sentence. In our Tibetan tradition, this method is described as “moving like a tortoise”—proceeding slowly and steadily to thoroughly understand every word and sentence without missing anything.

After understanding the literal meaning, it is essential to grasp the fundamental method for actual practice. If you merely have a fair understanding of the words but fail to uncover their deeper meaning, there will be a disconnection between your theoretical knowledge and personal practice, rendering your practice ineffective. Therefore, it is crucial to thoroughly understand the profound meaning of this teaching.

If you find that you haven’t fully grasped the meaning during my teaching, you can seek clarification from Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and Khenpo Sodargye afterward. I believe they can explain every detail of this teaching clearly to you. I urge you to take this teaching seriously

from the very beginning to ensure that you understand both its words and meanings. This time, you can study this teaching step by step in a hands-on manner. First understand the meaning of the teaching, and then examine whether you are able to experience it in your practice. Beyond such practical guidance, even if you were to travel to the Tibetan regions, you could not find learning conditions more favorable than what you have now.

The reason is twofold. From my perspective as a teacher with thousands of disciples, I usually give teachings to grand assemblies and seldom provide such detailed and in-depth guidance to a small group of about one hundred disciples as I am doing right now. From the tutors' perspective, the two khenpos instructing you in your study and practice of the Great Perfection are among the most accomplished at Larung Gar Buddhist Academy, and almost nobody can surpass them. During these few days, I will be transmitting the manual, and these two khenpos are also present to instruct you and address your questions. I hope you will make full use of this rare opportunity to thoroughly understand this manual and learn how to practice it. Through this study, I believe your wisdom will be greatly enhanced. This is the important reminder I wish to impart to you, and please keep it in your mind.

The Rarity of Human Rebirth

All fortunate ones, first, you should contemplate the following:

Here, *fortunate ones* refers to individuals who have a profound understanding of the Great Perfection and immense faith in their guru. Such individuals are considered proper vessels for this teaching. These fortunate ones should initially approach their practice with this understanding: The preliminary practices should not be conducted hastily or perfunctorily, and it is imperative to approach them in a way that thoroughly internalizes all aspects of mind training they contain. If

you have properly and accurately internalized each aspect of mind training in the preliminary practices, the main practice will become much easier to accomplish. Sometimes, you may recognize the nature of mind simply by hearing one word from the guru or seeing him snap his fingers. However, if you have not mastered the essential points in your preliminary training, no matter how much time and effort you devote to the main practice, it will hardly yield any results. Hence, it is essential to first gain full mastery of the preliminary practice stages.

Now, I possess the jewel-like human body endowed with the freedoms and advantages. Such a human rebirth is extremely difficult to attain—as evidenced by examining causes and conditions, analogies, and numerical data—yet it enables me to accomplish the enlightened results of the paths for individuals of three levels of capacities.

First, contemplate this: The human body we currently possess, especially one that serves as the exceptional support for practicing the genuine dharma, is rare to obtain. From the perspective of causes, it would be impossible to obtain a human rebirth capable of practicing the dharma without having maintained pure precepts, gathered the accumulations of merit, and purified obscurations in past lives. In terms of numerical comparisons, sentient beings unable to practice the dharma—such as hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals—are countless, whereas human beings who have the opportunity to practice the noble dharma are exceedingly few. Analogically speaking, when you scatter beans against a smooth wall, only extremely few will stick to it when all outer, inner, and secret causes and conditions align. Similarly, obtaining a precious human rebirth is even more rare. Therefore, examining it from the perspectives of causes, analogies, or numbers, this human body is indeed precious and not easy to come by. Thus, you must first develop deep faith in the Buddha's teaching and then engage in dharma practice.

One might wonder, “What kind of benefits does this rare human rebirth bring?” Indeed, attaining a human rebirth holds significant benefits, as it allows you to achieve the results of the paths for individuals of three levels of spiritual capacities.

All that is virtuous in the world is encompassed within the paths for individuals of the three capacities. Many people practice Buddhism hoping to transcend the suffering of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals in the lower realms, and attain higher rebirths in the human and heavenly realms; these are referred to as individuals of lesser capacity. Some aspire to transcend all suffering in samsara and dwell in the peace of one-sided nirvana; they are called individuals of middling capacity. Those who aspire not only for their own liberation but also for all sentient beings to achieve buddhahood—the unsurpassable enlightenment that transcends the two extremes of samsara and nirvana—are known as individuals of greater capacity. In this present life, relying on this human body, regardless of which capacity you possess, as long as you practice the corresponding path diligently, you will surely attain its respective fruition.

Furthermore, I have encountered the qualified spiritual teacher who has imparted to me the profound and sublime dharma.

In this lifetime, you have not only obtained a precious human rebirth but have also encountered a guru who possesses all the required qualities of a qualified teacher. What qualifications, then, should a spiritual teacher possess? As described in the *Great Array Tantra*:

*Possessing wisdom and transcending worldly affairs,
Recognizing the truth of dharmata to its full extent,
Free of confusion toward the teaching disciples seek,
These are the qualities of a spiritual teacher of the Secret Mantrayana.*

A qualified teacher should be well-versed in the profound meanings of the Great Perfection and should be able to elucidate the teachings for others. Such a teacher firmly remains in the state of dharmata without distraction, exhibits minimal attachment to this life, and remains free of worldly concerns. When disciples have questions, this teacher can provide lucid and explicit answers. Conversely, those who teach the dharma for worldly gains, and practice the dharma with a political agenda or with minds clouded by greed or anger, do not conform to the attributes of a true spiritual teacher.

Merely having a spiritual teacher in our vicinity does not mean we will benefit automatically. What truly brings benefit is when the teacher imparts the ultimate of all teachings—the profound clear light teaching of Dzogpachenpo—according to the varying capacities of disciples.

Now, with all these favorable conditions present, I should reflect repeatedly and resolve to diligently practice the genuine dharma, avoiding laxity.

When endowed with all these conducive conditions, you should recognize the significance of practicing the pure dharma and then make a firm commitment to wholeheartedly engage in its actual practice.

The above completes a brief introduction to the practice of contemplating the rarity of human rebirth. Were I to elaborate on the guidance for this practice, its contents would fill hundreds of pages. However, here I have succinctly summarized its core essence. Everyone should contemplate the profound meaning conveyed in this teaching, while the more extensive explanations may be explored according to individual interest and need.

The Impermanence of Life

Contemplate that your body will inevitably die, but the time of death is uncertain. At that moment, nothing but the

genuine dharma will be of any help. Having understood this principle, resolve to quickly practice the dharma without delay.

This precious human body does not exist eternally, as all sentient beings will eventually face death. Masters in the Nyingma School such as Guru Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra, along with some of their lineage disciples, once proceeded directly to dakinis' realms or other pure realms without leaving behind their physical bodies. Apart from them, no one in this world has ever escaped the fate of death. Looking back just one hundred years, with very few exceptions, those who lived then are no longer present in this world. In a hundred years, we too will cease to exist. From this evidence, you must recognize that no one can escape the inevitability of death. Thus, it is essential for you to first acknowledge that you are bound to die.

Of course, except for those living in profound ignorance, most people understand that death is certain. However, what is more important is to realize that the time of death remains uncertain. No one can predict when they will depart from this world: It could be tomorrow, the day after, or sometime next year or the year after. Who can guarantee that you will still be alive on this same day next year? If everyone believes they have a long time to live and spends their lives pursuing only food, clothing, public fame, and material goods, they will reach the end of life without spiritual realization and remain helpless regarding their next existence. Therefore, you must cultivate a sense of urgency, relinquish all worldly activities—both significant and trivial—and live with contentment and less desire, with the attitude that “it is sufficient to have simple clothes to prevent coldness and simple food to fill my stomach.” With such a mindset, you should wholeheartedly concentrate on your dharma practice.

Furthermore, you cannot know how death will strike, as the causes that sustain life are exceedingly few while the causes of death are innumerable. Some people die of illness, some due to being possessed

by maras, some due to indigestion, and some perish in pursuit of fame and fortune—the causes are diverse. When life reaches its end, all accumulated wealth and possessions become meaningless, and only the dharma provides assistance. Even if someone becomes the ruler of the world with boundless wealth, they cannot take a single needle or a single attendant with them at death. Similarly, fame and power are useless in the face of death. What truly benefits one at death? It is solely the dharma one has practiced. If you have practiced the dharma, you will experience happiness and peace life after life; otherwise, you will experience only suffering. Therefore, you should deeply realize that only the dharma brings benefit at the end of life, and resolve to practice the dharma as soon as possible.

While contemplating the rarity of human rebirth, you should resolve to engage in dharma practice; while reflecting on the impermanence of life, you should resolve to practice the dharma without delay, because if you do not accelerate your dharma practice now, there is no guarantee you will have the opportunity tomorrow. If you begin to practice the Great Perfection at this moment, even without expecting significant accomplishments in this lifetime, enlightenment will surely be attained in future lives. Therefore, act immediately and practice the dharma as soon as possible, and the practice you engage in should be the Great Perfection.

The Buddhadharma is tremendously vast. In this era when human life span is short and people are entangled in myriad worldly affairs, attempting to practice all teachings would make it extremely difficult to attain accomplishment before death. The Buddha initially taught the shravaka teachings of the common vehicles during times when human life span was longer. During his presence in this world, the Buddha primarily taught the dharma of the Bodhisattvayana. In the current era, aside from the path of Dzogchen, people can rarely gain the direct benefit of liberation from other teachings.

Practitioners of the common vehicles may wonder, “Is practicing the Great Perfection really as simple and swift as claimed?” Indeed, it is. As long as you engage in actual practice of the Great Perfection, attaining accomplishment is not difficult at all. Just as having a plate full of delicious food placed before you—if you don’t eat it, your hunger will never be satiated; but immediately after eating, your hunger naturally diminishes. Similarly, if you don’t engage in Dzogchen practice, you won’t experience its profound blessing which is as direct as a sharp blade cutting through your body. However, if you do engage in the practice, you will certainly achieve corresponding accomplishments.

Through practicing the Great Perfection, many accomplished practitioners do not need to undergo ordinary death, or even when facing death, can transform their physical bodies into light. From Vajradhara of the past to present-day root gurus, many have achieved the deathless rainbow body, their physical form liberated as the *kaya* of light. If some practitioners haven’t reached such a state, they can still achieve a state of no regret at the moment of death. Even those with less advanced practice can take rebirth in the realm of Sukhavati and other pure lands with the ease of returning to their original home.

If you harbor doubts about what I have stated, consider personally visiting the Land of Tibet for investigation. Whether through modern technology for precise observation or through direct perception and valid inference, you will discover that these phenomena are not merely ancient legends. In the Tibetan regions, there are indeed many individuals who have achieved the rainbow body, their physical bodies dissolving into light without remainder. For example, among my gurus, dharma friends, and disciples, many have attained the deathless *kaya* of light. Other teachings may not address modern people’s afflictions as effectively as the Great Perfection, so it is the Great Perfection that you should practice. By doing so, even if you do not practice other teachings, you remain well-served, because the essence of

all Buddhadharma is encompassed within the Great Perfection. Therefore, it is vital to make it the core of your practice and dedicate yourself to it wholeheartedly.

The Infallible Karmic Law of Cause and Effect

After death, sentient beings do not cease to exist; rather, they will inevitably experience suffering or happiness driven by their negative or positive karma without any deception.

If the end of life simply meant complete annihilation or disappearance, like the extinguishing of a fire or the drying up of water, perhaps you wouldn't need to worry too much. In reality, however, death does not signify that everything returns to nothingness; rather, your actions in this life will determine your trajectory in future lifetimes. Specifically, virtuous deeds bring about happiness, and non-virtuous deeds lead to suffering. If you commit negative deeds, you will be reborn as hell beings, hungry ghosts, or animals. Even when reborn as humans, those with negative karma will experience various sufferings such as being tormented by illnesses, facing the death of loved ones or livestock under their care, and being overtaken by misfortune. Conversely, if you actively engage in virtuous deeds, you can temporarily enjoy a happy and fulfilling life within cyclic existence and eventually attain rebirth in a pure land such as Sukhavati.

In particular, among all the virtuous deeds you perform with your body, speech, and mind, the practice of the clear light Great Perfection allows you to attain perfect awakening immediately after you leave this world in this lifetime. Considering the infallibility of the law of cause and effect, you should regard even minor virtuous actions as significant and engage in them to the best of your abilities. Similarly, even minor negative actions should not be regarded as inconsequential; you should actively refrain from them and cultivate virtue. If you neglect the importance of abandoning evil and cultivating good, you

will lose the opportunity to have the state of Great Perfection arise in your mind stream.

The Suffering of Samsara

You must develop a deep and unwavering conviction that the suffering of samsara is boundless, long-lasting, and unbearable. With that conviction, resolve to follow the vast and extensive dharma path that can liberate you from samsara.

If you are reborn into lower realms due to having accumulated negative karma, the scope of suffering you endure is particularly extensive, and its duration is exceedingly long. For instance, by taking the life of another out of anger, you will be reborn into the Reviving Hell, which is the least severe of all hells. Upon being born there, driven by intense anger, you will engage in mutual violence, killing each other together with hundreds or even thousands of beings. With this crime as a cause, you will be propelled to even lower hells, thereby making your liberation increasingly difficult. Moreover, one day in the Reviving Hell is longer than hundreds of millions of years in the human realm. Calculated in this way, you will undergo immense suffering over numerous eons of time in human terms. As Lord Nagarjuna described in his *Letter to a Friend*,

*For one whole day on earth three hundred darts
Might strike you hard and cause you grievous pain,
But that could never illustrate or match
A fraction of the smallest pain in hell.*

In this world, if a felon is slowly stabbed with needles, spears, and awls every day, without succumbing to death, you can imagine the immense agony they will endure throughout life. Nonetheless, even this cannot match the slightest suffering in hell. The suffering experienced by hungry ghosts and animals is likewise terrible.



1.34: Chojé's compassionate smile

Therefore, you must use this human body to attain liberation and achieve the state of omniscient buddhahood. Should you miss this chance and be reborn into a lower realm, the opportunity for liberation will no longer be available to you. Hence, it is imperative for you to first cultivate a firm resolve to practice the dharma by contemplating the rarity of this human life, and then to make up your mind to engage in dharma practice immediately by contemplating the impermanence of life. At the same time, you must follow a vast and extensive dharma path, for practicing ordinary paths is insufficient. Only through practicing the clear light Dzogchen can you find great solace at the time of death, which is difficult to attain through other teachings.

Some may question, “Since one must solely practice the Great Perfection, does it mean one has to abandon all other teachings included in the common vehicles, the Mahayana Sutrayana, and the uncommon Vajrayana, and focuses exclusively on the Great Perfection?”

In fact, this is not the case. When you practice the Great Perfection, the essence of all other paths has been encompassed within it. As an excellent Tibetan master of Dzogchen would exemplify: “Externally, one needs to strictly observe precepts,” implying that outwardly, one must adhere to pure pratimoksha vows that flourish in Sri Lanka and other places; “Internally, one needs to properly cultivate bodhicitta,” meaning that inwardly, one must practice the complete bodhisattva path centered on benefiting others, which flourishes in lands like the Han regions and Japan. Beyond these practices, the Great Perfection requires neither the abandonment nor the adoption of any other teaching.

The clear light Great Perfection is the ultimate practice of all Buddhist teachings. It is comparable to how the Kosala measure contains six of its smaller measuring units, or just as six wooden bowls naturally include one or two wooden bowls, which is common sense to all. When one truly practices the Great Perfection, one simultaneously practices

all teachings of the Shravakayana, the Bodhisattvayana, and the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra without exception.

If one asks, “In that case, is the Great Perfection simply a collection of all other teachings?”

Not exactly. Rather, the Great Perfection is a teaching that elaborates the most profound practice methods not mentioned in other teachings. It presents many pith instructions that enable one to achieve buddhahood in a single lifetime. If one has full faith in Dzogchen and engages in actual practice with diligence and great courage, one can achieve buddhahood in as short as three or four years.

This completes the mind training on the four thoughts that turn the mind away from samsara. I have also explained the true essential points for meditation practice in teachings of the common vehicles that are flourishing in many countries south of Bodh Gaya, India.

Then, fervently pray to the guru and the deity so they will bless you to fulfill the above three resolutions.

Now, we turn to the instruction on relying on a spiritual teacher. Now that you have vowed to practice the Great Perfection, to engage in actual practice as soon as possible, and to embrace such a vast and extensive dharma path, if you want to actualize these three resolutions, you must seek the blessings of Lord Manjushri, who is inseparable and non-dual from your benevolent root guru. This inseparability and non-duality mean that the guru is none other than Lord Manjushri, and Lord Manjushri is none other than the guru. Currently, Lord Manjushri benefits sentient beings in various forms throughout the pure realms, while manifesting as a guru with a physical body of flesh and blood to those impure sentient beings who are to be tamed. You should therefore view your guru as Manjushri bestowing blessings upon you, cultivate devout faith in your guru and pray to him

single-mindedly. This is of paramount importance for this training. This concludes the brief introduction to relying on a spiritual teacher.

The rarity of human rebirth, the impermanence of life, the infallible karmic law of cause and effect, the suffering of samsara, and the reliance on a spiritual teacher are collectively referred to as the common outer preliminary practices.

Taking Refuge

Now, we begin the uncommon inner preliminary practices, which consist of two parts: taking refuge and generating bodhicitta. While taking refuge is also discussed in the common vehicles, here it primarily refers to refuge in the context of Mahayana.

The uncommon inner preliminary practices primarily belong to the category of the Sutrayana teachings, and flourish in many countries to the east of Bodh Gaya. The teachings on generation and completion stages are widely practiced in many countries to the west and north of Bodh Gaya. The teaching of the clear light Dzogchen that combines all these teachings into one, however, particularly flourishes in the Land of Snows in the north.

One might ask, “Why does it flourish in this sparsely populated region?”

The Buddha personally prophesied, “Approaching the final five hundred years when the Buddhadharma remains in the world, this teaching will flourish from north to north.” This indicates that the teaching of the Great Perfection will be widely propagated in the Land of Snows. The Buddha also foretold the appearance of Tubo dharma kings such as Songtsen Gampo, Trisong Detsen, and Tri Ralpachen. Additionally, the Buddha mentioned that great masters and panditas like Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra had close karmic connections with beings of the Snow Land of Tibet. As a result, this land became a

place in the world where the complete teachings of Buddhism flourish, and to this day, the dharma continues to thrive there.

Taking refuge is the cornerstone of all Buddhist paths.

To take refuge means to entrust oneself to the Three Jewels, never abandoning them even at the cost of one's own life, and always regarding them as the ultimate protection.

Regardless of which Buddhist path you practice, you must genuinely take refuge in the Three Jewels as a prerequisite. Without this foundation, your practice would resemble constructing a forty or fifty-story building without laying proper groundwork—rendering all floors unstable.

It is the doorway for you to enter Buddhism.

Generally speaking, numerous differences in view and practice exist between Buddhist and non-Buddhist paths. However, the defining characteristic that determines whether a practitioner is Buddhist lies in their commitment: if one takes the Three Jewels as permanent refuge, one follows Buddhism; if not, one follows a non-Buddhist path.

It is crucial to understand the true meaning of taking refuge. To take refuge in the Three Jewels, we must first recognize the Buddha as our root teacher and resolve to follow and practice the path that the Buddha revealed. Some may ask, "What is this path like?" It involves realizing that the nature of samsara is suffering, thus generating a strong desire for liberation, and committing to training in Buddhist practices to achieve this goal.

Other religions in the world today—such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism (which primarily worships deities like Ganesha, Sarasvati, and Maheshvara)—aim mainly for happiness, fame, and success in

this present life. Buddhism, on the other hand, aims primarily at achieving peace and happiness in future lives, while indirectly leading to happiness in this life. When you prioritize peace and happiness in future lives, it signifies that you have taken refuge in the Buddha.

After taking refuge in the dharma, you must refrain from harming sentient beings. Certain non-Buddhist traditions hold that killing beings might be considered virtuous under specific circumstances, which contradicts the fundamental tenets of Buddhism. For instance, Christianity emphasizes love and helpfulness toward all human beings, but traditionally has not extended the same prohibition against killing to animals such as horses, sheep, fish, and whales. Hinduism prohibits the killing of cows while permitting the slaughter of other animals for certain rituals. Islam permits the consumption of most animals except pigs. The compassion these traditions promote thus tends to have specific boundaries. In contrast, Buddhism advocates that all sentient beings without exception deserve both temporary benefits and ultimate peace and bliss—a truly universal perspective that is undoubtedly needed.

After taking refuge in the sangha, you should regard the sangha as companions on your spiritual path. You must abstain from harmful intentions or deeds toward others, while cultivating altruistic intentions and engaging in beneficial activities. The path that Buddhists follow is absolutely harmless and peaceful. The core principle of Buddhism is non-harming. This is vitally important. The doctrine of harming others does not exist in Buddhism, as the Buddha said, “Harming others is not the practice of a shramana.”

Buddhism as it flourishes in today’s world is categorized into three yanas: the Shrivakayana, the Bodhisattvayana, and the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra. What distinguishes these traditions? The Shrivakayana emphasizes observing the ten virtuous actions through body, speech, and mind, and refraining from even the slightest harm to others. The

Bodhisattvayana, building upon this foundation, places greater emphasis on benefiting others rather than on oneself. Followers of this vehicle are expected to actively engage in activities beneficial to sentient beings, whether directly or indirectly. Meanwhile, they resolutely abandon anything harmful to others, even if it brings immense benefit to oneself. The Vajrayana of Secret Mantra further perceives all phenomena that appear and exist as pure wisdoms and kayas in nature, thus achieving the twofold benefit of self and others effortlessly, swiftly, and with ease.

It is ideal to practice these three yantras together. If you consider the teachings of these three vehicles to be separate or contradictory, it becomes impossible to practice the Buddhadharma in its completeness. In such cases, whatever path you train in would remain a one-sided practice. Recognizing this, resolve to follow the complete dharma path in your actual practice.

In the past, when Lord Atisha arrived in Tibet, he posed questions regarding sutras, tantras, and sciences to Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo, a scholar of outstanding reputation among Tibetan intellectuals. Rinchen Zangpo knew all the answers and responded effortlessly. Lord Atisha remarked, “You are truly remarkable. With a great master like you in Tibet, it is unnecessary for me to come.” Rinchen Zangpo then shared his method of practice: he meditated on Shrivakayana teachings on the first floor of his temple in the morning, Bodhisattvayana teachings on the second floor at noon, and Vajrayana of Secret Mantra on the third floor in the afternoon. Hearing this, Atisha said, “The manner of your practice is mistaken. Now it seems that it is still necessary for me to come to Tibet.” From Lord Atisha’s response, you should understand that all Buddha’s teachings share fundamentally the same essence—just as a sugar cube tastes equally sweet throughout. Therefore, understand how to practice them all together in a single meditation session.

Some practitioners of the Shravakayana hold negative opinions about Vajrayana teachings, while some practitioners of the Secret Mantra Vajrayana regard Shravakayana teachings as inferior. Such views can lead to the misconception that “some Buddhist scriptures are superior to others,” thereby committing the fault of abandoning the sacred dharma. In today’s Land of Tibet, the dharma flourishes in the form of approximately one hundred and eight volumes of sutras, or the Kangyur, which contain the complete practice methods of all three vehicles. These should be practiced together. It is essential to recognize that viewing the yantras as contradictory constitutes a grave offense of abandoning the sacred dharma.

The core message I wish to convey is this: as my disciples, you must first understand that the teachings of the three yantras complement rather than contradict each other. You should then practice them impartially and propagate them equally. With the understanding that these teachings share the same ultimate intent, strive to guide sentient beings onto the Mahayana path as effectively as possible. This is my sincere hope.

I emphasize this point because without understanding the unified intent of the three yantras, those who uphold Buddhist teachings will become divided, resembling the separation between Buddhists and non-Buddhists. Such division would impede Buddhism’s widespread propagation and limit its benefit to sentient beings worldwide. Therefore, use your intelligence to contemplate deeply until you truly understand the harmonious nature of all Buddhist vehicles. Based on this understanding, learn to practice their teachings simultaneously within a single meditation session and share this integrated approach with others.

Thereby, clearly visualize the object of refuge as described in the root sadhana. (In the state of emptiness, visualize that in the sky before you, among a vast expanse of magnificent rainbow light and white clouds is your root guru in

essence, appearing in the form of Manjushri Jnanasattva. He smiles serenely, appears youthful, and is graced with perfect signs and marks. Orange in color and brilliant as rainbows, he is adorned with jewels and silken ornaments. His right hand wields a wisdom sword in the air while his left hand holds an utpala flower bearing a volume of scripture. He sits majestically in the full-lotus posture upon a lotus and full-moon seat. From every pore of his body, countless mandalas of self-occurring tantras emanate. Throughout all directions—cardinal and intermediate, above and below—an expanse of densely arrayed rainbow rays of light pervades, within which naturally appear lineage gurus, dakas, dakinis, and dharma protectors in a gathering so vast and incalculable, like specks of dust in sunlight.)

Having visualized this, contemplate, “From now until perfect enlightenment, I take refuge only in you and follow your instructions. Until I attain the same fruition as yours, my lord guru, I will continuously and diligently practice together with companions who share the same view and conduct.” Making such a commitment constitutes the approach of taking refuge in accordance with the common Sutrayana tradition.

The essence and embodiment of the Three Jewels are the guru. Relying solely on the guru corresponds to taking refuge in the Buddha in the common Sutrayana tradition; committing to follow only the guru’s teachings and instructions is taking refuge in the dharma; and pledging to practice continually and diligently with companions of the same view and conduct is taking refuge in the sangha. The contemplation method here differs slightly from the Sutrayana tradition in that the Three Jewels are subsumed within the guru, and one takes refuge solely in the guru.



1.35: Chojé sitting on the dharma throne

Abide in the realization of your own mind’s nature—the great original purity; this is Manjushri Jnanasattva on the ultimate level. Maintain this state as it is recognized; this represents the specific approach of taking refuge in this practice that is uncommon to others.

Having recognized that your mind’s nature is Lord Manjushri, rest in this state of realization. This represents the approach to taking refuge particular to the Great Perfection tradition.

The reason your mind is carried away by various discursive thoughts is that you have not yet realized the mind’s true nature as it is. Upon realizing its true nature, you directly perceive Bodhisattva Manjushri. Even without proper realization, the mind’s nature remains Manjushri. To take refuge in this approach unique to the Great Perfection path, first recognize this inherent nature of mind and then sustain that recognition.

Remain in this state without deviating from it and chant the refuge verse as many times as possible:

གཞི་དབྱིངས་ཀ་དག་གཞོན་ལུ་བུམ་པའི་སྐྱུ།
zhi ying kadakoln zhönnu bumpé ku

*The ground is primordially pure space, the youthful
vase kaya;*

གདངས་རྩལ་མ་འགགས་རང་རིག་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས།
dang tsal magak rangrig changchub sem

*Its radiant energy is unceasing—my own awareness,
bodhicitta*

ངེས་དོན་འཇམ་དཔལ་དཔལ་བོའི་བདག་ཉིད་བྱ།
ngedön jampal pawö daknyi du

Is of the nature of the hero Manjushri on an ultimate level.

རང་ངོ་ཤེས་པའི་ངང་ནས་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆོ།།

rang ngo shepé ngang né kyab su chi

In recognition of this, my own true essence, I take refuge.

Recite this verse as much as you can. Finally, visualize the guru dissolving into light and then into you.

THE SECOND LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On the morning of May 5th, Chojé continued the teaching on the practice manual of *Peaceful Manjushri* at the People's Buddhism Study Society.

You have just recited *Wangdu* in a very melodious tone, creating an auspicious dependent arising. We Tibetans often say that everything relies on dependent arising, so we must observe it carefully. Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy has many branch centers throughout different cities and provinces in China. Compared to them, your way of chanting *Wangdu* is more pleasant-sounding. This creates a favorable dependent arising for us to be even more tightly connected through the dharma in the future, which will play a significant role in propagating the dharma and benefiting sentient beings. Please keep this in mind.

Although our Buddhist Academy doesn't engage in extensive prayer-chanting activities like other monasteries and centers in the Land of Tibet, we do maintain certain chanting traditions. It would be truly beneficial if you could learn to chant some prayers in the Larung style, through which we will forge closer connections in the future.

For me personally, this is my first visit to Singapore and possibly also my last. In the future, other Tibetan lamas may come to Singapore to give teachings, but their visits likely won't require the logistics that mine has. Though I don't deliberately present myself as a great lama,

for various reasons, I must travel with a sizeable entourage comprised of an attendant, two translators, a doctor, and others. Despite my efforts to reduce the number in my party, it remains necessary to have seven people accompany me this time. This has undoubtedly created considerable demands for your dharma center, the People's Buddhism Study Society, regarding accommodations and other arrangements. You regard your center and Larung Gar as one unified Buddhist establishment, as do we. In the future, you may visit the Land of Tibet, and we may return to Singapore. Through such interactions, we can maintain our close ties.

I hope that while studying and practicing this manual, you will observe your minds to see if any of the states mentioned arise within you. I firmly believe this teaching will greatly enhance your spiritual development. Why such confidence? Because when I first met you devotees, a profound joy welled up in my heart, as if encountering dear friends and family members. This sentiment stems from our karmic affinity from past lives. Otherwise, meeting complete strangers would hardly evoke such joy. I have visited many places in the Han regions of China including Beijing, Mount Wutai, and Chengdu; I have also traveled to India, Nepal, Bhutan, the United States, Canada, and France. Yet nowhere have I experienced the comfort, joy, refreshment, and physical well-being that I feel during this visit. This indicates that we—teacher and disciples—share a mutual and deep karmic connection with this teaching.

As mentioned yesterday, Venerable Kwang Chao initially provided financial support for our Buddhist Academy. Since then and continuing to the present day, Larung Gar has established cabins for those of you who come seeking the dharma. Although these cabins are simple and small, they attract many disciples who continuously settle at Larung Gar for dharma study and practice. They have full faith and yearning

for the Great Perfection and have attained varying degrees of experience and realization through actual practice. I hope you will also practice Dzogchen diligently. Personally, at my advanced age, my days are numbered. While I may not be able to guide each person present here to the state of perfect buddhahood during my lifetime, I assure you that I will do my utmost to help most of you achieve the state of “dying without regrets.” Please remember this. These are sincere words from my heart, not mere rhetoric.

Now, let us begin the actual teaching:

The teaching you will receive today is *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, the practice manual of *Peaceful Manjushri*. It is a teaching that arose effortlessly from my expanse of awareness as the blessings of Manjushri entered my mind stream. In the previous lecture, I expounded on the teachings corresponding to the common vehicles. Among these, the practices on the rarity of human rebirth and the impermanence of life help you sever attachment to this life; the practices on the infallible karmic law of cause and effect and the suffering of samsara help you relinquish attachment to future lives and to the entire cyclic existence of samsara. I have completed the instructions on these four thoughts that turn the mind away from samsara. Among the teachings for beginners in the Mahayana path, taking refuge and generating bodhicitta constitute two crucial instructions. Of these two, taking refuge means making an unwavering commitment that even at the cost of one’s life, one will never abandon the Three Jewels. This guidance was completed yesterday. Now I will begin the teaching on generating bodhicitta.

Generating Bodhicitta

Contemplate how wonderful it would be if sentient beings, who are constantly tormented by endless suffering, could be liberated from that suffering!

Generating bodhicitta is a unique practice of the Mahayana of sutra tradition. If one has aroused bodhicitta, one embarks on the bodhisattva path of the Great Vehicle. Without bodhicitta, any practice one engages in falls only under the category of Shrivakayana. Therefore, the key to distinguishing the Great Vehicle from the common vehicles lies in the presence of bodhicitta.

There are two prerequisites for generating bodhicitta: great compassion focused on all sentient beings and great wisdom directed toward fully enlightened buddhahood.

The great compassion focused on all sentient beings requires us to first recognize that throughout all our lifetimes wandering in samsara since beginningless time, every being has been our parent, even those as tiny as mole crickets and ants. Sometimes they became our fathers and sometimes our mothers. When they were our parents, they cared for us just as our present parents do, providing us with their best food and clothing us with their finest garments. Through their meticulous care, tender love, and kind acts, they guided us through every step of our growth. They bestowed upon us immense kindness and grace. Therefore, you must first recognize that all beings have been your parents and then recall their kindness.

However, although all sentient beings long for happiness, they do not know how to accomplish its causes, which is virtue; although they wish to avoid suffering, they have not eliminated its causes, and instead continually commit the ten non-virtuous actions. Their actions directly contradict what they truly desire. They are as blind as an unsighted person lost in the wilderness. They are truly pitiable! You need to cultivate such an attitude toward these sentient beings—this concerns the first aspect of bodhicitta, the compassion focused on all sentient beings.

Reflect in this way until intense compassion arises and tears spring from your eyes.

Continue to contemplate, “I must accomplish buddhahood that provides me with the ability of saving and liberating all sentient beings.

Merely wishing for all sentient beings to be liberated from suffering does not accomplish their actual liberation. You must also strive to find ways to liberate them from the causes of suffering—karma and mental afflictions—and from the resulting three types of suffering, and to establish them in permanent peace and bliss. However, presently you lack the capacity to help them, just as an elderly woman without arms watches helplessly as her son is swept away by a torrent. You possess only a compassionate heart but lack the ability to liberate sentient beings. Therefore, you must seek this ability, cultivating such an aspiration in your mind.

What does the ability to liberate sentient beings refer to? It is attaining the fruition of buddhahood. Once you attain buddhahood, you can establish all sentient beings in the state of perfect buddhahood in a permanent, pervasive, and effortless way. Therefore, you must generate the aspiration: “May all sentient beings, both myself and others, become buddhas.” This concerns the aspect of great wisdom directed toward fully enlightened buddhahood.

Only when your intention encompasses these two aspects have you truly generated bodhicitta in your mind.

“The path that enables me to attain buddhahood smoothly and swiftly—without enduring prolonged hardship—is none other than the clear light teaching of Dzogpachenpo. Therefore, I must engage in the actual practice of the Great Perfection.”

Then, abide in the great placement beyond all extremes [...]

To attain buddhahood, one needs to gather the two accumulations and purify obscurations. Without proper causes and conditions, buddhahood can never be achieved. Although the common teachings of the Great Vehicle present extensively how to accumulate merit and purify obscurations, following that path, even with the greatest effort, one will still take as long as three countless eons to achieve buddhahood. With each eon equivalent to innumerable billion years in the human realm, the time needed to reach buddhahood following the path of the common Mahayana teachings is far beyond the measure of human life span. Without gathering accumulations and purifying obscurations over such a prolonged period, one cannot reach buddhahood. Moreover, during this process, one must undergo all sorts of ascetic practices, including significant austerities such as sacrificing one's head and limbs. This path clearly requires an immense amount of time, greatly delaying one's ability to benefit sentient beings.

However, practicing the path of the Great Perfection differs fundamentally. It does not require long-term arduous practices and enables practitioners to attain full awakening with ease and joy. If practitioners possess extraordinary diligence and embrace this path with full faith, they may even develop remarkable abilities to benefit sentient beings in as short as one month.

In order for all sentient beings to attain buddhahood, you should aspire to practice the path of clear light Dzogpachenpo; such an intention is called aspirational bodhicitta. To fulfill this aspiration, resolve to engage in the actual practice of this path and wholeheartedly abide in the realization of the clear light Great Perfection; this is practical bodhicitta. You should meditate by integrating these two aspects of bodhicitta, which embodies the ultimate essence of the Mahayana of sutra tradition.

In the actual practice of generating bodhicitta, visualize Manjushri in the space before you, inseparable from your root guru, as described in the root sadhana, and then make your vow before him.

[...] and recite the prayer of generating bodhicitta as many times as possible:

ལོ་བུར་འབྲུལ་སྣང་སྐྱུ་མའི་གོང་ཁྲིར་ལ།
lobur trulnang gyumé drongkhyer la

In the illusory city of incidental deluded perception,

ཨ་འཇམས་ཞེན་པས་ཁོར་མོར་འཕུན་པ་རྣམས།
até zhenpé khormor chenpa nam

Beings roam endlessly through clinging to things as real.

ཡེ་གོལ་ཚོས་སྐྱུ་འི་ས་ལ་དབྱགས་དབྱུང་ཕྱིར།
yedrol chökü sa la ukyung chir

To bring them all to the dharmakaya's primordial freedom,

མཐའ་གོལ་ཙོག་བཞག་ཆེན་པོར་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་དོ།
ta drol chok zhak chenpor semkyé do

I generate bodhicitta in the great placement beyond extremes.

Driven by karma and mental afflictions that are temporary and adventitious, deluded sentient beings stubbornly cling to all appearances of samsara as solid existences, which in reality are insubstantial, illusory, and dream-like. Due to their blind attachment, they continuously wander in samsara. Although they inherently possess the dharmakaya's primordial freedom, they have not recognized this. In order to help all sentient beings attain ease in primordial freedom, or to enable them to actualize this state, you commit yourself to practicing the path of the clear light Dzogchen. Call upon the blessings of the root guru so that you may practice the clear light Dzogchen, perfect the four visions on this path, and actualize the nonduality of the two kayas, thereby smoothly and swiftly benefiting sentient beings as infinite as space.

With this contemplation, recite this verse one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand, or even one hundred thousand times.



1.36: Chojé compassionately looking at the audience

Finally, visualize that from the heart centers of the noble beings who are the objects of refuge, infinite light rays radiate to you and all other sentient beings, purifying all your negative karma and obscurations without remainder. Then, your bodies melt into light and dissolve into the object of refuge. Rest in meditative equanimity, free from all fixation.

Yesterday, during the empowerment, you all received the bodhisattva vows. In your everyday life, you should also make this aspiration, “In order for all beings to attain buddhahood, I commit myself to practicing the clear light Great Perfection.” From the moment the bodhisattva vows arise in your mind stream, you must embrace a key discipline. What is it? If something directly benefits sentient beings,

you must undoubtedly engage in it; even if it benefits them indirectly, you must also strive to do it. Conversely, you should avoid anything that does not help sentient beings at all. This is the fundamental discipline.

However, it is indeed challenging for beginners to be completely altruistic without any consideration for themselves. Even so, you should diminish self-concern and place the welfare of others at the forefront. This is the practice of a bodhisattva.

The key difference between the Shravakayana and the Mahayana Sutrayana is their focus. The Shravakayana primarily emphasizes one's own spiritual benefit, with others' welfare as secondary. In contrast, the Mahayana Sutrayana teaches practitioners to gradually release self-concern and strive to create profound benefit for others, recognizing that true self-realization cannot occur without benefiting others.

Pursuing solely one's own benefit is unwise. As Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltzen, a true emanation of Lord Manjushri, taught, "For those who seek great and extensive benefit for themselves, benefiting others is the skillful method. For those who desire great and vast enjoyment, even a small act of giving is the key." To achieve significant benefit for yourself, you must first benefit others. Otherwise, self-benefit remains elusive. Consider business as an example: If someone seeks substantial profits but neglects to help, please, and bring joy to customers, they ultimately cannot achieve their own goals. On the other hand, if one hopes to receive abundant benefits, starting by giving even a small offering will eventually yield a two or three-fold return. Therefore, even Shravakayana practitioners who primarily seek their own benefit must recognize the importance of benefiting others. From now on, we should prioritize others' welfare and work to eliminate self-centered thinking. Only then can we truly become bodhisattvas.

If asked, "How should one practice the bodhisattva path?" We can turn to the Indian master Shantideva's wisdom:

*The pains and sorrows of all wandering beings—
 May they ripen wholly on myself.
 And may the virtuous company of bodhisattvas
 Always bring about the happiness of beings.*

Contemplate in your heart: “May the mental and physical sufferings of all sentient beings ripen upon my mind stream, and may they experience the boundless joy and happiness that bodhisattvas experience.” During breathing practice, with each exhale, visualize offering all your goodness, virtue, happiness, and peace to all sentient beings so they may be liberated from suffering and enjoy happiness. With each inhale, visualize taking the suffering and misfortune of all sentient beings upon yourself. Maintain this contemplation continuously.

The method of benefiting others aligns with these verses from *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*:

*And now as long as space endures,
 As long as there are beings to be found,
 May I continue likewise to remain
 To drive away the sorrows of the world.*

You should contemplate: “Until space itself is exhausted, there are always beings to be liberated; until sentient beings are all liberated, may I remain in samsara to benefit them. May I eliminate all their pains and sufferings rather than seeking my own comfort.” Make this virtuous aspiration deep in your heart. These teachings embody the perfect thought and the perfect conduct of a bodhisattva—the essence of the bodhisattva path.

Let me ask you: Have you generated the intention to prioritize others’ benefit over your own, and to continue working for their welfare until all sentient beings attain liberation? Such a transformation cannot

happen all at once. Unlike changing a cloth's color, which occurs immediately, this transformation requires gradual effort to make your altruistic intention overcome self-centered attitudes. If you wish to transform your mind this way, please raise your hand. (At this point, Chojé and all the disciples raised their hands without exception.) I also raised both my hands and vowed: "From now on, until space itself ends, I will do my best to benefit sentient beings, just as Manjushri does."

Although this practice manual doesn't explain the Shravakayana, Mahayana Sutrayana, and general Secret Mantra Vajrayana teachings in detail, they are essential for those pursuing the Great Perfection. Without relinquishing attachment to samsara—especially to this present life—and without striving solely for future liberation, you cannot become receptive to the Great Perfection. Begin by practicing according to the teaching, "If you are attached to this life, you are not a true spiritual practitioner," meaning genuine dharma practice is impossible while desiring worldly achievements. Once you develop stability in this understanding, realize that "If you are attached to your own self-interest, you have no bodhicitta." When you seek only personal benefit without considering others, the signs of the Dzogchen path cannot arise in your mind. Therefore, understanding the Mahayana Sutrayana teachings prepares you properly for Dzogchen practice.

These teachings should be practiced sequentially. First, practice the Shravakayana teachings, then gradually learn and implement the Bodhisattvayana and general Vajrayana teachings. When all these practices become stable, realizing the Great Perfection state becomes effortless.

However, during this current guidance period, we lack sufficient time for you to practice each instruction thoroughly. Ideally, you should practice each instruction for an extended period until reaching stability before advancing. Never underestimate the preliminary practices

by focusing only on the main practice. Without the foundation of preliminary practices, you cannot realize the state of the main practice.

Now, I will teach the general practices of the Secret Mantra Vajrayana. These consist of two main instructions: the generation stage, where one visualizes the deity, and the completion stage, involving visualization of the winds, channels, and bindus. Here, I will focus on the generation stage instruction of guru yoga. To practice guru yoga effectively, one must first establish a proper relationship with a qualified guru. This process involves three phases: carefully observing the guru initially, properly relying on the guru during the intermediate phase, and ultimately learning to embody the guru's wisdom and conduct—through which one can attain buddhahood.

First, the initial phase of careful observation: Without proper assessment, if you hastily receive teachings from someone who presents as a dharma teacher but lacks proper qualifications, it can harm both your present and future lives, as well as those of others. Conversely, relying on a genuine, qualified guru will help fulfill all your aspirations and spiritual goals. Therefore, it is crucial to observe potential teachers thoroughly before committing to them. Begin by considering others' informed perspectives about the teacher, then engage your own discernment and analysis. Only after confirming that the teacher possesses the necessary qualifications should you follow their guidance.

You might ask, "How do we discern a guru's qualities or shortcomings during this observation period?"

In our current era, some individuals appear to teach the noble dharma while actually being motivated by worldly concerns such as fame, wealth, or political status. Receiving teachings from such individuals will ultimately prove harmful. A qualified teacher or genuine guru should possess authentic realization in various paths—the Shravakayana, the Mahayana Sutrāyana, the general Secret Mantrāyana, and the Great Perfection. They should have gained personal experience

and realization of these noble teachings and demonstrate the ability to effectively transmit them to diverse students according to their needs.

Second, the intermediate phase of proper relationship: When following a guru, you need to establish a beneficial connection and please the guru. The supreme method is through practice-based offerings: diligently studying and teaching the dharma of transmission, engaging in actual practice to cultivate the dharma of realization, and living virtuously while abandoning harmful actions. If this level of commitment is beyond your current capacity, you can cultivate a positive relationship through service offerings—supporting the guru’s activities and mission in whatever ways you can. A third approach involves material offerings—respectfully offering your valued possessions and resources to the guru with sincere generosity. All these three methods can bring joy to the guru and make you a good disciple.

Finally, the phase of emulating the guru’s wisdom and conduct: Though students have varying capacities—some with sharper faculties than others—by sincerely receiving the guru’s teachings and instructions and applying them in dedicated practice, you will inevitably experience previously unknown signs of spiritual realization.

This summarizes the essential points of establishing a proper relationship with a guru. Next, I will teach the specific instructions on guru yoga practice.

Guru Yoga

Clearly visualize the guru as before. Pray wholeheartedly, “From now on, in all my future lives, and even in my dreams, I will seek no sources of hope other than you, my supremely kind guru, the embodiment of all sources of refuge. I will rely upon you as my sole refuge [...]

As described in the guidance on taking refuge, first visualize the field of merit clearly and vividly. That is, in the empty space before you, visualize Lord Manjushri, who is inseparable and non-dual from your guru. Recognize that your guru and Manjushri share the same essence, with your guru appearing in Manjushri's form.

Although outwardly the guru appears to have an impure and coarse physical body of flesh and blood, this perception stems solely from your unpurified karmic obscurations—similar to how a person with jaundice perceives a white conch shell as yellow. Moreover, your guru's relationship with you is more direct than Manjushri's, as your guru gives you empowerments, transmissions, pith instructions, and all other teachings while granting you extraordinarily immediate blessings. Therefore, visualize the essence of Manjushri as your root guru. Before your root guru, pray sincerely, "Please accept me as your disciple, bestow your blessings upon me, and I will rely solely on you as my refuge."

This concludes the brief introduction to the visualization stage of guru yoga.

"[...] and offer you my body, all my possessions, and root of virtue accumulated throughout the three times.

Contemplate: "I offer my guru everything I cherish as my own, including my beloved body, my possessions such as food, drink, clothing, and ornaments, and all virtuous root I have accumulated in the past, present, and future. With these three categories of attachments as my primary offering, I present to my guru all pleasant objects—whether I possess them or not, whether they are actual substances or visualized and imagined objects." This is the brief instruction of mandala offering.

"I disclose and confess all my misdeeds and downfalls committed since beginningless time.

This represents the pith instruction of Vajrasattva practice, which purifies misdeeds and obscurations.

Contemplate: “From beginningless time until now, throughout countless lifetimes in samsara, driven by greed, hatred, and ignorance, I have committed various offenses forbidden by the Buddha after entering the dharma path. These include transgressions of the pratimoksha precepts, violations of bodhisattva vows, and breakings of Secret Mantrayana samayas. I have also committed numerous inherent misdeeds. Before Manjushri, who is inseparable from my guru, I confess all these misdeeds and downfalls. I feel profound remorse for all accumulated wrongdoings and firmly resolve never to commit them again in the future.” In this way you confess all negative actions, and meanwhile, also pray that your guru blesses you to purify your mind stream.

“Please ripen and liberate my mind stream, bless me to fully realize the clear light Great Perfection and attain the supreme fruition equal to yours, my sublime teacher.”

Contemplate: “I pray to you, my guru. Through your blessings, may my mind stream mature through your empowerments and find liberation through your instructions. Bless me that the realization of the ultimate and profound path of the Great Perfection arises in my mind, that I perfect the four visions on the path, and eventually attain unsurpassable buddhahood. Bless me to achieve the same enlightened state that you, my supreme guru, have realized.”

While contemplating this, chant the prayer with sincere devotion:

གཞོན་ནུའི་སྐུ་ལུས་འཆང་བ་དོ།།

zhon nu'i ku lu jang wa po

Appearing in the form of a youthful kaya,

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྒྲོན་མེས་རབ་ཏུ་བརྒྱན།།

yeshé dron mé rab tu gyan

Splendidly adorned with the wisdom luminosity

འཇིག་རྟེན་གཏི་མུག་མུན་སེལ་བ།།

jigten ti mug mun sel wa

That can dispel the darkness of ignorance in the world—

འཇམ་པའི་དབྱངས་ལ་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།།

jampé yang la sol wa deb

To you, Lord Manjushri, I pray.

Visualize your guru in the space before you as you pray, make offerings, and confess. Supplicate your guru wholeheartedly to bless your mind stream.

Before concluding the meditation, visualize rays of white, red, and blue light radiating from the three places of the guru and merging into your own corresponding three places. This purifies the karmic obscurations of your three doors and bringing forth all excellent qualities of body, speech, and mind.

Visualize white light rays emanating from between the guru's eyebrows, red light rays from the guru's throat, and blue light rays from the guru's heart center. These light rays enter your corresponding three places and purify the karmic obscurations of your three doors. The body's negative actions are purified—taking life, taking what is not given, and sexual misconduct. The speech's negative actions are cleared—lying, divisive talk, harsh speech, and idle gossip. The mind's negative actions are removed—covetousness, maliciousness, and wrong views. The root causes of these negative actions—greed, hatred, ignorance, and self-attachment—as well as their habitual tendencies are completely purified. Consequently, all the enlightened qualities of Manjushri's body, speech, and mind fully merge into your mind

stream. These include his magnificent form, his melodious tones of brahma's speech, and his twofold wisdom that discerns both the nature of all phenomena and their distinctive characteristics.

Finally, the guru dissolves into light that is absorbed into you. Rest in the equanimity of the genuine nature beyond conceptual mind.

If you have attained a certain level of realization through actual practice of the clear light Great Perfection, rest in that state. If not, remain single-pointedly in a state of no conceptual thoughts for as long as possible.

When emerging from this meditative state, recognize that all appearance and existence are the essence of the guru. Dedicate the root of virtue to ultimate enlightenment.

Know that all you see is the display of the guru's body, all you hear is the display of the guru's speech, and all that arises in your mind is the display of the guru's wisdom. Abide in this state and dedicate the root of virtue to ultimate enlightenment.

Now I would like to emphasize several points that I believe are essential for your practice.

In the Great Perfection practice, understand that guru yoga forms the foundation of all recitations and meditations. Begin each meditation session by practicing guru yoga once before proceeding to other practices. Never omit the practice of guru yoga.

Generally speaking, the Great Perfection path rests solely on guru yoga. If you skillfully rely on the guru, genuinely embody his wisdom and conduct, and continuously pray to him, the guru's blessings alone will enable you to realize the Great Perfection—even without understanding any other teachings. Conversely, without faith in the guru and without sincere prayer, even a hundred years of diligent practice

will yield no accomplishment. Thus, guru yoga constitutes the true essence of the Great Perfection path.

In Sutrayana and other Vajrayana practices, both guru and disciple must memorize numerous pith instructions to overcome obstacles and deviations of the path and master various methods to enhance their actual practice. The Great Perfection, however, requires no such complexity. Simply rely wholeheartedly on the guru, pray sincerely, and practice guru yoga persistently throughout your life. This approach naturally dispels all obstacles in your dharma practice and facilitates all spiritual progress.

While guru yoga technically belongs to the preliminary practices of Dzogchen, it represents the ultimate of all practices. This crucial point deserves your deepest attention. Please keep this teaching in your hearts and practice guru yoga repeatedly.

A RELAXING TRIP TO THE SEASIDE

In the afternoon, some people enthusiastically suggested that Chojé go to a nearby beach to relax and enjoy the cool sea breeze. Chojé gladly agreed, and we followed along. After four o'clock, we arrived by car at Marine Parade.

This coastal paradise is famous for its charming beaches, lush coconut trees, and diverse natural scenery. Its soft and delicate sand, crystal-clear blue waters, and spectacular sunrises and sunsets combine to create this dreamlike vacation destination.



1.37: Chojé at Marine Parade

That day, the sun was shining brightly, and a gentle breeze caressed our faces. Chojé arrived at the seaside in an especially cheerful mood. We prepared wheelchairs for him and Ani Medron, slowly pushing them along as we all enjoyed the seamless beauty where the sea meets the sky.

After walking for a while, the weather gradually became warmer, so we found a coconut tree to rest under. Enjoying the snacks we had brought, sipping on refreshing Fanta, and feeling the gentle caress of the sea breeze, we were completely at ease. It was an incredibly pleasant experience. There were few tourists on the beach; some were taking photographs, others dining under trees, while we gathered around Yidzhin Norbu, chatting happily...



1.38: Chojé and his dharma friends



1.39: Chojé and his entourage relaxing by the seaside



1.40: Chojé with his entourage by the seaside, a photo treasured by Khenpo Sodargye and Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro to this day

It was only by evening that we finally ended this wonderful time at the beach and returned to the dharma center.

Although this was just a brief moment of leisure, for me, it became an unforgettable memory. At that time, we took a precious group photo, which Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and I still keep in a prominent place in our small wooden cabins, forever cherishing that memorable time.



1.41: Khenpo Sodargye setting foot on Marine Parade again in 2013

In 2013, when I went to Singapore to teach the dharma, the driver happened to pass by this place. I immediately

recognized it and asked to stop. Returning to the beach where Chojé had once walked, I gazed out at the boundless ocean and silently prayed to my guru.

THE THIRD LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On the morning of May 6th, Chojé continued to teach *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*.

The Great Perfection teaching you are receiving today represents an exceptionally profound and incomparable path. It encompasses the essential points of all vehicles and presents the ultimate teaching. Without relying on it, even buddhas of the three times would not be able to attain full awakening. As the Great Perfection teaching spread throughout the Land of Tibet, three lineages emerged, transmitted by Guru Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and Vairotsana respectively. The practice manual I am teaching today integrates the wisdom intent and essential instructions of these three lineage masters. It was directly transmitted by Lord Manjushri through his great compassion and blessings. This practice manual carries extraordinary blessings and is endowed with auspicious signs that remain untainted. Now is the opportune time for this practice manual to benefit sentient beings.

How does this practice manual perfectly encapsulate all essential instructions of the three vehicles? As taught in the previous guidance on the four thoughts that turn the mind away from samsara, you should realize that samsara possesses no intrinsic existence, and all phenomena are impermanent and inherently empty. Only by severing attachment to samsara can you generate true renunciation in your mind stream. Recognizing samsara's inherently suffering nature and developing an unwavering determination to be free from it constitutes the generation of genuine renunciation—the core practice of the common vehicles. Specifically, by contemplating the rarity of human rebirth

and life's impermanence, you can eliminate attachment to all things of the present life; by contemplating the infallible karmic law of cause and effect and samsara's suffering, you can renounce attachment to all appearances of future lives. The intention to seek freedom from samsara can be summarized as the renunciation of these two types of attachments.

The core practice of the Bodhisattvayana is to take refuge and generate bodhicitta with the intention of benefiting others. Both have been explained in detail in previous lectures.

As for the core practice of the general Secret Mantra Vajrayana, it is to realize the great view beyond all extremes. It includes the generation stage and the completion stage. The generation stage involves visualizing oneself as the deity. The completion stage is a skillful method that transforms one's physical body into the wisdom body through practices aligned with the key points of winds, channels, and bindus. The generation stage helps us purify attachment to impurity, while the completion stage helps us purify attachment to purity, enabling us to practice the path of non-attachment. Today I will teach the completion stage following the general Secret Mantrayana path.

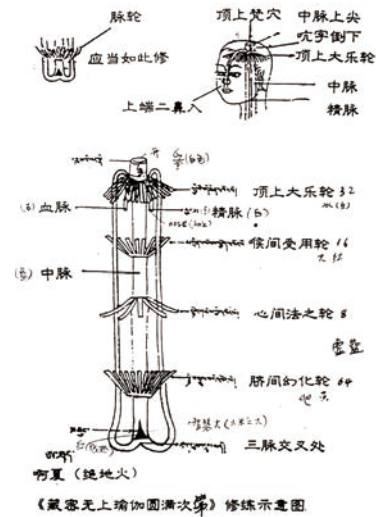
Completion Stage

Visualize in the center of your ordinary body a clear blue central channel, straight like a bamboo arrow shaft. The top of this channel opens at the top of your head while its bottom is closed below your navel. To its right is the red rasana channel, and to its left is the white lalana channel. The lower ends of these two channels curve and connect with the lower end of the central channel, forming a shape like the Tibetan syllable *cha* (ཅ). Their upper ends curve into your two nostrils. Visualize this clearly and exhale the stale wind.

In the completion stage, visualize your body as it currently appears. You need not visualize yourself as the deity. Sit naturally upright and visualize the central channel in the center of your body. It is as straight as a bamboo arrow shaft, without any twists or bends, and is approximately the width of your ring finger. The surface of the central channel is white, its interior red, and the entire channel radiates a subtle clear blue light. These three features represent the three kayas: the outer white signifies the nirmanakaya

of the body, the inner red the sambhogakaya of the speech, and the subtle radiation of clear blue light the dharmakaya of the mind. Visualize the central channel as transparent throughout, luminous by nature. Its upper end reaches the top of your crown with an opening, and its lower end is sealed four finger-widths below your navel.

To the right of your central channel is the red rasana channel, filled with moist blood; to the left is the white lalana channel, filled with moist bindus. These two channels are one-third the size of the central channel. Their lower ends join with the base of the central channel, forming a shape resembling the lower part of the Tibetan syllable *cha* (ཅ), while their upper ends extend upward through your straight body to the top of your crown and then curve into each nostril. Exhale the stale wind in three times. Visualize your body as completely transparent, like an inflated placenta. This constitutes the yoga of visualizing the outer body.



1.42: Illustration for visualization of channels, winds, and bindus

Visualize the three channels standing like pillars within the body. This is the yoga of visualizing the inner channels.

Afterward, exhale the stale wind three times through your right nostril, visualizing this process as purifying all demonic forces, diseases, karmic obscurations, and downfalls arising from greed. Next, exhale three times through your left nostril, visualizing the purification of all demonic forces, diseases, karmic obscurations, and downfalls stemming from hatred. Finally, exhale three times through both nostrils simultaneously, visualizing the purification of all demonic forces, diseases, karmic obscurations, and downfalls originating from ignorance. This completes the yoga of visualizing the wind.

As you inhale, visualize the wind entering through the two nostrils, passing through the *lalana* and *rasana* channels all the way to the junction of the three channels below your navel. At this junction rests the fierce *tummo* wisdom fire, about the size of a barley grain, with a solid base and a sharp tip, hot to the touch. When your inhaled wind touches the fire, its flame grows stronger, completely incinerating your contaminated body—including its winds, channels, and *bindus*—leaving not a trace behind. In the end, everything disappears into the non-referential state.

Visualize the fierce wisdom fire at the junction of the three channels, four finger-widths below your navel. As you inhale, visualize the wind entering the body through both nostrils and descending through the *lalana* and *rasana* channels until it contacts the fierce wisdom fire below your navel.

The fierce wisdom fire possesses a thick, stable base and a thin, sharp tip. It is hot to the touch, approximately the size of a barley grain, and its flame flickers continuously. You must visualize the fire with these five distinct characteristics.

When the wind inhaled through both nostrils descends and touches the fire, the flame intensifies and completely incinerates all your impure winds, channels, and bindus, until nothing remains but empty space. This constitutes the yoga of visualizing the fire.

Within this state of emptiness, visualize yourself appearing in the vajra body of Manjushri—completely transparent, like a fully inflated placenta.

In the state of emptiness, clearly visualize your body manifesting as the vajra body of Manjushri. This visualization belongs to the generation stage. Using this as your foundation, you then proceed to the completion stage practices.

Just as you visualize Manjushri in the previous guidance on taking refuge, generating bodhicitta, and guru yoga, now visualize yourself as Manjushri Jnanasattva. He is the deity emanated by the nonconceptual wisdom of all buddhas. His body is golden yellow, resembling the color of the Tibetan saffron flower. His right hand wields a sky-blue wisdom sword in the air and his left hand holds the stem of an utpala lotus flower at heart level. The lotus blossoms at the level of his left ear, upon which rests the text of the prajnaparamita sutra.

He is adorned with the thirteen ornaments of the sambhogakaya. These include the five silk adornments consisting of the five-buddha crown, upper garment, long scarf, belt, and lower garment, and the eight jewel ornaments including the jewel of the crown, earrings, short necklace, armlets, two long necklaces, bracelets, rings, and anklets. He sits in full lotus posture atop a moon disk upon a lotus throne.

Visualize Manjushri's form clearly in your mind; this clarity is called "clear visualization." Manjushri's body is not composed of flesh and blood, nor is it an aggregate that can obstruct like earth, stone, mountain, or rock and that is subject to the truth of suffering. Rather, it is the body of the deity manifested by buddha's omniscient wisdom, similar

to a reflection in a mirror or a rainbow in the sky—completely transparent and free from all obstructions and obscurations. This quality is called “pure visualization.” Generate the vajra pride that you are exactly the deity; this is called “stable visualization.”

Although you have habitually viewed your body as impure, recognize that it is actually Manjushri Jnanasattva’s authentic form. This body is clear, pure, and stable, transparent throughout, like a flawless crystal sphere or an inflated placenta. This practice constitutes the yoga of visualizing one’s own body.

In the center of your body are the three channels and four chakras. Below the navel is a short *a* (Λ), and at the top of the central channel is a white, inverted syllable *hang* (𑍅). This syllable *hang* represents the essence of all buddhas and even the mere recollection of it can bring about the experience of emptiness and bliss.

This is the yoga of visualizing inner channels. As mentioned earlier, in the center of your body there is the blue central channel, with the red rasana channel to its right and the white lalana channel to its left. The lower ends of these three channels converge below the navel, forming a shape resembling the Tibetan syllable *cha* (ཅ).

At the crown of your head, visualize a white inverted syllable *hang* (𑍅) at the top of the central channel. It embodies the condensed essence of all buddhas, and simply thinking of it generates the experience of emptiness and bliss.

Having visualized the three channels, proceed to visualize the four chakras. At the crown of your head, at the position of the hair whorl, is the chakra of great bliss with its thirty-two white branch channels appearing as downward-facing umbrella spokes. In your throat, at the position of celestial chimney², is the chakra of enjoyment with its sixteen red branch channels slightly facing upward. At your heart center

is the chakra of dharma with its eight blue branch channels slightly facing downward. Below your navel, where the three channels converge, is the chakra of manifestation with its sixty-four yellow branch channels.

When the wind inhaled through your nostrils touches the fierce wisdom fire (the short *a*) below your navel, a flame as tiny as a needle quickly ascends to the top of the central channel and touches the inverted *hang* (ॐ). Then, the flame intensifies, causing nectar to descend continuously from the syllable *hang*. The flame and the bindu chase each other up and down. In succession, this nectar fills the four chakras, enabling you to experience the four wisdoms of joy (joy, supreme joy, exceptional joy, and connate joy) and four wisdoms of emptiness (emptiness, great emptiness, extremely great emptiness, and everything as emptiness), thus realizing the genuine wisdom of emptiness and bliss. Rest in this state for as long as possible, and at the conclusion, dedicate the root of virtue.

When the outer wind is inhaled into your body, it descends through the *lalana* and *rasana* channels and touches the short *a* (Λ) below your navel. The sharp needle-like flame then soars upward and contacts the inverted syllable *hang* (ॐ) at the crown of your head. This syllable begins to melt, and a drop of nectar falls onto the flame, causing it to kindle even more intensely, as if sprinkled with oil. The *hang* at the top continues to melt, releasing more drops of nectar, so the flame cannot ascend further but must descend. In this way, the flame and the bindu chase each other up and down, while the white bindu progressively fills all the chakras and their branch channels at your crown, throat, heart, and navel. Through this process, you attain the four wisdoms of joy—joy, supreme joy, exceptional joy, and connate joy—as well as the four wisdoms of emptiness—emptiness, great emptiness, extremely great emptiness, and everything as emptiness. The four joys lack any

inherent true existence; we call this aspect the wisdoms of emptiness. This constitutes the yoga of visualizing the bindu.

In summary, begin with the yoga of visualizing the body, then sequentially visualize the channels, wind, fire, and bindu. Through consistent practice in this manner, you can attain the four wisdoms of joy and the four wisdoms of emptiness.

This completes the practice of the completion stage.



1.43: Chojé transmitting the Dzogchen teachings to the assembly

The above represents the skillful means for actual practices that align with the general teaching of Secret Mantra Vajrayana. All tantric paths can be included in the practices of generation stage and completion stage. What is the purpose of engaging in these two practices? All phenomena of the external world and sentient beings within it are primordially awakened, though sentient beings remain unaware of this truth. To realize this reality, one visualizes all phenomena as the deity—this is the generation stage. To purify all impure skandhas, ayatanas, and

dhatu, one practices the yoga of winds, channels, and bindus—this is the completion stage.

Now I will teach the uncommon path of Great Perfection, which encapsulates the essential points of the three vehicles and elaborates their ultimate meaning. It is the swift path to buddhahood and the most profound teaching of all. Let us begin the main practice of Dzogchen.

The Great Perfection

In Dzogchen practice there are three stages: preliminary practice, actual practice, and concluding practice.

The Preliminary Practice

It consists of three parts: the preliminary of body, speech, and mind that leads to the three doors, the preliminary of the yoga of the four elements that leads to the three kayas, and the preliminary of discerning the two extremes of samsara and nirvana that leads to pristine awareness.

The preliminary of body, speech, and mind that leads to the three doors also has three parts: the preliminary of the body, the preliminary of speech, and the preliminary of the mind.

For the preliminary of the body, visualize your body as a blue vajra blazing with fire and radiating sparks. Maintain the vajra posture for as long as possible, until you can no longer control your body and collapse involuntarily. At that moment, the flow of discursive thoughts is interrupted, and you rest in the natural state and relax. Repeat this practice again and again.



1.44: Chojé gazing forward with compassion and peace

Through the preliminary that leads to the three doors, you can be directly introduced to rigpa. This preliminary is practiced through body, speech, and mind respectively.

First, the preliminary of the body: Visualize your body as a blue, three-pronged vajra blazing with fire and radiating sparks, and assume the vajra posture for as long as possible. Focus completely on the visualization and maintain the posture until your body loses control and falls. When the body collapses and all conceptual thoughts disappear, observe the nature of mind.

Regarding the symbolism of the vajra: the upper three prongs represent the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya that you already possess in your present body; the lower three prongs represent the nature, essence, and great compassion of mind; the convergence of the upper and lower prongs in the middle signifies that you primordially possess both the nature, essence, and great compassion of mind (the ground) and the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya (the fruition)—with ground and fruition being nondual and inseparable by nature. With this understanding, engage in the actual practice.

Maintain the vajra posture for as long as possible until your body naturally collapses. When falling, whether to the left or right, do so in a way that prevents injury. At the moment of complete exhaustion, remain in the thought-free state for as long as possible. When conceptual thoughts resurface, return to the beginning of this preliminary and practice it repeatedly.

For the preliminary of speech, visualize your mind abiding in the heart in the form of the syllable *hung* (ॐ). From it, countless subtle *hung* syllables continuously radiate outward one after another. When they penetrate external phenomena, such as houses, mountains, and earth, everything transforms into *hung*'s. Further, those *hung*'s from outside return and dissolve into your body, which in turn becomes

a *hung*. Finally, all the *hung*'s dissolve into the dharmadhatu, and you rest in the natural state and relax. During this visualization, you should chant the song of *hung* with a melodious voice continuously.

Second, the preliminary of speech: Sit in the full lotus posture, place your hands in the mudra of evenness, straighten your spine, tilt your chin slightly toward your neck, and fix your gaze directly in front of the tip of your nose. Visualize your heart as completely transparent, like a curtain made of blue-green sapphire, with a motionless blue syllable *hung* (ཨུ) at its center. From the top circle of the syllable *hung*, individual *hung* syllables radiate one by one, exiting your body through the nostrils. When they touch external phenomena such as mountains, rivers, and houses, all these phenomena transform into *hung*. All these *hung* syllables are then reabsorbed into your body, which itself becomes *hung*, and eventually disappears in the dharmadhatu.

When visualizing the syllable *hung* (ཨུ), do not visualize it as flat like written text. Instead, visualize it three-dimensionally, like carved wood, standing upright in your heart. It faces the same direction as your face. Although there are different ways to visualize the syllable *hung*, this particular approach is required by this practice manual.

Then, sing the song of *hung* in a prolonged and melodious tone. It is best to sing groups of seven *hung* syllables, "*hung, hung, hung, hung, hung, hung, hung.*"

Both the preliminaries of body and speech each require at least twenty-one days of practice. At present, I don't have sufficient time to guide you through the entire practice. However, in the future, you must continue your practice seriously and diligently. If you do so, the main practice of Dzogchen will naturally manifest in your mind.

For the preliminary of the mind, ascertain that all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are the magical display of the mind.

Third, the preliminary of the mind: Contemplate that all phenomena of the external world and sentient beings within it are the magical display of your mind.

Just as in your dreams, where high mountains, large rivers, or dangerous passes are all manifestations of your mind according to its habitual tendencies without inherent existence, all appearances you perceive at this moment are exactly the same. Even when you eventually attain buddhahood, everything that manifests—such as the pure realm, the assembly, and the pure body—is simply the magical display of your pure mind’s unobstructed power. There is no substantial external existence.

Therefore, the root or creator of all phenomena in samsara and nirvana is simply this mind. You must understand deeply what the mind truly is. Only when you have realized the mind’s nature can you be considered to have attained a certain level of understanding of the view of the Great Perfection. Beyond this, there is no other method to achieve Dzogchen realization.

Examine where the mind originates, where it abides, and where it goes. All coarse material things can be broken down into particles, and particles to indivisible particles, which in turn are ascertained as being baseless. Thus, you come to the conclusion that the mind has no location for its origin, abiding, or cessation. If you further observe whether the mind has any shape, color, sound, smell, taste, or texture, then you find none of these. Even the cognizant aspect of mind is merely something described by words, with a lack of true, inherent existence. Thus, you dismantle the

mind house of clinging to its true, inherent existence and realize its selflessness.

Then, what exactly is this so-called mind?

If this mind exists, ascertain its existence. If it does not exist, ascertain its non-existence. If you believe the mind exists, examine where it comes from in the beginning, where it abides in the middle, and where it goes in the end. If you think it originates from particulate substances—such as external objects like earth, stones, mountains, and rocks, or your own body—analyze these further. Through analysis, you will discover that all particles resolve into indivisible particles, which in turn are determined as having no true, inherent existence. Eventually, all phenomena reveal themselves as baseless and rootless. Hence, you can ascertain that within external material things, the mind has nowhere to originate, abide, or go.

If you believe the mind exists independently, continue your observation. The mind has no shape—whether rectangular, semicircular, or elliptical—and no color, such as white, yellow, red, blue, or green. Thus, it is not visible form. Similarly, in the nature of the mind, you cannot identify intrinsic characteristics such as melodious or strident sound, fragrant or stinking smell, sweet or bitter taste, soft or coarse texture. Therefore, it corresponds to nothing in the realm of visible form, sound, smell, taste, or texture.

Some might think: “Although analysis and observation can demonstrate that the mind lacks true, inherent existence, the cognizant aspect of the mind vividly exists.” In reality, such cognizance exists only as a conceptual designation, established by words and languages. If you genuinely search for the mind’s entity, you will notice it cannot be found anywhere—in the external world, within the body, or between them. By understanding this, you can dissolve your attachment to the

mind's apparent solidity—like dismantling an illusory structure. Until you have gained certainty regarding the mind's selflessness, continue practicing this preliminary repeatedly.

The preliminary of the mind is crucial. I hope you approach it seriously and engage in diligent practice. It is the key to realizing the view of the Great Perfection. If you gain certainty in the Dzogchen view, even just seven days of practice will significantly diminish your anger, hatred, and all other mental afflictions and delusions. With only six months of practice, you may even journey to the land of the vidyadharas. The Great Perfection is an extraordinarily profound teaching. With genuine faith, you might realize the mind's true nature during these few days. If you haven't realized it clearly and definitively this time, you may visit us in the Land of Tibet when conditions permit, and we will welcome you warmly. Although we may not offer lavish hospitality, we will certainly fulfill your spiritual aspirations.

Whether you realize the Great Perfection depends fundamentally on your practice of the mind preliminary. Therefore, please commit yourself earnestly to this practice.

THE FOURTH LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On the morning of May 7th, Choje taught the following teaching:

The teaching you will receive today is the profound pith instruction that distills all essential points of the nine yantras into one. It is *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, the practice manual of *Peaceful Manjushri*.

In previous lectures, I have already taught the stage-by-stage practice in harmony with the common vehicles of the Shravakayana, the uncommon vehicle of the Bodhisattvayana, and the general Vajrayana vehicle of Secret Mantra. Next, I will teach you the main practices of the Great Perfection. These practices include three parts: the preliminary practice, the actual practice, and the concluding practice.

The preliminary practice consists of three components: the preliminary leading to the three doors, the preliminary leading to the three kayas, and the preliminary leading to pristine awareness. Although I have completed the guidance on the preliminary leading to the three doors, I must emphasize again that you should place great importance on this part. As for the other two preliminaries, the constraints of your current setting and time make it impractical to engage in them for the time being.

To review the preliminary leading to the three doors: First, in the preliminary practice of the body, you should assume the vajra posture and visualize yourself as a blue three-pronged vajra.

Second, in the preliminary practice of the speech, clearly visualize your ground-abiding awareness or your own mind as the syllable *hung*, which continuously radiates multiple *hung* syllables, causing all phenomena of the world and sentient beings within it to transform into *hung* syllables. Then all these *hung* syllables are reabsorbed into

your body, and your body itself becomes *hung*. Finally, rest in the non-referential state free from any conceptualization. Once you have mastered both the sitting posture and visualization technique, few obstacles will remain in these two preliminaries. I recommend practicing each of them diligently for either seven or twenty-one days.

The preliminary practice of the mind involves observing where the mind comes from, where it abides, and where it goes. This practice is essential. However, since we only have a few days for this subject, it will be difficult for most practitioners—except those with the keenest faculties and extraordinary faith—to grasp this teaching in such a short time. Therefore, you must engage with this preliminary practice continuously, year after year. Without fully discerning the nature of mind in this way, it is impossible to realize the view during the actual practice of Dzogchen.

Although I explained yesterday the method of examining the mind's origin and destination, today I want to offer a deeper and more detailed explanation. Please listen carefully and absorb these teachings deeply.

To recap yesterday's teaching: You need to examine and analyze your mind to determine where it originally comes from, where it currently abides, and where it eventually goes. Today we will focus more on its existence. Does the mind have a true, inherent existence? If it does, there must be a place from which it originates, in which it abides, and to which it goes. If it does not exist at all, then discussing its origin, abiding, and cessation becomes meaningless.

Now, carefully examine whether the mind truly exists. If it does exist, it should be perceivable through one of these means: seen by the eyes, heard by the ears, smelled by the nose, tasted by the tongue, felt by the body, or perceived by the mental consciousness. These six modes of perception are known as the six consciousnesses. Apart from these six consciousnesses, no other way exists to establish the mind's true

existence. If the mind cannot be ascertained through these six modes of perception, you can conclude that the mind has no inherent existence.

First, if the mind can be seen with the eyes, it must have a color and a shape. Carefully observe whether your mind has a color—white, red, yellow, or green—or a shape, such as a square, triangle, or semicircle. If it does, you can confirm its existence; if not, you can establish its non-existence. Now, observe whether your mind has any color or shape. Isn't it true that it has neither? Do you understand this mind? In fact, what we call "mind" is simply that which is cognizant in this moment—it has no color or shape. Even if hundreds of wise scholars and thousands of realized beings claimed the mind exists as an entity with specific colors and shapes, this should not shake your recognition of its non-existence. You must attain this certainty.

Similarly, continue your observation: Does your mind have a melodious or strident sound? Does it have a taste detectable by the tongue? Does it have a texture that can be felt by the body? You must analyze and verify all six modes of perception one by one.

You can also observe the mind another way: Does it exist in the upper, lower, or middle part of your body, or in the earth or stones of the external world? Does it truly exist, or not? If through such thorough investigation you cannot find the mind itself, you can confirm its non-existence, and need not question further whether it really exists.

What is your mind truly like? This question deserves deep contemplation to discover its non-existence. In my own reflection, the mind resembles the sound from a recording device. Although we hear the sound, it cannot be located—not inside the device, outside it, or somewhere in between. Similarly, without careful investigation, we might assume the mind exists because it thinks and ponders. But once we apply rigorous analysis, we discover it has no substantial foundation

and no inherent existence. Do you agree? Does your understanding align with mine?

What you are now listening to is indeed a profound teaching. Except for those who have spent numerous eons gathering accumulations and purifying obscurations, I'm afraid I cannot bring you to full enlightenment with just one sentence today. In short, if the mind exists, ascertain its existence; if it doesn't exist, ascertain its non-existence. In this way, you will establish a solid foundation for the preliminary practice of mind investigation.

Exploring the nature of mind is a distinctive feature of the Buddhist path. Followers of non-Buddhist paths focus primarily on abandoning non-virtuous actions of body and speech while engaging in virtuous ones. In contrast, for Buddhist practitioners, being mindful of bodily and verbal actions is secondary; their primary focus is exploring the essence of mind. For instance, in the common vehicles, as the teaching states, "Whoever knows how to tame the mind is a wise being, and whoever knows how to tame the mind enjoys the greatest peace and happiness." Their fundamental teaching addresses the characteristics of mind and guides practitioners in applying the mind to the enlightened path. As for the Mahayana Sutrayana, it is said,

*All those who fail to understand
The secret of the mind, the greatest of all things,
Although they wish for joy and sorrow's end,
Will wander to no purpose, uselessly.*

It considers the analysis of mind's nature to be paramount, and one cannot attain buddhahood without gaining certainty about mind's nature. Therefore, you first need to investigate the nature of mind—this is the ultimate essence of all Buddhist teachings. In the clear light teaching of the Great Perfection in particular, the sole focus is directly pointing out mind's nature and transforming it into the enlightened path. I hope you will hold this deeply in your heart.

You needn't consider the observation and analysis of mind difficult. Unlike scientific research requiring extended intellectual investigation, realizing the nature of mind is relatively accessible. Particularly if you have genuine interest in this teaching and sincerely pray to your guru with devotion, then simply by looking into your mind, you can ascertain whether the mind exists or not. The key factors are your karmic connection with this teaching from previous lives and your capacity for proper analysis. When these conditions are met, this realization becomes available to anyone—whether young or old, regardless of gender or social status. Those new to this practice may initially have doubts, having never observed their minds attentively before. But through thorough and careful examination, you will have no difficulty understanding the mind's non-existence.

Let me explain from another perspective. Do you experience hatred toward enemies or adverse circumstances? If so, then observe: Where is the mind that harbors this hatred, and what exactly is it like? When burning with anger, face contorted and fists clenched, where precisely does that hatred abide? You will discover it is nowhere to be found. This is something that transcends verbal expression. Do you understand?

If you realize that the mind is baseless and rootless, you have directly grasped the meaning of selflessness. This realization encompasses all essential points to be realized in both Shrivakayana and Bodhisattvayana. Nevertheless, you shouldn't merely accept this statement on faith. You need to verify it with your own mind. Once you've realized that the so-called mind does not exist and has never existed, you are truly on the path to enlightenment. To achieve this, continuous effort in actual practice is essential.

Here, I have emphasized again what I taught yesterday. Having received this teaching, you should not only practice it diligently during these few days but also continue practicing it consistently in the future. If you practice this teaching year after year, you will inevitably

realize it. This distinguishes the Great Perfection from other teachings. If you earnestly dedicate yourself to practicing the Great Perfection, even for just one month, you will surely gain certainty in the nature of mind. This is the unique feature of the Great Perfection.

Let's continue with the text of *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*.

For the preliminary of the yoga of the four elements that leads to the three kayas, your mind seems to dissolve into the sounds of earth, water, fire, and wind. Single-pointedly focus on each of them and abide in that state. When all conceptual thoughts are pacified, naturally relax, and recognize the nature of mind.

Although this yoga of the four elements should be practiced in the preliminary stage, today there isn't a tradition of engaging in extensive practice of it in the Tibetan region. In your country, it is also difficult to find suitable conditions for the actual practice, so you may proceed without this preliminary if necessary.

If you choose to undertake it, when you naturally rest your mind, observe its nature, just as you do when observing the mind's origin, abiding, and cessation in the previous preliminary. For example, when working with the sound of earth, focus on the sound of clapping your palms. As the mind dissolves into the sound, the unborn nature of the mind becomes recognizable. When working with the sound of water, listen to the continuous flow of a river or the rising and falling of ocean waves. The mind dissolves into these sounds as you rest single-pointedly in that state, and then ascertain the mind's nature. When working with the sound of fire, stand near burning firewood and focus your mind on its sound. When working with the sound of wind, position a porous structure on a high mountain where wind can whistle through it. Focus on the various sounds emanating from the structure until your mind dissolves into them. Suddenly the nature of the mind is revealed, allowing you to ascertain it.



1.45: Chojé explaining key points of the teaching

This is the preliminary of the yoga of the four elements. Like observing the mind's origin, abiding, and cessation, this is also a skillful method to realize the unborn nature of the mind. When your mind focuses on sound, you can naturally abide in that state and realize the mind's nature. Should you wish to engage in this practice, performing it several times will be beneficial.

For the preliminary of discerning the two extremes of samsara and nirvana that leads to pristine awareness, randomly engage in the behaviors of sentient beings of the six realms

in terms of their body, speech, and mind. When all sorts of discursive thoughts are proliferating, forcefully shout *phat*, through which all discursive thoughts are severed. At that moment, look directly into the face of awareness itself. Repeat this practice until you gain certainty in the view that the nature of mind is baseless and rootless.

To engage in the preliminary of discerning the two extremes of samsara and nirvana that leads to pristine awareness, you need go to solitary mountains where you won't be seen or heard by those who haven't received empowerment or entered the Buddhist path.

When performing this practice, it is preferable to be completely naked. If circumstances don't permit this, you may expose only your upper body.

In the Land of Tibet, many uninhabited and tranquil places are suitable for this practice. However, in dense urban environments like Singapore, finding completely secluded spaces is nearly impossible. It is therefore difficult to meet the requirements for this practice. You may just remain in your private residence and perform all required visualizations according to the instructions in this manual.

During the practice, with your body, imitate the conducts of sentient beings in the six realms, such as hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, and human beings. Perform whatever behaviors arise in your mind, including walking upright, crawling, running, and jumping. With your speech, imitate the different languages and sounds of the six realms, such as human speech, horse neighing, sheep bleating, cow mooing, and the screams of beings in hell. With your mind, imagine experiencing the pain and suffering of those sentient beings. In summary, except for conducts that violate the pratimoksha vows (killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and taking intoxicants), engage in all

other conducts as they arise in your mind while simultaneously imagining the corresponding mental experience. For instance, imagine being born in hell and suffering there—crying out in pain vocally while feeling unbearable anguish mentally. When these scenarios arise, suddenly and forcefully shout *phat* and observe the mind's nature. You will recognize that the mind is baseless and rootless. Continue repeating this practice. This is the practice of discerning the two extremes of samsara and nirvana.

Great mahasiddhas of the past, such as Guru Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and Jnanasutra, practiced this yogic discipline of awareness for approximately seven years, highlighting its profound importance. If you have the opportunity to visit the Land of Tibet, you can engage in formal training of this preliminary. For now, we can only practice it symbolically, as direct practice is impractical in our current circumstances.

In the end, simply rest with the three doors of body, speech, and mind in a motionless state. By looking naturally at the nature of the resting mind, certainty will develop in the view of the nonconceptual dharmakaya.

In this stage, allow your body to remain motionless, your speech silent, and your mind still and free from thoughts. Like a tree that has fallen to the ground, lie face-up, completely relaxed, feeling light and comfortable, and rest your mind in a thoughtless state as fully as possible.

In this state of rest, the wisdom of the union of the shamatha of primordial abiding nature and the vipashyana of clarity and cognizance will naturally arise. Therefore, strive to cultivate this single-pointed concentration, using it as your foundation for attaining the fruition of nonconceptual dharmakaya.

Then, engage in the peaceful conduct like a shravaka, engage in the moderate conduct like a bodhisattva, or engage

in the wrathful conduct like a wrathful deity—practicing these three approaches while identifying the nature of mind. At this stage, you should enter the path by perfecting both shamatha and vipashyana, meaning that you abide in the nature of mind continuously.

Abiding in the nature of mind continuously means to enter the path. During the preliminary stage, your mind may sometimes be occupied by the vipashyana of unborn emptiness and sometimes naturally abide in shamatha. To truly enter the path, first adopt the demeanor of a shravaka: sit in the seven-point posture of Vairochana, fix your gaze in front of the tip of your nose, and engage in the path of the union of shamatha and vipashyana in a peaceful manner. Next, adopt the demeanor of a bodhisattva, performing slightly rougher behaviors such as standing, walking, and looking around, to test whether you can maintain the union of shamatha and vipashyana. Finally, adopt the demeanor of a wrathful deity—jumping and running with your body, shouting *ha ha, hi hi* with your voice, and generating various discursive thoughts such as desire and hatred with your mind—then observe whether you can still abide in the union of shamatha and vipashyana during these activities. In essence, practice the path of the union of shamatha and vipashyana at all times and in all places until your mind stream becomes indivisible and inseparable from it. Until then, practice persistently.

Now we turn to the actual practice of trekchö, thoroughly cutting through to original purity.

The Actual Practice of Trekchö

Rest the mind naturally and without any contrivance, observe its innate nature, and fully realize its intrinsic emptiness that is baseless and rootless, beyond inner, outer, and middle extremes while having its natural and unceasing radiance, and that it is free from conceptual thoughts and

beyond expression in words. Thus, realize that there is no good or bad between the wisdom of all buddhas of the three times and the impure minds of sentient beings, and identify the innate wisdom nature of luminosity and emptiness that encompasses everything. This is called *the direct placement in the view like a mountain.*

The actual practice of Dzogchen includes two paths: the practice of trekchö that thoroughly cuts through to original purity is the path to realize emptiness, and the practice of tögal that directly crosses over to the spontaneous presence of appearances is the path to fulfill all the qualities of a buddha. In practicing trekchö, we directly cut through all conceptual thoughts and delusions, thereby purifying all impure appearances of samsara—including everything encompassed by the five aggregates, twelve sense sources, and eighteen elements—and dissolving them into the pure expanse of dharmadhatu. In practicing tögal, we let all the qualities of wisdoms and kayas of a buddha manifest in our direct perception, thereby transforming our coarse body and mind into the pure body and primordial wisdom. Now I will present guidance on these two paths by following the gradual stages of their actual practice.

First, cultivate the view of trekchö. Neither go back to the past, nor anticipate the future, nor follow the six sense objects of visible forms, sounds, smells, tastes, textures, and mental objects in the present moment. Simply rest your mind naturally and observe its nature at ease. At this point, you do not need to conduct any analysis as you do in the preliminary practices. Just by watching your mind naturally without contrivance, you will find its entity exists nowhere—not in any inner, outer, or intermediate place. The nature of mind is originally empty, not created by any causes and conditions. Therefore, it transcends any solid existence and is baseless, unsubstantial, untouchable, thoroughly unimpeded, and beyond inner, outer, and middle extremes.

Such unborn emptiness is the very nature of mind, referred to as *the essence is emptiness*.

While the mind remains in emptiness, its natural radiance never ceases. Though its essence transcends any conceptual thoughts of comprehension or comprehending, the mind itself is fully aware of its own indescribable state, just as one clearly sees external objects with healthy eyes in daylight. This is known as *the intrinsic nature is luminosity*.

The nonduality of the essence of emptiness and the intrinsic nature of luminosity is called *the all-pervasive compassion*.

There is no distinction of good or bad when differentiating the enlightened mind of buddhas throughout the three times from the impure mind of sentient beings, as both find perfection in the expanse of the primordial wisdom of awareness and emptiness. To recognize this innate face of rigpa gives rise to *the direct placement in the view like a mountain*.

You should all understand this crucial point. Now I will explain it again in simpler terms: When you observe your mind with your own mind, you will discover its intrinsic emptiness that transcends all substantial bases. This is easy to understand. The essence of mind does not exist externally, internally, or in between, and it is simply empty with nothing to be established. This is called *the essence of emptiness*. While it is empty, the mind is not like insentient things such as earth, stones, rocks, or mountains that have no awareness. Instead, the mind itself is fully aware of its true nature, and such clarity refers to *the intrinsic nature of luminosity*. Further, there is no differentiation between the wisdom of Tathagata Samantabhadra and the impure mind of a sentient being in a lower realm, both of which are perfect in the expanse of the primordial wisdom of emptiness and luminosity. This quality is known as *the all-pervasive compassion*. These teachings are

based on Orgyen Rinpoche Padmasambhava's direct pointing-out instructions on the essence, intrinsic nature, and great compassion of the mind.

While recognizing the true face of the view and resting naturally in that state, there is no fixation on any object, such as existence, non-existence, being, or non-being, and it is beyond any defilement of conceptualization and analysis, such as negating and affirming. This perfect union of the shamatha of the innate concentration on the dharmata and the vipashyana of the true seeing into its own face is called *the direct placement in meditation like an ocean.*

As you recognize the view on the essence that is the non-duality of luminosity and emptiness, or on the nature that is originally unborn, you should rest in such recognition naturally and without any fabrication.

In such a state of natural abiding, should you meditate on "existence"? No, because the true nature of mind is empty, there is nothing whatsoever to be meditated on. Should you then meditate on "non-existence"? Again, no, because the mind itself is not mere emptiness or nothingness, not like earth and stones that are devoid of consciousness. Besides these two, the so-called concepts of "both existence and non-existence" or of "neither existence nor non-existence" cannot be truly established as knowable things, so we should not meditate on such concepts either. The view we should meditate on is the dharmata, the true reality of mind that is beyond any extremes of existence, non-existence, being, or not being, having no fixation at all. Therefore, the so-called meditation does not truly exist.

In other words, while concentrating on the view, do not try to refute discriminative thoughts about external objects outwardly or to prove the existence of emptiness and clarity inwardly with an analytical mind. The innate concentration on the dharmata naturally abides

within itself, and this is the true reality of the mind. Since you do not follow the concept of nothingness, you are not distracted from the meditation. When you gain certainty in the perfect union of the shamatha of the innate concentration on the dharmata and the vipashyana of the true seeing into rigpa, and you sustain this state without going astray or harboring any doubt, this is called *the direct placement in meditation like an ocean*.

In your daily practice of the Great Perfection, sometimes you may let your mind wander with your deluded thoughts, and then watch the essence of your thoughts; sometimes you may rest your mind without any thoughts, and then watch the nature of mind. The so-called mind cannot be established in any outer, inner, or in-between places, and it is inherently empty. Gaining certainty in this recognition is called the view or the convinced understanding. Once you attain the view, you sustain that state of realization and abide in it single-pointedly without distraction; this is called meditation.

The great Tibetan master Karma Chakme Rinpoche once said, “Now, turn inward and observe your own mind; you may recognize that the mind exists nowhere and is the nature of emptiness. Abide in that state of emptiness and relax at ease. Other than this, there is no other practice called Mahamudra.” By watching your mind with the mind, you will discover its empty nature. As you recognize the view of emptiness, you abide in such a state naturally and do not part from it. In other words, you must meditate in the state of realizing the view for an extended period of time.

At this moment, we are enjoying the view and meditation of the Great Perfection. All that we have acquired in our minds, even the slightest virtuous thought, is mainly due to the compassionate blessings of noble beings such as Lord Manjushri Bodhisattva and Omniscient Ju Mipham Rinpoche. For this reason, I will now use another teaching from Ju Mipham Rinpoche to directly point out rigpa, the intrinsic

awareness. In his *The Melodious Song of the View of Dzogchen*, Rinpoche said,

*Searching for the mind that has various arising thoughts,
You end up with nothing; this shows the true reality.
Such is the uncontaminated expanse of awareness.
You should safeguard it with undeluded wisdom.*

When you repeatedly contemplate and search for the mind through either analysis or abiding, you cannot find anything. This unattainable awareness is the uncontaminated expanse of awareness. You should sustain this state through meditation, thereby safeguarding intrinsic awareness with your undeluded wisdom. This is actually something you can readily understand. Just watch your mind inwardly, and you will find there is nothing to attain. At that moment, simply abide in that state of unattainability. This is the ultimate meditation of the Great Perfection.

In the renowned Dzogchen practice, while the preliminary practices mentioned earlier are certainly important, the view and meditation of the actual practice are even more crucial. They should be the ultimate focus of the practice.

In the next lecture, we will discuss *tögal*. According to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, *tögal* should only be practiced after the realized state of *trekchö* has become truly stable. If you were to practice *tögal* from the outset without any recognition of the Dzogchen view, you would merely plant seeds of virtue in your mind stream. Therefore, while practicing *tögal* to a small extent is permissible, engaging in its long-term practice would not be reasonable at this stage. Your main effort at this point should be directed toward the practice of *trekchö*.

SHOPPING FOR CHOJÉ

Since 1990, due to vision difficulties, Chojé has regularly relied on tape recorders for his teachings. After arriving in Singapore, he sent me to search the stores for high-quality portable tape recorders.

During our time in Singapore, I searched for suitable recorders whenever I had free time. After much effort, I finally found a Sony portable recorder with excellent sound quality and easy operation. When Chojé tried it, he praised it repeatedly, saying it was even better than the one previously purchased in the United States.

Chojé not only used the small recorder for teaching the dharma but also enjoyed listening to dharma songs during his leisure time. He had a keen interest in songs and dances. Sometimes, while traveling in Tibetan regions, when devotees gathered around his vehicle, he would play spiritual songs through a small loudspeaker outside the car due to certain special circumstances. One of his favorites was a love song by Tsangyang Gyatso:



1.46: Khenpo Sodargye and Singaporean devotees



1.47: Sony portable recorder

*On the peak of the eastern mountain,
A bright white moon is rising.
The face of Makye Ama,
Appears vividly in my heart...*

At the academy, Chojé would ask khenpos with melodious voices to sing dharma songs composed by previous great masters, such as *The Flight of the Garuda*, and Ju Mipham Rinpoche's *Song of Praise to Dzogchen*. These were recorded onto cassette tapes so he could listen to them during his free time.

When teaching the third lecture of *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* in Singapore, Chojé used this newly purchased recorder for the first time. Before the lecture, he played a dharma song written by Ju Mipham Rinpoche:

*May the ultimate nature of samsara and nirvana,
The natural wisdom appearing as the form Manjushri,
Effortlessly dispels with radiant light
The entire darkness of the twofold obscurations in sentient beings' minds.*

*Marvelous indeed, O wise ones with leisure and freedom!
Life is impermanent, vanishing as swiftly as lightning.
Bound by the unfailing law of karma,
One falls into samsara without liberation.*

*Now that we have encountered the genuine dharma,
And through hearing and contemplating,
We have attained the essential teachings as a swift path to liberation,
If we fail to practice with single-minded focus,
What could be more foolish than this?*

After playing the recording, Chojé introduced it to the audience, saying, “This recorder was purchased here in Singapore, and it contains the voices of our Tibetan people. This song was sung by Khenpo Chimé Rigdzin from our academy. Do you know him?”

At that time, imported electronic products were relatively scarce in China, not only difficult to purchase but also extremely challenging to repair if damaged. Seeing how pleased Yidzhin Norbu was with this recorder, I bought two additional units as backups.



1.48: Electronic blood pressure monitor purchased in Singapore

Considering Rinpoche needed to regularly monitor his blood pressure, I found an advanced and convenient electronic blood pressure monitor in Singapore and bought two for him. Although the readings were occasionally inaccurate, the device was far more convenient and comfortable to use.

As our departure from Singapore approached, Chojé wished to prepare gifts for the khenpos at the academy, as a token of appreciation for their long-term dedication to teaching the dharma. In that era before mobile phones, a wristwatch was not only an essential tool for



1.49: SEIKO watch

practitioners in their studies but also a symbol of status. Learning that SEIKO watches from Japan were renowned for their excellent quality, Chojé entrusted me with selecting suitable ones.

However, purchasing the watches proved to be quite a challenge. Many stores had limited stock, usually only two or three pieces per store. As a result, I had to make use of every possible opportunity—sometimes searching alone, other times asking a few people for help—to visit stores one by one. After several days of effort, we finally managed to gather dozens of watches. These watches were quite expensive, each costing around 300 yuan.



1.50: Doctor Rigpa and Khenpo Sodargye

After returning to Larung Gar, Chojé gifted these watches to many khenpos and tulkus. They were delighted to receive them and wore the watches for many years.



1.51: Chojé's entourage by the seaside



1.52: Chojé and his entourage experiencing Singapore's local customs and culture

THE FIFTH LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On the morning of May 8th, Chojé delivered the final lecture on the *Peaceful Manjushri*. Below is the complete teaching.

This teaching presents the guidance on the actual practice of the clear light teaching of Dzogchen, the pinnacle of all vehicles. We have covered the common and uncommon preliminaries, as well as the preliminary practice of Dzogchen in previous lectures. Today we will explore the actual practice of Dzogchen, which includes two methods: the practice of trekchö that thoroughly cuts through to original purity, and the practice of tögal that directly crosses over to the spontaneous presence of appearances. We are now focusing on the path of trekchö.

Some of you may wonder, “What is the precise purpose of trekchö and tögal?”

The method of trekchö aims to thoroughly ascertain the true reality, or the dharmata, of the mind, while tögal serves to actualize the true nature of the mind through various skillful means. The authentic method for practicing Dzogchen lies in recognizing the very nature of mind in one’s direct and unerring perception—this is also Dzogchen’s ultimate goal. On this path, the essential point is to apply the nature of mind in the main practice, without needing to analyze whether external phenomena such as earth, stones, rocks, or mountains truly exist. Why? Because all external appearances are merely illusory manifestations of the mind. Once the mind, the fundamental root of everything, is conclusively determined to be nonexistent, all external phenomena will naturally be liberated. Just as in a magic show, there is no need to scrutinize the reality of illusions; when the illusory nature of the magician is firmly established, all varieties of illusions naturally disappear.

You may ask, “How would you determine that various external appearances are merely illusions of the mind?”

This can be illustrated through analogy. For instance, in a dream, you see high mountains, deep valleys, or white and red scenes, all of which are nothing other than manifestations of your sleeping mind. Similarly, if you regard phenomena in the external world as truly existent and try to establish or negate them, you will never have a chance to break free from them. However, if you understand that all external objects are illusory manifestations of your own mind, exactly like what you see in a dream, then all appearances, whether favorable or unfavorable, can neither benefit nor harm you.

You might think, “It is absurd to view a person or a horse in a dream as real, because they are illusory and have no true essence. However,

such phenomena do exist in the real world.” This thought lacks careful examination. In a dream, when swept away by water, you feel danger and fear; when falling from a cliff, you feel frightened; and when enjoying delicious food and abundant possessions, you feel happy and pleased. However, upon awakening, all scenes from the dream no longer hold any benefit or harm—they merely become objects of recollection.

Similarly, in the waking world, pleasant circumstances bring joy and unpleasant ones evoke aversion. But upon attaining buddhahood, all those experiences of happiness and unhappiness become unattainable, like awakening from a dream. Indeed, what we perceived in the past only existed at that moment of perceiving, like in a past dream, and no longer exists in the present moment. By tomorrow, whether today’s appearances or those from dreams, all will become mere objects of recollection, devoid of true existence. Examining from various angles, we find that dreams and reality are not different at all. They are identical in that both are manifestations arising from the force of mind.

Consider a cup of water as an example. Beings in hell perceive it as boiling copper liquid and blazing flames that burn their limbs at the slightest touch. Hungry ghosts see it as unpleasant pus and blood, unable to drink it. Animals and humans, while generally considering water potable, still perceive it differently. Aquatic creatures perceive it as their habitat, relying on it for sustenance to nourish their bodies and sensory faculties. Humans cannot remain submerged in water for extended periods without impairing their senses and eventually risking their lives. Celestial beings perceive water as nectar; vidyadharas perceive it as the female Buddha Mamaki; and in the eyes of buddhas, water is the nature of primordial wisdom of the Great Perfection, transcending all extremes.

In reality, neither water, pus, blood, nor boiling copper liquid exists objectively in the external world. These are merely manifestations perceived by different beings according to their own karma. Hell beings genuinely perceive scalding copper liquid and experience unbearable suffering from burns, while humans, under the influence of their own karma, can use water to quench thirst and cleanse. All these manifestations are illusory appearances of the mind, and no one can simply assert that “there is only water and no copper liquid” or “there is only copper liquid and no water.” All appearances in the external world manifest through the different karmic forces of sentient beings, and karma itself is created by the mind. This point must be clearly understood.

Consider another example: regarding fire, humans and most animals experience intense heat and burns upon contact. However, there exists a certain beast called “Purified by Fire,” which experiences peaceful bliss and whose fur becomes even more resplendent after jumping into flames. There also exists a type of fire mouse that lives in fire pits, viewing fire as sustenance and feeling pleasure upon contact with it. Thus, while humans generally perceive fire as hot, some beings experience it as cool, and others regard it as their dwelling place. Therefore, no objectively real fire exists in the external world—it is simply a manifestation of mind.

Similarly, with the same food, some find it delicious while others find it foul; some find it appetizing while others find it distasteful. As with excrement, humans find it particularly filthy and repulsive, avoiding it entirely; however, animals like pigs and dogs find it exceedingly satisfying and delightful, relishing it as a delicacy.

Consider salt as another example. Humans regard it as an essential seasoning for meals. However, if a frog ingests salt, it can cause perforations in the frog’s body, leading to great suffering. This illustrates the varying karmic effects experienced by different sentient beings.

The concept of habitat offers another example. For the same location, one person may find it comfortable, while another may not. We humans typically prefer environments that are dry and cozy, while most aquatic creatures find water-abundant environments comfortable. These preferences all stem from the habitual clinging of different sentient beings' minds. In the external environment, there exists no absolute standard for the comfort of a dwelling place.

Similarly, consider shelter: We find houses that are dry and have roofs comforting; however, aquatic creatures and many wild animals prefer dwellings without roofs and with high humidity. These attachments all originate from the mind itself. In the external environment, houses, clothing, food, and habitats do not possess inherent qualities of being good or bad.

We can also observe this principle with people. When an individual's enemies see him, they feel displeased, experiencing anger and resentment, and prefer to avoid him. Meanwhile, his relatives, friends, and loved ones are pleased with him, and in their eyes, he is a delightful presence. This, too, is merely an illusory projection of the mind. The person himself possesses no inherent quality of pleasantness or unpleasantness.

Likewise, regarding personal appearance, some may find a person attractive while others may not. Again, this stems from the habitual attachment of the mind. In reality, no inherent distinction exists between beautiful and ugly. The appearance of everything manifests through the habitual tendencies of the clinging mind, thereby appearing as diverse phenomena.

Regarding the sun and moon, human beings perceive the moon as bringing coolness while the sun brings heat. However, for hungry ghosts, the winter sun feels bone-chillingly cold while the summer

moon emits scorching heat. These perceptions are not fixed but are determined by the karmic forces of sentient beings. In the external world, nothing truly exists possessing inherent qualities of cold or heat.

Furthermore, sunlight enables humans to perceive colors and shapes, bringing people joy. However, for most rakshasas and owls, after the sun rises, they can no longer see forms, and their entire world becomes enveloped in darkness. Clearly, what appears as brightness to certain beings appears as darkness to others.

Many similar examples exist. The same piece of land appears as earth to some beings, while to others, it manifests as water, fire, wind, space, or other forms. This applies equally to wind and other phenomena, which manifest in various forms according to the karmic inclinations of different beings. All of these are illusory manifestations of the mind, and there are no truly existing phenomena in the external world. In other words, the appearances of all phenomena are solely projected by the mind, which serves as the fundamental source of everything. Therefore, as Buddhist practitioners, especially those following Mahayana Buddhism, it is essential to recognize that all phenomena encompassed by universe and beings are illusions of the mind.

In a film, all the various images such as horses or cows are projected by the projector and do not actually exist on the screen itself. Similarly, all phenomena such as earth, stones, mountains, courtyards, and houses are illusory appearances caused by the habitual tendencies of the mind. Chandrakirti, the disciple of the great Indian master Nagarjuna, stated in his *Introduction to the Middle Way*,

*The vast multiplicity of sentient life,
And the enveloping physical world spring from mind.
The Buddha taught sentient beings arise from karma,
So without mind, karma could not exist.*

This statement highlights that all phenomena arise from the mind.

Hence, we must trace back to the mind, the root source of everything. This principle is known as “directly pointing out appearances as the mind.” The crucial point here is to understand that the appearances of external phenomena are none other than manifestations of mind. Otherwise, if we grasp onto the notion that all phenomena truly exist in the external world while examining the mind as something isolated from them, such examination cannot affect external things, which would persist in the external world. Only when we understand that all appearances are illusions of the mind do we no longer need to observe or analyze external phenomena—it becomes sufficient to delve deeply into their fundamental root, the mind itself. The above summarizes the key point that appearances are the mind.

Regarding this principle that all appearances are illusions of the mind, even buddhas and bodhisattvas cannot fully expound it throughout countless eons. Dharma teachers like myself, Tsultrim Lodro, or Sodargye can explain its meanings and reasonings for months without exhausting the entire teaching. We certainly lack sufficient time for such detailed explanations, nor is it necessary to delve into such depth. The core teaching primarily revolves around understanding that through the workings of sentient beings’ minds, a vast multiplicity of phenomena can appear, yet none truly exists in the external world. It is crucial to first comprehend this point. Building on that understanding, we trace the root of all phenomena and focus on studying the mind. It resembles film projection—if one wishes to adjust the size and clarity of the images, one must recognize that everything is controlled by the projector, and adjusting this device will change the scenes displayed. Similarly, we need not excessively observe the myriad appearances outside. Instead, we must deeply explore our own minds and ascertain their nature as emptiness.

If you ask, “How should we study the mind, the fundamental root of all appearances?” The answer lies in recognizing the very nature of the mind itself.

The method is as previously explained in the actual practice of trekchö: Do not dwell on various past experiences, whether they bring joy or sorrow, or give rise to desire or anger; do not indulge in longing, pondering, or planning for future activities; and do not be attached to present sense objects such as visible forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and mental objects. Instead, allow the mind to be fully concentrated and abide in a state free from thoughts. This is the pith instruction for resting the mind.

In this process of abiding, five kinds of experiences will gradually develop. The first is the experience of movement, which resembles a steep mountain waterfall. Consider this: in the very beginning, is it possible for your mind to remain single-pointedly stable without any disturbance? It is almost impossible. In fact, it may seem even more chaotic than before, making you feel, “I normally do not have so many wandering thoughts, but now, whenever I try to settle my mind, it simply cannot be settled and is filled with distracting thoughts like a waterfall cascading down a cliff.” What should you do at this stage? Do not feel discouraged or distressed—try to settle the mind even just a little bit. If unable to abide, take a break and try again later. I don’t know if you have horses here, but among us Tibetans, we have experience in skillfully taming wild horses. Chasing a wild horse relentlessly is futile; one must move slowly and circle around it cautiously to catch it. The mind requires similar gentle handling. Forcibly controlling the mind will only block the flow of wind in the upper body, leading to symptoms resembling madness. Therefore, it is not advisable to apply excessive force.

When you manage to settle down a bit, try to maintain that state. If you cannot abide, take a short break. If, even after several attempts, you still cannot abide, you may shift your attention to virtuous qualities such as faith and compassion. If you still cannot abide, then take another break. By practicing in this manner repeatedly, improvement will gradually occur.



1.53: Chojé in concentration

At this stage, there are two pitfalls. What are they? One is the situation where the mind remains too tight, which often leads to symptoms resembling madness or illness. The other is where you lose interest in meditation, which leads to laxity or even abandonment of meditation practice. As the Tibetan yogini Machig Labdron once said, “Neither too tight nor too loose, that is the key to the view.” There needs to be a balance between tightness and looseness, with moderate tension in your practice. At this stage, many people abandon their practice due to the difficulty of perseverance. This happens easily. So please be mindful of these pitfalls and remain cautious.

For practitioners who have faith and devotion, the Dzogchen practice ensures that anyone who engages in it will unfailingly attain buddhahood. However, in the present age, many practitioners of the Great Perfection remain in a mundane state because they become weary during this first stage with its experience of movement. Losing interest in meditation causes their practices to stagnate. Therefore, it is essential for everyone to persevere in their meditation.

You may wonder, “Does this practice require long-term hardship?”

Unlike other vehicles, this practice does not necessitate excessive hardship. If you approach it with devoted faith, joyous enthusiasm, and reverence, persistently and wholeheartedly pray to the guru, and practice according to the pith instructions of Dzogchen for seven days, then as Lama Mipham Rinpoche said, “Practicing for seven days can loosen the illusory wheel of the winds of karma.” After seven days of practice, although mental afflictions such as greed, anger, and ignorance cannot completely vanish, they will not be as rampant as before, and their power will be weakened. At that time, you will experience joy, peace, and ease. Such progress is not difficult to make if you master the pith instructions from your guru. It is crucial not to stray from the guidance of your guru. If you were to leave your teacher at the outset, claiming that you could succeed in the practice solely through your own efforts, it would be very challenging.

Now, let us continue with the five experiences in sequence. The second is the experience of attainment, which resembles water in a deep, narrow gorge. Compared to the previous stage, the mind becomes more stable here, like water flowing in a gorge—still swift but slower than the cascading water on steep slopes. As the practice continues to stabilize, this experience of attainment will manifest.

The third is the experience of familiarity, which resembles a great river slowly winding its way down to the sea. Subsequently, the state of practice becomes even more stable, akin to the slower flow of a big river compared to water flowing in a deep, narrow gorge. The mind becomes increasingly steadfast.

The fourth is the experience of stability, which resembles a still and placid ocean. When viewed from afar, the ocean appears serene and blue, seemingly without ripples or waves. Yet, upon closer inspection, you can still notice waves. Likewise, yogis may sometimes feel as though their minds are free from thoughts, but upon careful observation, they will notice subtle conceptual thoughts continually arising, like ocean waves.

The fifth is the experience of ultimate stability, which resembles a mountain king. Just as a great mountain remains unmoved by wind and rain, when practice reaches its ultimate state, it will not be shaken by any discursive or deluded thoughts. For sentient beings in the realm of desire, if not even a momentary thought arises within about seven days, such a state can be called “one-pointedness of a mind of the desire realm.” With a physical body in the desire realm, one has reached the ultimate limit of calm abiding that cannot be surpassed. With mastery of these key points, if one continues to practice the four meditative absorptions of the form realm and the four formless absorptions, one can eradicate all mental afflictions of the three realms.

Briefly speaking, the practices of shamatha meditation—whether in the common vehicles of Shrivakayana, in the Mahayana Sutrayana, or

in the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra—all require such a process of cultivation. Particularly in the Great Perfection teaching, a practitioner needs to settle the mind naturally and then observe its nature. If one realizes that the nature of mind is unattainable emptiness, one has recognized the rigpa of the Great Perfection. To achieve this goal, the mind must be rested single-pointedly. Otherwise, amidst mental turbulence, one cannot recognize the nature of mind. Just as we need to still water so that an image can be reflected in it, only by settling the mind can we realize its unborn and empty nature. Recognizing the emptiness of the mind—that nothing can be established—is called the view, and sustaining this state for an extended period to see if the aspect of luminosity arises is called meditation.

Continuing the practice, any appearance of the six collections of objects and consciousnesses should not be altered, accepted, or rejected. Sustain the natural state of primordial awareness and emptiness and do not lose it. All appearances displayed by its unobstructed power are neither harmful nor beneficial, like waves naturally subsiding into the ocean. This is called *the direct placement in conduct with appearances*.

When sustaining this state of meditation, do not alter, transform, accept, or abandon any visible form seen by your eyes, any sound heard by your ears, any scent smelled by your nose, any flavor tasted by your tongue, any texture touched by your body, or any mental object perceived by your mental consciousness—including affirmation, negation, discernment, and analysis. If a virtuous thought arises, do not grasp it inwardly; if a non-virtuous thought arises, do not discard it outwardly. Neither accept nor abandon anything, and do not lose the primordial abiding awareness that is both cognizant and empty. Abide solely in the realization of the trekchö view that points out the empty essence and the intrinsic nature that is luminous with unceasing radiance. At this point, all appearances of the eye, ear, nose,

tongue, body, and mental consciousnesses, together with the six sense objects of visible forms, sounds, smells, tastes, textures, and mental objects, are neither harmful nor beneficial—like waves merging into the ocean. This is called *the direct placement in conduct with appearances*.

When you have become familiar with this practice, in the beginning, when recognizing the intrinsic awareness, conceptual thoughts are self-liberated like a snake naturally uncoiling its own knot. In the middle, when the unobstructed power is perfected, any collections of consciousness have lost their potential to benefit or harm, like a thief entering an empty house. In the end, when perfect stability is achieved, even if you search for impure phenomena, you cannot find any, because only inherent, genuine wisdom remains and becomes perfectly evident, like arriving at an island of gold where there is no earth or rock. This is called *the direct placement in pristine awareness as the result*.

As you become familiar with this realization, in the beginning, when any conceptual thought arises, you observe its essence and recognize its unborn nature at the very moment of its appearance. Therefore, you need not deliberately reject it outwardly or establish it inwardly. Like a snake naturally uncoiling itself, the thought becomes self-liberated.

In the middle stage, the unobstructed power of your realization of intrinsic awareness becomes perfected, indicating that the sign of warmth on the bodhisattva path has appeared. Any thought that arises is neither harmful nor beneficial. A virtuous thought brings no particular benefit, and a non-virtuous thought causes no harm—just as a thief breaking into an empty house finds nothing to steal.

In the final stage, all deluded thoughts grasping at the duality of subject and object dissolve into the pure expanse of dharmadhatu, thus revealing the naked awareness of primordial wisdom. At that moment,

no matter how you search, you cannot find any impure phenomena—just as if you had arrived at an island of gold where no earth or rock exists. At this point, buddha wisdom fully manifests, and this is called *the direct placement in pristine awareness as the result*.

These three pith instructions above—recognizing the true face of rigpa, perfecting the unobstructed power, and stabilizing the state of realization—are presented by summarizing the essence of Rigdzin Garab Dorje's 6,400,000 stanzas of the Great Perfection.

The Concluding Practice of Tögal

In order to directly perceive the secret luminosity of rigpa instead of establishing it through conceptual analysis, you should practice tögal, directly crossing over to the spontaneous presence of appearances.

In tögal practice, the key point of the body is to assume one of the three postures. The key point of the speech is to remain silent while inhaling and exhaling slowly through the mouth. The key point of the mind is to engage in the actual practice of trekchö to place the mind in the luminosity of self-occurring prajna. The key point of the place is the cloudless sky, the sun, the moon, a butter lamp, or the like. The key point of the gateways of the eyes is to gaze upward, to gaze sideways, and to gaze downward.

The nature of mind possesses three qualities: the essence is emptiness, the intrinsic nature is luminosity, and the great compassion is all-pervasive. To have the great luminosity of rigpa directly reveal itself, we need to rest our mind in this very nature. In other words, we need to recognize and abide in the intrinsic awareness of rigpa as pointed out by the instruction of trekchö. Previously, instead of directly perceiving the luminosity of rigpa, we could only establish it through analysis and speculation. Now, to make it the direct object of sensory

perception, we engage in the practice of tōgal that consists of six key points.

The key point of the body is to assume one of three postures: the dharmakaya posture like a sitting lion, the sambhogakaya posture like a sleeping elephant, and the nirmanakaya posture like a crouching rishi.

The dharmakaya posture like a sitting lion: Sit with the soles of both feet coming together, legs slightly extended forward without excessive inward bending. Keep all parts of the body relaxed to avoid discomfort in knees and other areas. Sit comfortably like this and hold your hands in vajra fists. To form these, press your thumbs against the roots of your ring fingers and close your palms into fists. Then place the fists beside your heels. This posture resembles the seated position of a lion. Keep your upper body straight, slightly tilt your neck upward, with eyes half-closed and focused in the direction between the eyebrows. While observing lights and so on, see whether various bindus and subtle bindus manifest. If light and bindus appear, this indicates the manifestation of pure kaya and wisdom. Through continuous practice, one day the kaya and wisdom will truly manifest.

The sambhogakaya posture like a sleeping elephant: Kneel on the ground with knees close to the chest, soles of both feet facing upward, hands supporting the chin, elbows resting on the ground, and eyes gazing evenly to the left and right. Then observe whether bindus manifest.

The nirmanakaya posture like a crouching rishi: Sit in a squatting position with the soles of your feet on the ground, hands clasping the knees tightly against the chest, eyes slightly closed, gazing toward the tip of the nose, guiding bindus downward to see if they manifest.

When a continuous cluster of bindus appears, this signifies Lord Manjushri Bodhisattva, the embodiment of the essence of all buddhas of

the three times. Through continuous practice, the true form of Manjushri and his hand emblems will eventually manifest. These manifestations must remain stable without movement or wavering—this is the fundamental requirement. If the mind and eyes remain still, these appearances will remain steadfast.

The key point of the speech is to maintain silence while inhaling and exhaling slowly through the mouth, avoiding forceful breathing.

The key point of the mind is to abide in the realization state of trekchö—the direct placement in the luminosity of self-occurring prajna.

The key point of the place is to focus on the stainless sky, the sun, the moon, or a bright lamp. Gazing at any of these will manifest something resembling blue bindus, which are actually the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness. To reveal all light and bindus, gaze into the azure sky during meditation. During daylight hours, focus on a position about one arm's length below the sun. Avoid looking directly at the sun, as direct sunlight can harm the eyes. At night, focus on the moon; at dawn or dusk, focus on lamp light.

The key point of the gateways of the eyes is to gaze upward, downward or sideways with eyes slightly closed. In tögal practice, the eyes must be half-open and half-closed, rather than fully open or fully closed. In the dharmakaya posture, look upward, directing your gaze through the middle of your eyelashes toward the area between the eyebrows. In the nirmanakaya posture, gaze downward toward the tip of the nose. In the sambhogakaya posture, gaze evenly to both sides.

The key point of appearances through the practice is to perceive the spontaneous appearances of the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness, the luminosity of the empty bindu, as well as the vajra chain of awareness. The luminosity of

the dhatu of awareness is the pervasive blue expanse surrounded by concentric rings of five-colored lights. The luminosity of the empty bindu is concentric circles of five-colored lights with a bindu at their center. The vajra chain of awareness is like gold threads adorned with crystal beads.

The key point of appearances is to perceive clearly the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness, the luminosity of the empty bindu, and the vajra chain of awareness. The luminosity of the dhatu of awareness appears as pervasive blue space, rounded and surrounded by rainbow lights. The luminosity of the empty bindu is a small bindu surrounded by many layers of concentric circles of five-colored lights. It may not appear initially but will manifest after a few days of practice. In the center of the bindu appears the vajra chain of awareness, resembling many gold threads threaded with crystal beads, twisting and winding, moving up and down. The manifestation of the vajra chain can occur in the early stages of practice and may become visible with initial efforts. So you would probably see it today.

When these appearances arise, stabilize them and make them motionless by dissolving your breath, eye consciousness, and mental consciousness into the appearances and focus your mind there. You need to sustain this practice for a long period of time, free from any conceptual thoughts of mental analysis or characteristics, [...]

The above describes the six key points of tōgal practice. In general, the essential points for the tōgal path may vary according to the teachings of different gurus or the intentions of different tantras. Some teachings emphasize three points, some four, and some even more. Here I present the teaching with six key points, which is the unique pith instruction of Lord Manjushri, the embodiment of non-conceptual wisdom of all buddhas. These six points are integral—omitting one would

be deficient while adding more would be superfluous. When practicing tōgal with these six key points, you must abide in the view of trekchö.

[...] until you can directly perceive the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness, the luminosity of the empty bindu, as well as the vajra chain of awareness. This is the first vision of the direct recognition of the dharmata.

As appearances become increasingly apparent, stable, and complete, and boundless brilliance also arises, this is the second vision of the increasing experience.

Now we explore the four visions of tōgal, which are exclusively taught in the Dzogchen tradition and cannot be found in any other tantras or vehicles. Specifically, being able to clearly perceive the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness, the luminosity of the empty bindu, and the vajra chain of awareness at the initial stage is known as *the first vision of the direct recognition of the dharmata*.

As the bindu becomes increasingly apparent, the vajra chain of awareness grows more stable, and the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness becomes progressively enhanced, accompanied by the appearance of boundless brilliance, this is known as *the second vision of the increasing experience*.

When the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness appears as pure lands, the luminosity of the empty bindu perfects as immeasurable palaces, the vajra chain of awareness matures into kayas, and all appearances become pure manifestation, this is the third vision of pristine awareness reaching its full extent.

When the luminosity of the dhatu of awareness appears as pure lands, the luminosity of the empty bindu is perfected as immeasurable palaces, and the vajra chain of awareness matures into the bodies of deities—with all appearances becoming completely pure and no impure phenomena remaining—this is known as *the third vision of awareness reaching its full extent*.

When the boundless appearances of kayas and wisdoms, all phenomenal appearances that lack inherent existence, dissolve into the inner radiance of dhatu as the ever-youthful vase kaya and the stable ground of no appearances is attained, this is the fourth vision of the complete exhaustion of phenomena into dharmata.

When all impure phenomena have been purified in the third vision of awareness reaching its full extent, all pure appearances of the unobstructed power of kayas and wisdoms further dissolve into the inner radiance of dhatu as the ever-youthful vase kaya, thereby establishing the stable ground of no appearances. This is known as *the fourth vision of the complete exhaustion of phenomena into dharmata*.

Then, in various worlds where karmically connected beings dwell, you will manifest as the three kayas, and this display of the three kayas is the unfailing, self-occurring result of the gathering of both aspirations and virtuous karma.

Upon attaining perfect buddhahood, through the power of buddha's aspirations and the positive karma of sentient beings, you will manifest sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya, with dharmakaya as the dominant condition. You will then benefit sentient beings throughout space by responding to their capacities and needs. Such dependent arising is undeceiving and self-occurring.

If, in this life, you have not attained stable and supreme realization, then at the moment of death, visualize the mind as a white syllable *ah* (ཨ) in your heart. This syllable ascends on the upward moving wind and dissolves into the heart center of your guru, who is seated above your crown. The guru then ascends higher and higher, departing for the pure land of Sukhavati. With the focus that your mind and the guru's mind become inseparable, take rebirth.

This is the instruction for the bardo of dying. If you have not attained buddhahood in this life, then at the moment of death, imagine that your mind appears as a white syllable *ah* (ཨ) in your heart while chanting *ah ah ah...* Visualize this syllable *ah* emerging from your crown aperture and dissolving into the heart of your guru, accompanied by the sound of *hik* or *phat*. Your guru, inseparable from Lord Manjushri, ascends higher and higher, proceeding directly to the pure land of Sukhavati. Abide in such a state of non-abiding and take rebirth.

For daily practice, visualize as follows: At the core of your heart lies a joint in the blue central channel, similar to that found in a bamboo shaft. Slightly above this joint is a white syllable *ah*. Focus your mind on it and chant *ah ah ah...* Then visualize it shooting out from your crown and dissolving into the heart of Guru Manjushri. After this, visualize the guru transforming into light, descending and dissolving into your own heart, thereby granting you the deathless siddhi with mastery over lifespan.

Whether practicing repeatedly in daily life or applying this at the moment of death, reliance on this instruction alone will be sufficient.

In the dharmata bardo, whatever display of kayas and wisdoms appears, such as sounds, lights, brilliance, recognize them as your own display and abide in the realization of their innate nature through the direct placement in the view.

Continue abiding in that state until all appearances of unobstructed power are exhausted into the primordial ground.

During the dharmata bardo, the form of the main deity first appears, followed by the gathering of noble beings, and then spontaneously arising manifestations. Above, various forms of dharmakaya appear; in the middle, various forms of sambhogakaya appear; and below, various forms of nirmanakaya appear.

At this moment, you must recognize that all appearances are none other than your own manifestations without substantial external existence; this is the instruction known as “a child jumping into their mother’s lap.” You should rely on the direct placement on the view of trekchö and remain single-pointed and unwavering in that stable ground; this is the instruction known as “an unchanging golden scalpel.” All appearances of unobstructed power dissolve into the dhatu of the ground without reverting back; this is the instruction known as “a strong man shooting arrows.”

When the bardo of becoming manifests like a dream, pray single-pointedly to your guru and deity with devotion and reverence. Practice the pith instruction for the bardo of dying, and you will attain comfort in a self-occurring nirmanakaya pure realm.

*This practice that places buddhahood within reach
Welled forth from my wisdom mind,
With just a few words composed by my conceptual thoughts.
In order to benefit some beginners,
I wrote it down.
By the virtue of this composition,
May all sentient beings as boundless as open space
Equally attain comfort in the dhatu of awareness.*

This was written by Ngawang Lodrö Tsungmé in a break between morning meditation sessions, in the hermitage of the Asura Cave, also known as the Cave of Narayana, at the five-peaked mountain of Wu Tai Shan, a place sacred to the emanations of Manjushri.

Contemplate in your mind: “By the virtue of teaching and listening to this text, together with all merit accumulated by myself and others throughout the three times, may the Buddhadharma that is like wish-fulfilling jewels always remain in this world, flourishing and being widely propagated; may all sentient beings temporarily enjoy auspiciousness and happiness in the higher realms, and ultimately attain the fruition of buddhahood that possesses omniscient wisdom.” Please hold this motivation in your mind as we make dedications and aspirations together:

*By this accumulation of merit, may I obtain all-seeing omniscience,
And may all faults be defeated.
The whirling, turbulent waves of birth, aging, sickness,
And death—from this ocean of samsara, may I liberate beings.*

*Just as the Bodhisattva Manjushri attained omniscience,
And Samantabhadra too
All these merits now I dedicate
To train and follow in their footsteps.*

*As all the victorious buddhas of past, present, and future
Praise dedication as supreme,
So now I dedicate all these roots of virtue
For all beings to perfect Good Actions.*

*When it is time for me to die,
Let all that obscures me fade away, so
I look on Amitabha, there in person,
And go at once to his pure land of Sukhavati.*

*In that pure land, may I actualize every single one
Of all these aspirations!
May I fulfil them, each and every one,
And bring help to beings for as long as the universe remains!*

*May the Buddhadharma flourish and be widely propagated.
May all sentient beings enjoy peace and happiness.
May I put the noble dharma into practice day and night,
And accomplish the benefits of self and others spontaneously.*



1.54: Chojé and his entourage

DAILY ATTENDANCE

During our travels abroad, I had the great fortune of serving at Chojé's side, taking turns with Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro in attending to him. In this special period of time, I often helped soak his feet and gave him foot massages. I also plucked his beard, washed his clothes, and clipped his nails. Especially when we were outside, as Yidzhin Norbu had difficulty walking, I would often support him by holding his hand to make walking easier for him.



1.55: Khenpo Sodargye serving at Chojé's side

In the process of assisting Rinpoche, I learned some subtle techniques. Some people, out of reverence for Chojé, struggled with the appropriate amount of pressure—either relaxing their grip when Chojé placed his hand on theirs, or lifting their arm forcefully too high, both causing discomfort. When supporting Rinpoche, the strength needed to be neither too tight nor too loose, providing

stable support at his wrist. This way, even though my strength wasn't great, I could firmly support the tall and broad-shouldered Chojé. To this day, scenes of holding his hand and supporting him often appear in my dreams.



1.56: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro serving at Chojé's side

At night, when Rinpoche was preparing to sleep, I would first help him remove his outer robe, take off his belt and phurba, and then neatly fold his shawl, placing everything in an orderly manner with the belt and phurba on top. After that, I would place a thermos of warm water within his reach in case he needed to take medicine during the night. I would also leave a flashlight beside his pillow.

I most enjoyed washing Yidzhin Norbu's clothes. His robes carried a natural, subtle fragrance—no matter how many years passed, that unique scent

remained unchanged. This beautiful experience made every moment of washing his clothes sacred and filled with joy. It was as if the act of washing his garments was a spiritual purification, a deep heart-to-heart connection, making me feel even closer to him.



1.57: Having a meal at the People's Buddhism Study Society

THE FIRST LECTURE ON THE NATURAL FREEDOM OF THE NATURE OF MIND

Starting from May 9th, Chojé gave a series of four lectures at the People's Buddhism Study Society, from 8 AM to 10 AM each day, to teach *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*.

To ensure the clarity of the teachings, this compilation does not directly quote the original text of Omniscient Longchenpa's practice manual of *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, but instead faithfully records the profound instructions given by Chojé. For those who wish to explore further, you may reference the original text yourself.

Please generate the supreme bodhicitta in your heart: "In order to bring all sentient beings throughout the universe the fruit of unsurpassable, complete, and perfect enlightenment, which is endowed with everlasting peace and happiness, I listen to this sublime dharma and practice accordingly." Now listen attentively with the proper conduct of hearing the dharma, without any confusion as to what should be accepted and what should be abandoned.

Today, I am giving you the teaching of Dzogchen, which encompasses the ultimate key points of all vehicles. This teaching was originally spread throughout the vast worlds of the ten directions by the twelve founding teachers of Dzogchen, including Buddha Shakyamuni. Later, Rigdzin Garab Dorje, who embodied the wisdom intent and blessings of all buddhas, brought it to the human realm. Subsequently, it was widely spread by Guru Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra. This refers to the earlier period of the Dzogchen teaching. During the middle period, it was propagated by Rongzom Pandita and Omniscient Longchenpa. In the later period, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Omniscient Ju Mipham Rinpoche greatly expanded its dissemination, bringing it to a peak of great flourishing.

Among them, the one who made the greatest contribution to the Dzogchen teaching, wrote the most prolific works, and attracted the largest number of followers was undoubtedly Omniscient Longchenpa. Although some of his works have been lost, his writings on Dzogchen alone are still preserved in more than ten large volumes in the Land of Tibet. To this day, all Dzogchen practitioners in the Snow Land consider solely Longchenpa's teachings to be their ultimate source of guidance.

Today, we will discuss one of the Dzogchen texts composed by Omniscient Longchenpa, *The Great Perfection Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*. This teaching presents the complete practice of Dzogchen, including the preliminary practice, the actual practice, and the concluding practice. It is an extremely profound teaching.

Homage to the Glorious Vajrasattva!

*To the nature of all phenomena, which is primordially unborn,
Unspeaking, beyond thought, and non-dual, the dharmakaya,
The king of the nature of mind, the self-arising Samantabhadra,
The perfect and unchanging ground, I bow!*

*The definitive doctrine that bestows the yoga fruition in a single
lifetime,
Is accompanied by the blessings of all noble ones,
And elucidates the meaning that whatever arises is self-liberated,
beyond accepting or rejecting,
I will explain on this by combining the practice instructions.*

The Buddha of unsurpassable and complete enlightenment, with his skillful means, great loving kindness and compassion, expounded countless vehicles and dharma doors in a gradual way according to sentient beings' elements and capacities. The essence of these teachings can be condensed into the awakened bodhicitta. Although it contains numerous practice instructions, most of them are bound by conceptual attachments, and cannot offer the path to liberation within

a single lifetime. What is taught here, however, is the pith instruction of *The Great Perfection Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*. This Dzogchen teaching is a supreme, secret, and skillful method for instantaneous realization of the liberation of the ground—the basis of accepting and rejecting. It transcends all vehicles.

The teaching consists of three parts: the sequence of lineage masters, the transmitted instructions, and sealing the teaching with a cherishing mind.

I. The Sequence of Lineage Masters

In the dharmadhatu palace of the Akanishtha realm, the dharmakaya Buddha Samantabhadra transmitted this teaching to the sambhogakaya Buddha Amitabha, who then transmitted it to the nirmanakaya Padmasambhava. Guru Padmasambhava transmitted it to Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal, who transmitted it to Guru Shila Mati. Shila Mati transmitted it to the learned and accomplished master Delek Gyatso, who transmitted it to the Dharma King Mönlam Özer. Dharma King Mönlam Özer then transmitted it to Omniscient Longchenpa.

The lineage listed in this commentary ends with Omniscient Longchenpa.

Subsequently, Omniscient Longchenpa passed it on to Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa, who passed it on to Jigme Gyalwe Nyugu. Jigme Gyalwe Nyugu transmitted it to Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who transmitted it to Omniscient Ju Mipham Rinpoche. Ju Mipham Rinpoche transmitted it to Khenpo Kunzang Palden, who transmitted it to Thubga Yidzhin Norbu. Thubga Yidzhin Norbu then transmitted it to me.

II. The Transmitted Instructions

This is divided into three aspects: instructions for the practice of natural freedom in this life, instructions for the luminosity of the ground during the bardo, and instructions for the ultimate fruition.

The first part is further divided into three sections: the preliminary practice, the actual practice, and the concluding practice.

The Preliminary Practice

The preliminary practice consists of seven mind trainings. The first one is the guru yoga practice for receiving blessings:

Sit on a comfortable cushion. After taking refuge and generating bodhicitta, instantly visualize: Above your head, on a lotus and sun and moon discs, sits Guru Padmasambhava, who is inseparable and non-dual from your root guru. He is radiant and majestic, wearing wrathful attire, with a dark blue complexion. He holds a vajra and a bell, adorned with precious jewels and bone ornaments, and is in union with Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal. Yeshe Tsogyal holds a curved knife in her right hand and a skull cup in her left hand, embracing Guru Rinpoche. Surrounding them are all the lineage masters, as well as countless buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakas and dakinis.

In your heart, mentally perform prostrations, offerings, confession, rejoicing, requesting the turning of the dharma wheel, and beseeching the gurus to remain without entering parinirvana. Then, recite: "I pray to the guru, the wish-fulfilling jewel, to bless me. Please purify the obscurations of my body, speech, and mind, and grant me the siddhis of body, speech, and mind. May I attain buddhahood within this very life..."

Then visualize the bodies of the gurus emanating light, purifying the obscurations of your body, speech, and mind, as well as those of all sentient beings. All appearance and existence are transformed into the gurus' nature. The light of their body, speech, and mind enters your body through your crown, giving rise to the wisdom of clarity, bliss, and no thought in your mind stream, along with the supreme realization of instantaneous self-liberation. Hold your breath slightly, and then expand the visualization to meditate further. Finally, dedicate the merit in the illusory state.

Practice in this way for seven days, and signs of accomplishing the guru will suddenly appear along with supreme blessings.

The second training is the mandala practice to perfect the two accumulations:

In the space before you, visualize your guru along with the assembly of mandala deities. Arrange the mandala offering heap to the best of your ability, and visualize that the worlds of the ten directions, primarily the four continents, are of the nature of precious jewels, filled with all desirable enjoyments for gods and humans, as well as clouds of inner and outer offerings as vast as the ocean. Offer your body, possessions, virtuous root, and everything else to the assembly of noble beings, visualizing that they are immensely pleased. Practice mandala offerings diligently, day and night, for seven days.

The necessity of this practice is that it allows you to perfect the two accumulations of merit and wisdom and to give rise to supreme realization in your mind.

The third training is the practice of the hundred-syllable mantra to purify the two obscurations:

In the expanse of emptiness, visualize yourself instantly transforming into Vajrasattva, pure white in color, with one face and two arms, holding a vajra and a bell with your two hands. You are adorned with precious jewels, seated in the full lotus position. At your heart center, on a lotus and moon disc, there is a white syllable *hung*, surrounded by the hundred-syllable mantra beginning with *om* in a clockwise direction. The *hung* and *om* are aligned on a straight line. Light rays emanate from the hundred-syllable mantra, purifying the obscurations of yourself and all sentient beings. Recite the hundred-syllable mantra as many as possible for seven days.

The necessity of this practice is that it purifies negative karma and obscurations, leading to swift realization of the true reality.



1.58: Chojé teaching *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind* to the assembly

Further visualization: Then, visualize that the self-resounding of the mantra emanates forth, and all appearances of the world and beings are of the nature of Vajrasattva's body, all sounds heard are of the nature of Vajrasattva's speech, and all thoughts and discriminations are the play of Vajrasattva's mind. In this state, where there are no impure appearances, focus single-pointedly on reciting the hundred-syllable mantra.

The necessity of this practice is that it purifies all obscurations.

The fourth training is the contemplation on the impermanence of life to generate the mind of renunciation:

Contemplate in your mind: This precious human body with its freedoms and advantages will not last long and will certainly deteriorate quickly. All external appearances and objects are subject to impermanence and will change and fade with time. No sentient being can escape death. Thinking of the passing of your friends and loved ones, realize that your own life is also impermanent. This body, composed

of the aggregates you cling to, will eventually break apart and disintegrate, as fragile as a bubble of water. There is no guarantee even for survival today or tomorrow. Contemplate the certainty of death and visualize that today could very well be the final day of this life, and you would have to face the dissolution of the four elements and the separation of body and mind. Reflecting in this way deeply and sincerely for seven days, a realization of impermanence and a sense of urgency will arise in your mind, motivating you to diligently engage in dharma practice.

The fifth training is the practice of taking refuge as a preliminary step to entering the path:

In the space before you, visualize all buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions and three times, along with the assembly of mandala deities, shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, arhats, and other representations of the Three Jewels. Resolve that, until attaining full enlightenment, you will take them as your refuge and protectors. Recite the refuge prayer earnestly:

*I take refuge in the guru;
I take refuge in the Buddha;
I take refuge in the dharma;
And I take refuge in the sangha.*

Visualize these noble beings looking upon you with great compassion, like parents lovingly caring for their children. From the depths of your heart, sincerely and wholeheartedly take refuge. Then visualize all sentient beings clearly repeating the refuge prayer along with you. Diligently practice in this way for seven days.

The necessity of this practice is that it eliminates obstacles to your dharma practice and increasingly enhances your realization.

The sixth training is the practice of bodhicitta to enter the dharma path:

Visualize in front of you the suffering beings in samsara: the unbearable heat and cold of hell beings, the hunger and thirst of hungry ghosts, the bondage and exploitation of animals, the suffering of birth, aging, sickness, and death of humans, the conflicts of asuras, and the eventual death and fall of celestial beings. Contemplate that these beings constantly endure these sufferings, and recognize that the very nature of samsara is suffering. Reflecting on how these beings have long been tormented by samsaric suffering, make the aspiration, "May my virtuous root, body, and possessions enable them to temporarily break free from suffering and attain happiness, abiding in the state of the four immeasurables without attachment, aversion, and bias, and ultimately attain buddhahood."

Recite the concise aspiration prayer for generating bodhicitta:

*The Lord Buddha and your heirs, please turn your minds
toward me!
Just as all buddhas of the three times
Have aroused the awakened mind,
I too, for the benefit of all beings,
Give rise to the bodhicitta.
I shall train diligently
In the precepts step by step.
I will dispel various sufferings of sentient beings
And work tirelessly for others' benefit.*

Then practice the tonglen meditation of exchanging self with others, alternately visualizing taking on the suffering of others and giving them your happiness. With a strong sense of compassion, do this practice for seven days.

The necessity of this practice is that all your actions of body and speech become causes for benefiting others, thereby entering the Mahayana path.

The two practice manuals, *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind* and *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, share a similar overall structure, but the latter specifically introduces the practice of tōgal. When you choose a deity, the deity on which your flower falls is the one with whom you have a karmic affinity. I encourage you to diligently practice *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, as this is essential for you to quickly receive blessings, achieve accomplishment, and gain benefits in various aspects.

The essential points of the Dzogchen path can be summarized into three practices:

Renunciation: First, purify your mind stream through preliminary practices, recognizing that everything in samsara is by nature suffering, and thereby developing genuine renunciation. This is not mere lip service but a sincere desire for liberation from samsara that arises from the depths of your heart.

Bodhicitta: Generate bodhicitta for all sentient beings, recognizing that there isn't a single being who hasn't been your parent in previous lives. Love all these parent-like beings more than yourself, and commit to practice for the sake of bringing them the fruition of buddhahood. This bodhicitta of virtuous and altruistic intention must arise in your mind stream.

Right View: As discussed yesterday, if you determine that both samsara and nirvana are mere illusory manifestations of the mind, and that the mind itself has no inherent existence—that it is empty by nature—then you can be said to have fundamentally developed the view of the Great Perfection.

These three—renunciation, bodhicitta, and right view—encompass the entirety of the 84,000 teachings of the Buddha. In particular, they include all the essential points of the Great Perfection. Lama Tsongkha-pa condensed the vast teachings of the Buddhadharmā into these three principles, and this is something everyone should deeply understand.

As mentioned before, if we look at practitioners from different countries around the world, some emphasize renunciation complemented by maintaining pure precepts, some focus on the practice of bodhicitta centered on benefiting others, and some emphasize the cultivation of right view. As a matter of fact, the view of Dzogchen encompasses all these key points and transcends all teachings. For this reason, the Dzogchen teaching has now spread widely throughout the world. In many countries, such as India and the United States, Dzogchen is considered more effective than other vehicles, and practitioners actively engage in its practice.

Currently in Singapore, many practitioners, particularly those from the People's Buddhism Study Society, appreciate and have faith in Dzogchen, and the number of people who are attracted to Dzogchen will continue to grow. Why? Because the practice of other teachings often does not bring immediate results, whereas Dzogchen can quickly lead to the direct realization of the dharmata of mind, as long as one has faith, reverence, and conviction in it. Therefore, in the future, Singapore is bound to see a large number of Buddhists practicing Dzogchen. You should also strive to practice, as Dzogchen is an excellent means to achieve buddhahood within a single lifetime. The merit of teaching Dzogchen far exceeds that of teaching other methods, and everyone should remember this.

Regardless of which of the three vehicles you practice, taking refuge is an indispensable foundation. You must have a firm commitment, resolving never to abandon the Three Jewels even at the cost of your life, and you must develop a deep sense of reverence for the Three Jewels.

Methods of Showing Respect to the Buddha Jewel: Although there is no actual buddha living in the world today, you should make offerings, prostrations, and aspirations before buddha images with sincere faith and reverence. Among all Buddhists in the world, no one would show disrespect to buddha images.

Methods of Showing Respect to the Dharma Jewel: The true dharma jewel exists in the form of scripture texts. In some places people show great reverence to Buddhist texts, while in other places people treat them merely as objects of study without sufficient respect. As Buddhists, we should regard the scriptures as the most important and venerable among the Three Jewels. Before entering parinirvana, the Buddha said: "Ananda, do not grieve, Ananda, do not weep. During the five hundred years of the Age of the Final Dharma, I will appear in the form of texts. Think of these texts as me, view them as my actual presence, and show reverence to them at that time." This means that the Buddha will manifest as texts, and we should respect these texts accordingly.

Especially for us, it's difficult to memorize all the teachings we hear from the guru, and if we keep asking questions repeatedly, the guru may become annoyed. However, if we record these teachings and turn them into written texts, this becomes what we call the "angerless guru." Even if you read it a thousand times, it will never get angry. Therefore, we should respect dharma texts properly, otherwise it could lead to a decline in wisdom, and our meditation experiences and realizations would regress. When reading scriptures, we should treat them with respect and never place them directly on the floor or in inappropriate places.

Of course, most Buddhists follow this practice, but in places like America, some people sit on scriptures or step over them. When I went to America before, someone asked me, "You Tibetans are very particular about the distinction between head and bottom, considering there's a big difference in purity between the head and buttocks, believing it's good to place scriptures on the head but bad to sit on them. We Americans don't see such a distinction between head and bottom in terms of purity. So, is it really inappropriate if we don't show the same respect for scriptures as you do?"

I jokingly replied, “Think about it. If you were to put shoes or feet on President Clinton’s head, do you think he’d be happy? In the same way, placing your feet on scriptures is disrespectful behavior. Everyone should be careful to treat scriptures with respect.”

Methods of Showing Respect to the Sangha Jewel: The merit of monastics far exceeds that of lay practitioners by hundreds and thousands of times. Therefore, it is said that “they are worthy recipients of offerings from lay people.” Monastics are the field of offerings for both humans and celestial beings.

Generally speaking, there are eighteen schools in the Shrivakayana tradition. Among them, all the vinaya holders in Tibetan Buddhism follow the lineage of the Mulasarvastivada school, which was passed down from the Buddha’s own son, Prince Rahula. Many vinaya holders in places like Sri Lanka follow the vinaya lineage of the Theravada school. Both of them are pure Buddhist disciplines established by the Buddha. Therefore, you should respect all monastics, and as lay practitioners, you should also take and uphold refuge vows and lay precepts. Most importantly, after taking refuge vows, you should respect the Three Jewels with faith and devotion.

In the future, you should all make every effort to help the monastic sangha in Singapore grow larger and more prosperous. Never neglect this point. Although Buddhism overall is widely spread in Singapore, the monastic sangha is very small. Only when the monastic sangha flourishes can the Buddhadharma flourish. When the Buddhadharma flourishes, sentient beings will naturally enjoy happiness. Therefore, if any of you wish to renounce worldly life and become monastics in the future, you may go to Sri Lanka to receive the Theravada precepts, or travel to Tibetan regions to receive the Mulasarvastivada precepts. Now in our Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy, we are also transmitting the precepts to many monastics. In any case, those who wish to become monastics must receive pure precepts.

The monastic sangha here is really too small. A few days ago, I visited Kong Meng San, the largest Buddhist monastery in Singapore, and there were only about a dozen ordained monastics there. In contrast, before coming here, I attended a grand dharma assembly at Larung Gar, where 38,000 monks and nuns participated, including a few from Singapore. After that, I held another dharma assembly in Nyarong, which attracted over hundreds of thousands of participants. Although such a large number of people doesn't gather regularly, when major dharma assemblies are held, the number of participants can be enormous. Generally speaking, Tibetans have a deep love for the dharma, which is why they have the largest number of monastics. I hope that in the future, Singapore can also have a large and flourishing monastic community. Please work hard toward this goal, and I will also pray for it!

VISITING TWO DHARMA CENTERS



1.59: Devotees of the Bodhi Association offering lunch to Chojé



1.60: Chojé giving teachings to devotees of the Bodhi Association

At noon, Chojé was invited to visit the Bodhi Association. Established in 1991, this newly emerging Buddhist organization had already made remarkable achievements in spreading the dharma and benefiting sentient beings. Dedicated to meditation, charity, and the promotion of Buddhist culture, the association remained non-sectarian, actively inviting esteemed masters from Theravada, Han, and Tibetan Buddhism to engage in dharma teaching and exchange. They regularly held lectures and group practice sessions, striving to help more people understand the true essence of the dharma.

I remember that in its early days, the association was located on the 26th floor of People's Park Complex in Chinatown. In 1994, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro personally visited the center to teach the first chapter of *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life* and *The Practice of Buddha Shakyamuni*. He also provided detailed explanations on lay precepts and tantric vows. Every Saturday, Venerable Kwang Chao would lead meditation sessions there.



1.61: Chojé bestowing empowerments to devotees of the Bodhi Association

When Chojé arrived at the Bodhi Association, devotees welcomed him with enthusiasm, the atmosphere filled with anticipation and excitement. Chojé had lunch there and bestowed the *Jampal Yeshe Sempa* empowerment to fortunate disciples. He also gave head-touch blessings to each person present, filling everyone's hearts with immense dharma joy.

Afterward, Chojé visited Penor Rinpoche's dharma center in Singapore, the Palyul Nyingma Buddhist Association. This center played a significant role in Singapore's Buddhist community, frequently holding empowerments, group practices, and retreats to support practitioners in deepening their understanding of the dharma and advancing in their spiritual practice.



1.62: Chojé visiting the Palyul center

The Palyul center was located on the third floor, with narrow and steep stairs. Due to his difficulty walking, Chojé found it somewhat strenuous to climb up. Though the space inside was relatively small, the number of attendees was considerable. Combined with the hot weather, the atmosphere felt a bit stuffy and crowded. Nevertheless, Chojé was in excellent spirits that day, his face glowing with a kind and gentle smile. He graciously bestowed the Amitayus empowerment to the gathered devotees, bringing great blessings to all present.



1.63: Chojé together with the abbot of Palyul center

DELIVERANCE CEREMONY FOR THE DECEASED

As part of the dharma activities in Singapore, the People's Buddhism Study Society specially arranged a phowa ceremony, hoping that through Chojé's compassionate blessing, the deceased could receive prayers for liberation. Rinpoche gladly accepted this request.



1.64: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro setting up the Buddhist altar for this ceremony

To prepare for this ceremony, the organizers invited devotees to register in advance, collecting the names of their deceased family members, relatives, friends, and even other departed beings outside the association who needed spiritual deliverance. The names, along with their birth and death dates, were respectfully written on yellow memorial

tablets and neatly arranged on the walls. Meanwhile, they meticulously set up a solemn Buddhist altar with offerings of water, incense, flowers, lamps, fruits, and other items, reverently enshrining an image of Avalokiteshvara.

On the afternoon of May 10th, the ceremony officially began. Chojé first purified the ritual space by chanting prayers and sprinkling blessed water, then took his seat on the dharma throne and performed the *Ocean of Conquerors Avalokiteshvara Deliverance Ritual*, a mind term of Namchö teachings. During this



1.65: Chojé chanting prayers and sprinkling blessed water

part, Chojé performed various ritual elements for the consciousness of the deceased, including summoning, confession of misdeeds, food offerings, and empowerment, helping them transcend suffering and attain a favorable rebirth—whether in higher realms or in the pure land of Sukhavati. As Chojé chanted, the devotees respectfully joined their palms in prayer, silently reciting *Namo Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva* or the six-syllable mani mantra.



1.66: Chojé burning the memorial tablet with the names of the deceased

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Chojé burned the paper memorial tablet bearing the names of the deceased and placed it in the offering plate, symbolizing their liberation. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro then led the devotees outside to a simple burning container, where the memorial tablets of the deceased were burned one by one. Following Tibetan tradition, they also added flour, biscuits, candies and other food items to the fire. With profound compassion, Chojé recited Ju Mipham Rinpoche's sur offering ritual,³ helping all wandering and invisible beings sever negative karmic ties and embark on the path to liberation.



1.67: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro leading devotees in burning the memorial tablets of the deceased

During this ceremony, Chojé performed the auspicious dharma offering for local deceased and non-human beings. All those who connected with the event received varying degrees of liberation. At the end of the ceremony, Chojé gave relevant teachings to the devotees, while I served as the translator, conveying his compassionate instructions to everyone present.

THE SECOND LECTURE ON THE NATURAL FREEDOM OF THE NATURE OF MIND

On the morning of May 11th, Chojé continued teaching:

The teaching I'm giving is the practice manual of *The Great Perfection Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, composed by Omniscient Dharma King Longchenpa. The instructions for the practice of natural freedom in this present life are divided into three sections: the preliminary practice, the actual practice, and the concluding practice. The first part contains seven mind trainings, and the first six have been explained. Now we will discuss the seventh.

The seventh training is the definitive and essential practice to realize the true reality:

This is further divided into three aspects: seeking shamatha, cultivating vipashyana, and establishing the union of shamatha and vipashyana.

Seeking Shamatha: Sit in the full lotus position. Do not think about past thoughts that have already ceased, do not anticipate future thoughts that have not yet arisen, and do not analyze the present state of mind. Simply rest in equanimity within this state and practice diligently in this way for seven days.

The necessity of this practice is to suppress ordinary discursive thoughts that create obstacles, discern the clarity or obscurity of awareness, and thereby more easily recognize any mental phenomena that suddenly arise.

When practicing shamatha, you should apply the nine methods of placement to overcome the five faults, rely on eight recognitions, and

then engage in four types of mental focus: effortful engagement, interrupted engagement, uninterrupted engagement, and effortless engagement. Initially, you must exert effort in this practice, but eventually, you should reach a state of effortless abiding. As it is said, "Relying on the object of focus, ultimately gives rise to objectlessness."

In the early stages of shamatha practice, you should focus on external supports such as buddha images and stupas; then observe the mind internally; and finally, rest in a state where nothing is grasped. Use these three key instructions to practice shamatha.

What is referred to as shamatha is resting in single-pointed concentration. Whether practicing the common vehicles, the Mahayana path of sutras, or the Vajrayana path of tantras, shamatha is an essential foundation. Just as fertile soil is crucial for growing crops, calm-abiding is equally indispensable.

There are many methods for practicing shamatha, such as focusing on buddha images, syllables, words, or observing one's own mind. Naturally, when you observe a buddha image with deep devotion, respect, and conviction, the benefits are immeasurable. Even a glance at a buddha image with anger in your heart can purify billions of eons of negative karma, allowing you to meet buddhas face to face, and gradually attain omniscient buddhahood.

When focusing single-pointedly on a buddha image, if the mind begins to withdraw inward and becomes dull, you can concentrate on the buddha's ushnisha to dispel dullness. If the mind becomes scattered among various external objects and experiences agitation, you can focus on the swastika symbol at the buddha's heart center, as if your own mind merges into it. This will help you to pacify the agitation. Sometimes observe the entire buddha image, and sometimes focus on specific features like the buddha's eyes or the urna. If you practice in this way, you will surely make progress. Therefore, this practice is very important.



1.68: Chojé quietly gazing ahead

If you focus single-pointedly on syllables such as *ah* (ॐ) or *hung* (ॐ) that have been blessed by buddhas of the three times, you will obtain vast merit, including enhanced wisdom of meditation and pure discipline. An even simpler method is to use unforgettable mindfulness as a guard and observe the mind with your own mind. This is something everyone can do. As the venerable Saraha said, “Cut off thinking and the thinkable completely, and rest like an infant.” Like a newborn baby, do not recall past objects, do not contemplate future events, do not follow present experiences. Instead, naturally relax and practice directly, without conceptual thought. Then the mind will gradually settle and become increasingly stable. At this point, you will spontaneously attain the clairvoyance of unobstructed omniscience of all phenomena possessed by buddhas and bodhisattvas, along with miraculous powers such as transforming large into small and small into large, as well as all qualities of abandonment and realization.

If you attempt to practice the Great Perfection without the foundation of shamatha, it is difficult to generate extraordinary experience and realization. Therefore, it is crucial to first cultivate proper calm abiding. During the practice of shamatha, if you exert too much effort, it may cause the wind to rise up, leading to madness or illness. In such cases, relying on the pith instructions of a qualified teacher can easily resolve these issues without causing harm. However, if you are distant from the teacher and do not understand his or her instructions, it can become problematic. Therefore, you should focus on practicing shamatha while not excessively constraining your mind.

Cultivating Vipashyana: Although, as mentioned earlier, shamatha is the foundation of the vast teachings of the Buddha, practicing shamatha alone without cultivating vipashyana leads only to worldly paths, resulting in temporary peace and delight in the form and formless realms within samsara. Even non-Buddhist traditions have shamatha, but vipashyana is unique and indispensable in the dharma path. It means recognizing the mind as emptiness, which has no origin at the

beginning, no abiding in the middle, and no destination at the end. It is like a rainbow in the sky, having neither a basis nor a root. Sometimes concentrate on the analysis of emptiness, sometimes rest in the conclusion of emptiness. In all cases, you must recognize the mind as baseless emptiness.

Establishing the Union of Shamatha and Vipashyana: If you cultivate vipashyana alone without shamatha, it will lead to an increase in conceptual thoughts. Conversely, if you practice shamatha alone without vipashyana, it becomes a neutral state of mind without meaningful insight. Therefore, the correct path is to practice the union of shamatha and vipashyana without separating the two.

To be specific, when the mind naturally abides without being carried away by any objects of the past, present, or future, that is shamatha. When, in that state of abiding, you realize the nature of mind as being inherently unborn, that is vipashyana. Practicing these two inseparably is the union of shamatha and vipashyana. This is the essential point that must be cultivated in all Mahayana teachings of sutras and tantras.

To practice the correct path of Paramitayana in the sutra tradition, you need vipashyana endowed with shamatha; to practice the Vajrayana path in the tantra tradition, you need to cultivate the perfect union of shamatha and vipashyana, which is the unique cause for cutting through obscurations and giving rise to wisdom. As it is said, "Without shamatha, vipashyana will scatter into distraction; without vipashyana, shamatha becomes a neutral state. The union of the two is the supreme path of cultivation and counteraction." Especially in Dzogchen, through the power of this practice, your mind will give rise to the shamatha that naturally rests in the innate state of mind and the vipashyana that is self-luminous and directly sees the true face of mind, both of which are even more extraordinary than usual. Therefore, practicing the union of shamatha and vipashyana is of utmost importance.

The Actual Practice

First, assume the full lotus or half lotus position, with hands in meditation mudra, spine straight, neck slightly bent, shoulders spread outward like a vulture's wings. The eyes gaze at the tip of the nose, and the tongue touches the upper palate. This is known as the seven-point posture of Vairochana. Then, let the mind rest naturally without contrivance.

Understand that all appearances of the outer worlds and the beings within are solely the nature of mind, the illusory manifestations of mind, and the fabrications of mind—nothing exists apart from this. This is just as was directly pointed out in detail earlier when teaching *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*.

Orgyen Padmasambhava once said, "Recognize that the essence of mind is emptiness, not existing outside, inside, or in between, this is dharmakaya; the intrinsic luminosity of emptiness never ceases, this is sambhogakaya; the unobstructed power of compassion gives rise to various appearances, this is nirmanakaya."

The emptiness of mind means that whether it is unwholesome thoughts like desire, anger, and ignorance, or wholesome thoughts like faith, compassion, and bodhicitta, or neutral thoughts like wanting to eat, walk, or sit—when these thoughts arise, if you can realize their nature as inherently non-existent and originally unborn, you have recognized the awakened awareness of dharmakaya.

This doesn't mean first having a negative thought and then transforming it into a positive one, but rather recognizing that the essence of your own mind is originally liberated. This is the natural freedom of conceptual thoughts. Regardless of whether a wholesome or unwholesome thought arises in the present moment, don't try to alter it, but directly observe its essence and abide naturally. In this way, as previously pointed out, you recognize the inseparability and non-duality of the emptiness of the essence and the unceasing luminosity

of its nature—this is the direct pointing to awakened awareness, or rigpa.

Since the liberation through recognizing the essence and the liberation through self-awareness of the nature are in inseparable union, abiding in the universal liberation of all phenomena is the very nature of mind. If resting naturally and without contrivance in the state where the luminosity of rigpa remains unceasing, once its unobstructed power becomes perfect, all experiences of clarity, bliss, and no thought will naturally manifest. When dwelling in this state, it's not that there is an initial existence from which liberation later emerges; rather, appearance and liberation occur simultaneously. Before any other thoughts arise, naturally abide in this state, in which no thoughts can arise due to the lack of a basis, just like a vessel with a leaking bottom cannot retain any liquid poured into it. Abiding in this state is the actual practice.

If you realize that all appearance and existence are but the single bindu of dharmakaya, free from arising and ceasing, and devoid of all extremes, then awakened awareness will remain uninterrupted. Practice is awakened awareness, and non-practice is also awakened awareness; conceptual activity is awakened awareness, and resting in stillness is also awakened awareness.

Thus, no matter what mental afflictions arise, there are, in reality, no "mental afflictions" to be eliminated. They are wisdom itself, the intrinsic nature of luminous emptiness and unconditioned reality. Other than all qualities of the three kayas of buddhahood, there is nothing. Since all qualities are inherently complete within yourself, there is no need to newly accomplish buddhahood. When contemplating this meaning, you only need to recognize the true face of rigpa. By gradually familiarizing yourself with this, eventually one day all buddha qualities such as the ten powers, as vast as the ocean, will fully manifest as they truly are.

This teaching is different from Paramitayana in the sutra tradition, which rejoices when mental afflictions like desire and anger don't arise, detests them when they do arise, and deliberately tries to eradicate them. Whatever thoughts appear, from the very moment of their arising, they have never truly come into existence. In this state of being unborn, their intrinsic luminosity remains unceasing. This is the true reality of the union of luminosity and emptiness. If you can clearly recognize this, all mental afflictions become wisdom. Then, whether the present conceptual thoughts are proliferating or resting, they are, in actuality, none other than dharmakaya. The mind that thinks of the past and the future has no true existence, thus transcending all conceptual subjects and objects.

You only need to relax and abide in the nature of mind, without grasping at whether it is emptiness or luminosity, and without thinking, "I must not let my mind scatter outward to objects; I must make it remain in stillness." If you can completely relax and rest in this natural state of mind, you occupy the innate ground of awareness, free from the duality of practitioner and practice, where there is neither distraction nor non-distraction, and every arising thought liberates into the dharmata.

By directly abiding beyond all dualities of perceiver and perceived, you come to realize that the mind has nowhere to go other than the expanse of dharmakaya. Even when various thoughts arise, it does not matter. When thoughts scatter, if you do not attempt to control them but instead abide naturally, you will awaken to the fact that the nature of scattering is fundamentally unestablished, thus returning to the innate ground of awareness. In this way, even distraction does not create obstacles. If you realize that every arising thought is inherently unborn, then every conceptual thought that arises remains unmoving within dharmakaya, like a bird flying from a ship will eventually return to the ship.

Both the arising of thoughts and the abiding in stillness are the very nature of bodhicitta. Therefore, focusing is acceptable, and not focusing is also acceptable. The key is to let the true face of awareness, free from all concepts of altering and the altered, be nakedly revealed. Both antidotes and what is to be eradicated are also awakened awareness, so correcting or not correcting is equally fine. Abiding with full concentration is fine, and not abiding is no problem either.

In short, whether in a state of concentrated abiding or not, you must solely practice this unimpeded, nakedly revealed awareness. Don't grasp at any internal or external phenomena, don't follow thoughts, and don't try to suppress conceptual delusions. Instead, let awakened awareness sustain its own ground. Coarse deluded thoughts arise and scatter freely because you haven't recognized the true face of rigpa and follow after ordinary thoughts. When awareness holds its own ground without clinging, all faults are truly liberated.

Now, no matter what thoughts arise, you don't need to alter, negate, or affirm them. The key is to naturally rest within them. Do not fixate on notions of existence or non-existence, being or not being, and do not cling to any external object. When there is neither an object to grasp nor a grasping subject, awareness of the unborn nature will be fully revealed.

THE PRACTICAL METHODS OF DZOGCHEN

That day, at the end of the second lecture, Chojé gave a concise explanation of the practical methods of Dzogchen:

In brief, whether you practice the Dzogchen teaching of *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* or *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, you must first practice what is called “natural abiding”. This includes sitting in the full or half lotus position; exhaling the stale wind through the mouth three or nine times, maintaining silence and visualizing this process as purifying all illness, demonic influences, negative deeds, and karmic obscurations; letting the mind rest naturally without engaging in any conceptual thoughts about the past, present, or future. These three types of natural abiding, or three types of rest, should be practiced first.

Next comes taking refuge and generating bodhicitta: With faith and devotion, pray to Bodhisattva Manjushri, the symbolic mudra of provisional meaning, who is inseparable from your guru, thereby receiving blessings in your mind stream. In the ultimate aspect, Manjushri is the unchanging dharmata of your own mind, the recognition of awakened awareness of Dzogchen. First, take refuge with the aspiration, “I will realize the ultimate Manjushri, the very nature of Jampal Sempa.” Then generate bodhicitta with the resolve, “In order to establish countless beings in buddhahood, I will perfect the practice of this profound Dzogchen path.”

Then, visualize the guru, who is inseparable from Manjushri, in the space before you. Pray single-pointedly while reciting the verse below for a long time,

*Appearing in the form of a youthful kaya,
Splendidly adorned with the wisdom luminosity
That can dispel the darkness of ignorance in the world—
To you, Lord Manjushri, I pray.*

Afterward, visualize the guru dissolving into light and merging with you. This is the practice of guru yoga. Then, without following after objects, you simply observe whether you have come to understand the true nature of the mind. For beginners, apart from trying not to think about anything, it is difficult to grasp this understanding. However, by letting the mind rest naturally and continually make prayers to the guru and Lord Manjushri with all your heart, the day will come when you realize the true meaning of Dzogchen.

During the day, you can assume an equalized posture, lying on your back and stretching out your limbs, focusing your gaze and consciousness as if merging into open space. Engage in this practice wholeheartedly, and it helps you eliminate bodily ailments and discomfort.

At night, while sleeping, you can adopt the auspicious lying posture of our compassionate root teacher during his parinirvana: lie on your right side, with your head pointing north, your right hand placed under your cheek, your legs extended, and your left hand resting gently on your leg. Sleeping in this posture promotes wisdom-filled thoughts. Conversely, sleeping on your stomach may generate thoughts of anger, lying on your left side may generate thoughts of ignorance, and lying on your back may generate thoughts of desire.

You can also visualize above the crown of your head the presence of Manjushri, inseparable from your root guru, radiating light and surrounded by the assembly of the refuge field. Focus your mind on this visualization. At times, pray with devotion; at other times, try to rest in the Dzogchen view. Normally, you can also visualize within your heart a pure land, with Bodhisattva Manjushri, inseparable from your guru, radiating light at its center. Falling asleep with such a visualization can give rise to the luminosity of the night and the luminosity of the day, allowing you to abide continuously in the luminous state day and night.

While other practices require closing the eyes during meditation, the practice of Dzogchen does not require closing the eyes, whether during the day or at night. In other practices of the winds, channels, and bindus, breathing is often done through the nose. However, in the Dzogchen practices of trekchö and tögal, breathing is primarily through the mouth. The mouth should be neither too wide open nor tightly closed; it should be just open enough to fit a grain of barley, with the upper and lower teeth not touching. Breathing should be so subtle that it becomes imperceptible. In this state, engage in your practice.

At the beginning, observe the mind with the mind itself. If your thoughts become scattered, take a short break and then continue the observation. The practice should be like water dripping through the cracks of an old house—conducted in short sessions but repeated frequently. For beginners, regardless of whether thoughts are scattered or not, each session should be limited to around six minutes. Occasionally, it is also acceptable to allow thoughts to arise naturally. Eventually one day, you may reach a state where no thoughts arise for seven consecutive days. In order to cultivate extraordinary experience and realization in your mind stream, it can be helpful at times to recite prayers to your guru and Lord Manjushri in a melodious tone. This can enhance your progress toward realization.

Finally, visualize all your accumulated merit and dedicate it to the flourishing of the dharma, as well as to all sentient beings so that they may achieve temporary human and celestial happiness and ultimately attain buddhahood.

In the past, in India and the realms of dakinis, there were inconceivably accomplished masters who attained realization through practicing Dzogchen, as recorded in many Buddhist histories. In the Snow Land of Tibet, during the time of Guru Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra, many practitioners also achieved realization and attained the rainbow body. Later, for example, during the time of Katok Dampa Deshek, who built the Katok Monastery in 1159, about one hundred thousand

people achieved complete liberation and the rainbow body through this Dzogchen path. At Larung Gar, there was a time when thirteen people attained the rainbow body and entered parinirvana. Even now, in the upper, central, and lower regions of Tibet, there are still practitioners who fly directly to dakini realms with their physical bodies, and some transform their bodies into light. Among you, it is also possible that some will attain the rainbow body. Therefore, everyone should persevere with unwavering diligence in your practice.

In fact, not only have there been countless accomplished masters in the past, but even in the 20th century, within the last hundred years, many realized practitioners have also emerged. As I mentioned on the first day of teaching, many of my own teachers have attained realization and reached buddhahood through the path of Dzogchen, and among my dharma brothers and sisters and even my disciples, many also have achieved realization.

Therefore, to determine whether a teaching is authentic and pure, we must look at the results of the practice. If practicing a certain teaching yields no results, then no matter how much one proclaims, “This teaching is extraordinary,” it will be of no real benefit. Dzogchen, however, is not like this. As Omniscient Ju Mipham Rinpoche said:

*When the world is enveloped in the darkness of degeneration
and decline,*

*The enlightened activities of Padmasambhava will become
as brilliant as the moon.*

*The essence of the Secret Mantrayana blazes like the sun,
Illuminating the three realms and increasing auspiciousness.*

This means that even though the darkness of the degenerate age, characterized by the five impurities, is so pervasive, Guru Rinpoche’s Dzogchen teachings shine even more brightly, like the moon in the night sky, and have been widely propagated. It is also mentioned in this text that the more degenerate and impure the times become, the more

the Great Perfection teaching will flourish. When the human life span decreases to just ten years, Dakini Paldzin will appear in the world and guide all beings who see, hear, recall, or touch her to buddhahood.

This is why the Dzogchen path is unlike any other. In general, Buddhist teachings go through the periods of fruition, accomplishment, transmission, and mere symbols. The earlier stages have already passed, and we are now approaching the last one when only the symbols are retained. However, the Dzogchen teaching is currently in its prime. Compared to practicing other teachings, everyone should devote yourselves even more diligently to the Dzogchen practice. By doing so, the fruition of accomplishment will surely manifest without deception.



1.69: Chojé and devotees at the People's Buddhism Study Society

THE THIRD LECTURE ON THE NATURAL FREEDOM OF THE NATURE OF MIND

On the morning of May 12th, Chojé continued teaching:

The teaching I am giving is *The Great Perfection Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, a Dzogchen text composed by Omniscient Longchenpa himself. It encompasses all the key points of tantras, transmissions, and upadeshas of Dzogchen, and the explanation is divided into three parts: the preliminary practice, the actual practice, and the concluding practice. Now we will discuss the concluding practice.

The Concluding Practice

It consists of cultivating unobstructed power, dispelling obstacles, and enhancing the state of realization.

Cultivating Unobstructed Power: Following the direct pointing-out instruction I gave yesterday, during meditation, you should rest evenly in the state of unborn awareness, free from all attachments and conceptual thoughts. In the post-meditation phase, when various thoughts such as eating, sleeping, walking, and sitting arise, you should recognize that the essential nature of these thoughts is unborn, and cultivate the perception that all appearances are like dreams and illusions. The meaning of *cultivation* is like someone exercising their body, to refine awareness and make it increasingly sublime, increasingly developed, and increasingly stable.

Dispelling Obstacles: If you become ill, you should feel happy because through this experience you can purify past karmic obscurations. In particular, if you can observe the nature of illness and rest in equanimity, this not only helps to enhance the realization of awareness but can also improve the cultivation of unobstructed power. Therefore, instead of thinking about removing the illness and recovering

health, recognize that being sick is to purify negative karma accumulated in the past, and hence you should be happy about this.

However, if you suffer from a severe illness that affects your practice for achieving enlightenment, then a necessary treatment is required. How to take the treatment?

From head to toe, throughout your entire body, visualize a hole in any place that is sick. Through the hole, all your illness, demonic influences, negative deeds, and karmic obscurations are expelled in the form of blue-red smoke or streams of air. Then, concentrate on the unborn nature of awareness, recognizing that all harmful demonic forces and obscurations affecting you since beginningless time were caused by beings who were once your parents. When they were your parents, they showed great kindness and benevolence to you. Therefore, instead of harboring malicious thoughts of taking revenge on them, you should generate virtuous thoughts and bodhicitta, thinking, "May all their sufferings ripen on me, and may all my accumulation of virtue and happiness ripen on them." If you arouse this kind of virtuous intention, all harm caused by demonic forces and obscurations will be pacified.

Enhancing the State of Realization: If you make no progress in any practice and feel discouraged or very confused, you can visualize your guru, who is inseparable from the deity, above your head, at your heart center, or in the space in front of you, and pray fervently, "Please bless me to eliminate all adverse conditions, demonic forces, and obstacles that prevent the arising of supreme experience and realization! Please bestow blessings on me so that the extraordinary signs of the path of the clear light Great Perfection arise in my mind stream right now! Please bless me to swiftly perfect all qualities of grounds and paths, becoming no different from you and attaining the same realization with you, my sublime guide and root guru!" You must generate a strong sense of renunciation and disenchantment in your mind

stream, accumulate merit through practices such as tsok offerings, and cultivate loving kindness and compassion and arouse bodhicitta.

Here, *renunciation* is the mind that wishes to be free from all sufferings of samsara and attain buddhahood. *Disenchantment* is the genuine wish to be free from the general sufferings of physical disease and pain and mental distress, which are common to all sentient beings in samsara, and the particular sufferings uncommon to beings in each realm, such as the unbearable heat and cold of hell beings, the hunger and thirst of hungry ghosts, the ignorance of animals, the suffering of birth, aging, sickness, and death of humans, the conflicts of asuras, and the eventual death and fall of celestial beings.



1.70: Everyone listening to Chojé's teaching attentively

Speaking of *tsok offerings*, while there are elaborate feast gatherings in tantric practices of both generation and completion stages, here refers to feast offerings: first arranging all the necessary substances such as food and implements and offering them to buddhas and bodhisattvas, the supreme field of merit; next, making offerings to the Three Roots with the guru as the central figure, presenting songs, dances, and other conducts unique to Tantrayana, and all faithful monastic and lay practitioners among the gathering enjoying the feast substances; finally, making offerings to dharma protectors and sharing the remaining offerings with other beings.

Loving kindness is the aspiration that all sentient beings, high or low, noble or humble, temporarily attain peace and happiness of human

and celestial realms, and ultimately achieve the fruition of buddhahood, combined with the wish to help them realize these states. *Compassion* is the wish for all beings to be free from the causes of suffering (the unwholesome deeds), and the results of suffering (pain), together with the wish for all their sufferings to ripen on me, and for all their illness and afflictions to be eliminated. *Bodhicitta* is the aspiration that all sentient beings be freed from suffering and attain the ultimate peace and happiness of buddhahood.

Sometimes, you can go to charnel grounds, secluded valleys, or quiet mountains, and for several days allow various conceptual thoughts to arise naturally and engage in all kinds of behaviors. When any of these thoughts arises, forcefully shout *phat* and ascertain that the thought is unborn in nature. By practicing in this way repeatedly over a long period, all obstacles and demonic forces will be pacified, and supreme realization will arise. This is similar to the practice of discerning samsara and nirvana in the preliminary practices of Dzogchen.

In summary, the instructions for the practice of natural freedom in this life mainly consist of directly pointing to awakened awareness, dispelling obstacles, cultivating unobstructed power, and enhancing the state of realization. After this, familiarize yourself with the key points of the instructions for bardo, the intermediate state between death and rebirth. This is an expedient method for attaining buddhahood within a single lifetime.

The essential points of the Dzogchen teaching I previously discussed can be summarized as follows: When observing the mind with your own mind, you realize that this mind is originally unborn emptiness—this is called the *view*, which must first be recognized as essential and indispensable, like your eyes. Remaining single-pointedly in this state with unforgettable mindfulness is called the *meditation*. When any thoughts arise, not being carried away by them but maintaining the state of awareness and emptiness is called the *conduct*. Finally, as all negative thoughts are gradually purified, your mind returns to the

innate ground of awareness and emptiness, this is called the *result*. This summarizes the key points of the view, meditation, conduct, and result of the Great Perfection.

In general, the Great Perfection teachings have 6,400,000 stanzas, with the content categorized into the category of mind, the category of space, and the category of pith instructions. The category of pith instructions is further classified into the outer, inner, secret, and quintessential secret cycles. Therefore, this so-called Great Perfection cannot possibly be fully presented in just dozens of pages or one or two books. According to different levels of capacity the students possess, there is much that can be explained, but the teaching I provide this time is the most profound and ultimate essence of Dzogchen.

I believe that if you practice this teaching with great faith and diligence, what it brings to you will not be inferior to any teaching you would receive even if you were to meet Bodhisattva Manjushri in person. Some lay Tibetan men and women, even if they have followed a guru for their entire lives, rarely receive such complete Dzogchen instructions. Most eminent monks and masters who give the Dzogchen teachings won't directly transmit these instructions unless the students have relied on them for at least five or six years.

This time, I come here and give you all these profound instructions without any reservation. There are four reasons: First, we live in different countries, and the great distances make it inconvenient for us to meet frequently. Second, you who have gathered here have deep faith in the Buddhadharma, particularly a strong affinity for the Great Perfection. Third, everyone is earnestly practicing this teaching. Previously, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and Paldzo came here to teach the preliminary practices, so now is the perfect time for you to engage in the actual practice of the Great Perfection. Fourth, you have sponsored our plane tickets and other travel expenses, which are not small, and have worked very hard to take care of everything. Therefore, I wished

to fulfill your wishes by transmitting these instructions to you without holding anything back.

We are not giving you the teaching for the sake of fame or wealth. Generally speaking, no one should use the transmission of the Buddhadharma as a means to seek name or profit. Even if one were to pursue such things, there are various other teachings from the nine vehicles that could be taught and there's no need to use such profound teachings for that purpose. This time, I've directly taught you the Dzogchen instead of any other teachings. You should practice this teaching persistently and steadily, while praying to the guru and the deity genuinely. In doing so, your doubts will naturally be dispelled, and certainty in this teaching will arise.

If time allows in the future, you can come to the Tibetan regions in summer, and we can teach you other pith instructions and practical guidance. Although the Tibetan regions' high altitude and cold climate may present some challenges, if bodhisattvas do not experience hardships in their path of learning, it would be difficult for them to accomplish the pure dharma. So, do not be discouraged by difficulties. For those with superior faculties, through the practice of Dzogchen, it is possible to attain accomplishment within this single life. Even if realization is not attained in this lifetime, it will undoubtedly be achieved at the time of death or during the bardo. This is certain.

HONORING THE INVITATION TO THE SINGAPORE BUDDHIST LODGE

LODGE

At noon, Chojé accepted an invitation from the Singapore Buddhist Lodge and visited their center. Accompanying him were staff members from the People's Buddhism Study Society and monks from other monasteries, totaling about thirty people.



1.71: Chojé having lunch at the Singapore Buddhist Lodge

There, everyone first enjoyed lunch together. Afterward, Chojé gave teachings to the key management personnel of the Buddhist Lodge. Considering that the Lodge follows the pure land tradition, Rinpoche particularly emphasized Buddha Amitabha's practices and provided detailed instructions on the reason and methods of attaining rebirth in the pure land.



1.72: Chojé at the Singapore Buddhist Lodge



1.73: Chojé and his entourage in the Mahavira Hall of Singapore Buddhist Lodge



1.74: Chojé visiting the five hundred arhats relief

Following the teaching, Chojé performed consecration for the statues in the Mahavira Hall (the main hall of a Chinese Buddhist temple), including Buddha Shakyamuni, Bodhisattva Manjushri, Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, Venerable Mahakasyapa, and Venerable Ananda. After that, Rinpoche took group photos with the Lodge's members before touring other parts of the center, including

the grand sutra hall, reception room, and activity hall. During the visit, Chojé also listened attentively to their shared experiences in managing Buddhist organizations.



1.75: Chojé listening attentively to management personnel sharing experiences in managing Buddhist organizations

The Buddhist Lodge was established in the 1930s and is an important dharma center in Singapore, second only to the Singapore Buddhist Federation and Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery. Typically, it hosts renowned dharma masters and maintains close connections with the Buddhist Association of China. Senior monks from China's four famous Buddhist mountains also frequently visit for dharma exchanges. Notably, many of Singapore's great dharma masters initially studied Buddhism at the Lodge, where they deepened their study and practice and eventually took monastic vows. Thus, this place has played a crucial role as a training ground for Buddhist talents.

Today, several decades later, although the Lodge's main buildings have been reconstructed, the statues consecrated by Chojé that year still radiate brilliantly

in the Mahavira Hall, continuing to draw devotees from all directions who come to pay homage.



1.76: Chojé and devotees at the Singapore Buddhist Lodge

THE FOURTH LECTURE ON THE NATURAL FREEDOM OF THE NATURE OF MIND

On the morning of May 13th, Chojé taught the last lecture:

The teaching presented here is *The Great Perfection Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind*, a Dzogchen text personally bestowed by Omniscient Longchenpa. Now we come to the instructions for the ultimate fruition.

Through the Dzogchen practice, whether you attain liberation in this life, in the bardo, or in future lives, it is undoubtedly the unsurpassed fruition of buddhahood. Regarding liberation, according to the teachings of the common vehicles, apart from a very few exceptional practitioners like Prince Siddhartha, ordinary people cannot achieve buddhahood and can only reach the fruition of a shravaka arhat. However, according to the Mahayana teachings, the ultimate fruition of the path is buddhahood. Although one may temporarily attain the fruition of shravakas or pratyekabuddhas, these are merely provisional steps for rest on the journey to buddhahood, and the ultimate goal remains the attainment of buddhahood. So what is buddhahood? It is called the dharmakaya, the ultimate expanse endowed with two purities: the elimination of all obscurations of the grasping and the grasped, and the revelation of the intrinsic nature of the mind. This must be realized.

If someone asks, “Is the so-called dharmakaya merely an empty void where the conceptual mind and its mental factors are eliminated within the dharmadhatu?”

It is not. For example, though space is empty, the sun can rise from it. In the same way, the innate luminosity, like the sun, is unceasing; and this is the sambhogakaya. The sambhogakaya possesses five certainties: The certain place is the realm of Akanishtha; the certain form is the kaya adorned with major signs and minor marks; the certain

time is perpetually turning the wheel of dharma; the certain teaching is the Mahayana doctrines, which are exclusively expounded; the certain retinue consists of bodhisattvas on all the ten bhūmis, whose karma has been purified.

Then, how does it appear to sentient beings whose karma is not yet purified? Just as the sun naturally radiates light, the sambhogakaya buddha—without any conceptual effort—manifests in various forms of nirmanakayas according to the elements, capacities, inclinations, and intentions of beings to be guided. These appearances are also like the moon's natural reflection in water. For those with relatively pure karma, supreme nirmanakayas manifest—such as buddhas who display the twelve enlightened deeds. For other sentient beings, according to their individual needs, various forms of nirmanakayas constantly appear, including diverse nirmanakayas such as buddha images, stupas, and scriptures, craft nirmanakayas like craftsmen displaying various skills, and other manifestations such as dharma sounds emerging from mountains, rivers, and trees.

During the bardo, there are two ways to liberation. If liberation is attained in the first bardo stage, you become a buddha in the essence of dharmakaya. At this stage, the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya naturally manifest from the dharmakaya essence to benefit sentient beings, before being ultimately liberated into the dharmakaya. To put it simply, attaining liberation in the first bardo stage means being liberated as the dharmakaya; attaining liberation in the second bardo stage means being liberated as the sambhogakaya. Regardless of which form your liberation takes, you will benefit sentient beings who appear in your perception and need to be tamed through the nirmanakaya, before dissolving into the vast expanse of dharmadhatu. Thereafter, according to the elements and capacities of different beings, you appear as the nirmanakaya to both pure and impure beings, while manifesting as the sambhogakaya only to those who are pure.

Although the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya are not two separate entities being emanated, they appear differently due to how sentient beings can perceive them. The dharmakaya buddha manifests as nirmanakaya before the conceptual minds of those whose karma remains unpurified and as sambhogakaya before those whose karma has been purified. Thus, while a buddha possesses only one dharmakaya, various forms arise from it according to the diverse needs of different sentient beings, continuously benefiting them throughout infinite space.

During the bardo stage, no matter what appearances arise, if you can recognize that they are self-appearing and understand that all conceptual thoughts in your mind are actually the essence of dharmakaya, then the sambhogakaya will dissolve into the dharmakaya, thereby attaining the stability of the primordial state.

This applies not only to the bardo stage but also to the present moment. For us, whatever positive or negative thoughts arise, if we cannot ascertain their nature as emptiness but instead follow various conceptual thoughts of the grasping and the grasped, then various appearances of the three realms of samsara will manifest.

These appearances arise primarily through self-clinging, which generates afflictions, and afflictions in turn lead to karma accumulation. As long as karma is created by mental afflictions, liberation from samsara remains impossible, regardless of how many virtuous or non-virtuous actions you perform. Accumulating virtuous karma leads to rebirth in human and celestial realms, while non-virtuous karma causes rebirth in the three lower realms. Although freeing yourself from afflictions alone can lead to the peace of nirvana, this is the fruition attained by shravakas and pratyekabuddhas, beyond which a greater possibility exists. If you can ascertain that the nature of your mind is unfabricated great emptiness and continuously familiarize yourself with this realization state, you can actualize the fruition of the dharmakaya buddha. From the dharmakaya, both the sambhogakaya and the nirmanakaya can manifest infinitely and countlessly, benefiting

sentient beings throughout space in a constant, pervasive, effortless, and spontaneous manner.

Therefore, when you don't recognize the dharmata of your own mind, you are a sentient being wandering in samsara. When you realize the true face of dharmata, you become a buddha who has attained perfect liberation and works for the benefit of all beings. The only difference between samsara and nirvana lies in whether you recognize the true face of the nature of mind, as simple yet profound as the difference between your palm and the back of your hand. Understanding this essential point is extremely crucial.

Whatever appears in the bardo, whether it's the appearances of kayas in the initial stage, the appearances of wisdom in the middle stage, or the various pure and impure spontaneous appearances in the final stage, as long as you recognize that they are self-manifesting, you will achieve liberation instantly and all other subsequent appearances will cease to arise. If you have attained liberation during the bardo, just like dream appearances disappear upon waking, due to recognizing the true face of the mind's nature, all appearances of the bardo will immediately dissolve into the expanse of inner luminosity where no impure appearances remain, and you will only actualize the state of a buddha.

Although this present awareness is unborn, if you don't recognize its essence as unborn and accumulate karma through mind, you will be reborn in the formless realm. If you don't recognize its intrinsic nature as the unceasing luminosity in a perfect union with emptiness and accumulate karma through speech, you will take rebirth in the form realm. If you fail to recognize the all-pervasive compassion but grasp the compassionate energy as inherently real, you will accumulate various positive and negative karma through body, which leads rebirth in the desire realm. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the true face of the essence, intrinsic nature, and great compassion of rigpa.



1.77: Chojé continuing to explain the Dzogchen teaching

If you don't understand that the nature of all phenomena is emptiness, and you perceive non-virtuous actions as truly existent, accumulating negative karma under the power of afflictions, you will fall into the three lower realms. If you practice virtuous actions without combining them with meditative concentration, you will be reborn among humans and celestial beings of the desire realm. If you combine virtuous actions with meditative concentration, you will take rebirth in the form realm. If you combine virtuous actions with meditative concentration focused on the state of thoughtlessness, you will be reborn in the formless realm. In any case, as long as you don't realize the dharmata of the mind as emptiness, whatever karma you accumulate will cause you to wander in samsara, unable to attain liberation.

When we observe the intrinsic nature of this present awareness, if we recognize its essence as emptiness, we are in accord with the dharmakaya. Such a realization leads to the attainment of dharmakaya

fruition. While it is emptiness, its intrinsic nature of luminosity remains unceasing. Recognizing this is in harmony with the sambhogakaya and leads to the attainment of sambhogakaya fruition. The unobstructed power of the inseparability of luminosity and emptiness gives rise to all kinds of virtuous and non-virtuous thoughts. Yet it never departs from the various compassionate manifestations of the dharmakaya and the sambhogakaya, and this is the nirmanakaya. At the fruition stage, it is through the nirmanakaya, inseparable from the dharmakaya and the sambhogakaya, that sentient beings are benefited.

The realization of such nature is referred to as the essence, intrinsic nature, and great compassion of the present ground. If these three aspects of the ground are freed from the net of conceptual thoughts of the grasping and the grasped, the three kayas—the dharmakaya, the sambhogakaya, and the nirmanakaya—will manifest. The ground's three aspects and the fruition's three kayas can be illustrated by the sun. When the sun is covered by clouds, it is not externally apparent, but when the clouds disperse, it appears vividly. Similarly, when obscured by conceptual thoughts, wisdoms and qualities such as the essence and intrinsic nature are not apparent to sentient beings, but once these obscurations are removed, all qualities and wisdoms of buddhahood will manifest. Thus, it is called *non-difference of ground and fruition*.

In Vajrayana, the term *vajra* means indestructible and thus represents indivisibility. According to the Sutrayana teachings, sentient beings at the ground stage must undergo a fundamental transformation, becoming free from the ground, before they can attain a new buddhahood at the fruition stage. However, Vajrayana of Secret Mantra presents a different perspective. This tradition teaches that all enlightened qualities already exist within the ground but are merely obscured. When these obscurations are removed, all qualities naturally manifest—this is what we call the fruition. Therefore, *Vajrayana* or *the indivisible vehicle* signified that all sentient beings are primordially buddhas.

The dharmakaya of buddhahood is the unborn nature that is free from all conceptual elaborations. The sambhogakaya is the buddha's self-manifestation and what bodhisattvas perceive when they reach the culmination of the tenth bhumi. For beings who respond to peaceful forms, the sambhogakaya appears as peaceful deities such as Buddha Vairocana and Vajrasattva. For those who respond to wrathful forms, it manifests as wrathful deities like the glorious Vajra Heruka, benefiting sentient beings throughout infinite space. The nirmanakaya comprehends the diverse elements, capacities, inclinations, and intentions of sentient beings. Through the wisdom that knows the nature of all phenomena and the wisdom that knows the multiplicity of phenomena as the dominant conditions, the nirmanakaya continuously carries out the activities that benefit all beings.

The sambhogakaya possesses the qualities of five wisdoms: the wisdom of dharmadhatu, which refers to the unborn aspect of the essence; the mirror-like wisdom, which serves as the foundation for all other wisdoms to manifest; the wisdom of equality, which emphasizes the aspect of no attachment to either samsara's inferiority or nirvana's superiority; the wisdom of discernment, which emphasizes the aspect of clearly distinguishing all phenomena without confusion or mixing them up through the wisdom that knows the nature of all phenomena and the wisdom that knows the multiplicity of phenomena; the all-accomplishing wisdom, which signifies that all these wisdoms are of great effect in benefiting sentient beings in a constant, pervasive, effortless, and spontaneous manner.

The colophon of this practice manual states that this teaching of *The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind* should not be transmitted to more than three fortunate ones. However, as Omniscient Longchenpa pointed out in his other works, for truly fortunate recipients, even hundreds or thousands of disciples are not too many; whereas for those who are not qualified, even three disciples are too many. The number

three here relates to the pure ground and the pure fruition, symbolizing the three doors of essence, intrinsic nature, and great compassion in the pure ground stage, and the three kayas of the dharmakaya, the sambhogakaya, and the nirmanakaya in the pure fruition stage. Therefore, it is not necessarily limited to only three people.

The most important requirement is that all who receive this teaching must be fortunate disciples. If this teaching is transmitted to those without fortunate connections, both the teacher and the disciple will fall into the vajra hell once. Everyone should take this matter seriously. Fortunate ones are those who, instead of liking, believing in, or following non-Buddhist paths or wrong paths, have devotion in the guru, possess eagerness and delight in the Buddhadharma, and can persist in diligent practice with determination and perseverance. Such people can be called fortunate disciples. All practitioners must carefully consider these qualifications.

During my fourteen days in Singapore, I have completed the empowerments, practical guidance, and pith instructions of Dzogchen. Moving forward, you should focus on achieving genuine results in your practice. What kind of genuine results? First, it is to clearly understand the distinctions between Buddhists and non-Buddhists in the world. Anyone who believes in, takes refuge in, and prays to the Three Jewels is considered Buddhist regardless of their status. Conversely, those who do not take refuge in, pray to, believe in, or respect the Three Jewels are non-Buddhists, regardless of who they are.

How should we approach the relationship between Buddhists and non-Buddhists? In political contexts, the principle of unity among all religious followers is advocated to achieve peace in today's world. From the Buddhist perspective, it is taught,

*Toward non-Buddhists in the world,
Do not harbor hatred,*

*But hold compassion for them,
And this is the supreme practice of patience.*

Regarding all non-Buddhist groups, if they neither harm sentient beings nor endanger the Buddhadharma, we should wholeheartedly cultivate compassion and bodhicitta toward them, and this is the path we should uphold. However, if they damage the Buddhadharma or harm beings, we must try to prevent such actions. These principles should guide our interactions with non-Buddhists.

As for our own practice, beginning with taking refuge in the Three Jewels, we must, from the bottom of our hearts, refrain from believing in, having faith in, or taking refuge in worldly powerful gods, naga kings, the eight classes of gods and demons, and similar entities. We should neither engage in their practices nor associate with their negative influence or companions. We must completely distance ourselves from such connections. This is essential because while the Buddhadharma benefits living beings, other teachings may cause harm. Contradictory teachings cannot be practiced simultaneously. Therefore, we should make a genuine determination to practice only the Buddhadharma, take refuge solely in our root teacher Buddha Shakyamuni, and associate exclusively with the sangha community. This commitment is crucial.

Regarding the Buddhadharma, as I have previously explained to you on multiple occasions, the Buddhist teachings widely disseminated in today's world can be categorized into three traditions: the common vehicles, the Bodhisattvayana, and the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra. What are their distinct methods of practice? Practitioners of the common vehicles follow the intentions and conduct of great arhats such as Shariputra, Maudgalyayana, Mahakashyapa, ultimately attaining the fruition of a shravaka arhat. Those following the Bodhisattvayana emulate and practice the conduct and realization of bodhisattvas like Manjushri and Samantabhadra, attaining the fruition of a bodhisattva. Practitioners of the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra learn and embody the

conduct and realization state of Buddha Shakyamuni, Vajrasattva, and other buddhas, ultimately achieving complete enlightenment of buddhahood.

The differences in superiority among the three paths are primarily reflected in their practice methods. For example, the differences between Buddha Shakyamuni, Noble Avalokiteshvara, and Shravaka Mahakashyapa exist because their paths vary in the levels of realization and the speeds of attainment. These distinctions are not my personal opinion but are recognized within the teachings of each vehicle itself. The scriptures of the common vehicles acknowledge that their practitioners aim to attain the fruition of a shravaka arhat, like Mahakashyapa. This is their own stated goal, not an external categorization imposed upon them, saying that “this is your tradition.” Similarly, the Bodhisattvayana teaches that “one should attain the same fruition as Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara.” This comes directly from their own teachings, rather than being designated by others, saying that “this is your path.” Regarding the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra, both its fruition and the path to be sought involve entering into the conduct and realization state of a buddha. This statement also comes from its own doctrines, not me declaring here today like a judge that “this vehicle is superior and that one is inferior.” Since these distinctions are based on and acknowledged by the teachings of each vehicle, we should understand the fundamental differences between the three.

All three paths ultimately lead to the fruition of buddhahood, though their approaches differ. Following the Vajrayana path allows one to directly achieve buddhahood without progressing through the paths of shravaka, pratyekabuddha, and bodhisattva. On the bodhisattva path, one must first reach bodhisattva fruition before ultimately becoming a buddha. The shravaka path requires practitioners to first attain shravaka fruition, then proceed to the bodhisattva path to achieve bodhisattva fruition, and finally, after reaching the highest level as a

bodhisattva, attain complete and perfect enlightenment of buddhahood. These paths clearly differ in terms of speed and directness. We can compare this to traveling to Bodh Gaya in India: the shravaka path resembles walking there on foot, which takes a considerable amount of time. The bodhisattva path is like traveling by bus, progressing at a moderate pace toward the destination. The Vajrayana path, however, is comparable to flying in an airplane, enabling one to reach the destination swiftly. Thus, the three paths differ significantly in terms of both speed and difficulty in attaining buddhahood.

Then, which path should you follow? Generally speaking, it would be ideal if you could practice all three paths that are widely spread in the world. How might one approach this? You can begin with the path of the common vehicles, which teaches abstaining from harmful actions toward others and eliminating the causes of such actions, while maintaining pure precepts in your mind stream. All lay practitioners should observe the appropriate lay precepts, undertake the one-day eight vows when possible, and engage in other practices as circumstances permit. In regions like Singapore where ordained monastics are relatively scarce, it is especially important for you to support the flourishing of the monastic sangha, as they play a vital role in preserving the Buddhadharma. When monastics maintain their novice vows and bhikshu vows with purity, refraining from harmful actions and their causes, their practice embodies the essential principles of the common vehicles. Additionally, you should study and practice the teachings and vows of the Bodhisattvayana, which focus on benefiting all living beings. If you wish to develop unwavering confidence when facing death without regret, it is most beneficial to practice the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra, particularly the path of the clear light Dzogpachenpo.

In the Snow Land of Tibet, all practitioners endowed with virtuous qualities follow the approach of integrating the three paths in their

practice. For instance, the seven of us who have come from the Tibetan regions to Singapore have all taken the novice or bhikshu vows of the Mulasarvastivada tradition. Daily, we renew our bodhisattva vows and study the bodhisattva path. Most importantly, the ultimate practice in our mind is the path of the clear light Great Perfection. Therefore, we encourage you to likewise strive to practice the teachings of all three vehicles simultaneously and harmoniously within a single meditation session. This integrated approach is of paramount importance for spiritual development.

If you have further questions about how to practice this practice manual in the future, I recommend visiting the Tibetan regions, where your wishes will surely be fulfilled. In today's world, Thailand and the Snow Land of Tibet stand out as regions where Buddhist teachings remain particularly vibrant. While the Tibetan regions may not be materially affluent, its spiritual and cultural wealth is extraordinary. Geographically, the Land of Tibet is divided into three main parts: the three regions of Ngari in the upper part, the four districts of U Tsang in the middle part, and the six ranges of Dokham in the lower part. These areas are all sacred places blessed by Noble Avalokiteshvara and Guru Padmasambhava. If you visit and travel through these regions, you'll encounter various miraculous remains, including buddha statues, syllables, ritual implements, footprints, handprints, and body imprints left by realized masters. Each sacred site reveals wonders more astonishing than the last, and they exist in profound abundance. In the lower region of Dokham, for instance, there is a great sacred site of inconceivable blessings and merit. With a knowledgeable guide who can introduce you to these holy places in detail, you'll likely experience genuine awe. In such spiritually charged environments, most qualities emphasized in Mahayana practice will naturally arise within one's mind stream. Additionally, since most Tibetans have deep faith and understanding of both Mahayana and Vajrayana teachings, you'll find supportive spiritual companions.

Although the Tibetan plateau presents challenges with its high altitude and its basic living conditions are not so good, the summer months from May to September offer pleasant weather. During this period, it is warm and comfortable, and you can make pilgrimages to sacred sites, enjoy the remarkable landscape, receive teachings and instructions from Tibetan masters, and naturally develop resonance with the Mahayana teachings in your mind stream.

To be honest, the Snow Land of Tibet stands virtually unique in the world as a land where the entire nation follows Mahayana Buddhism. For this reason, establishing connections with the Tibetan regions holds tremendous spiritual value. We have now formed a profound dharma bond and built a close relationship. I urge you not to let these spiritual connections weaken in the future. Instead, practice diligently, and you will surely discover the path to attain buddhahood, either in this lifetime or during the bardo state after death.



1.78: Group photo of Choje and devotees at the People's Buddhism Study Society

Finally, by dedicating the virtuous root of teaching and listening to this text, along with all other virtues accumulated by ourselves and others throughout the three times, may the wish-fulfilling jewel of Buddhadharmā spread widely, flourish, and remain in the world for a long time; may all sentient beings temporarily enjoy the auspiciousness and happiness of the higher realms, and ultimately swiftly attain the precious, wish-fulfilling jewel of buddhahood. With these aspirations in mind, let us now recite the dedication prayers:

*By this accumulation of merit, may I obtain all-seeing omniscience,
And may all faults be defeated.
The whirling, turbulent waves of birth, aging, sickness,
And death—from this ocean of samsara, may I liberate beings.*

*Just as the Bodhisattva Manjushri attained omniscience,
And Samantabhadra too
All these merits now I dedicate
To train and follow in their footsteps.*

*As all the victorious buddhas of past, present, and future
Praise dedication as supreme,
So now I dedicate all these roots of virtue
For all beings to perfect Good Actions.*

*When it is time for me to die,
Let all that obscures me fade away, so
I look on Amitabha, there in person,
And go at once to his pure land of Sukhavati.*

*In that pure land, may I actualize every single one
Of all these aspirations!
May I fulfil them, each and every one,
And bring help to beings for as long as the universe remains!*

*May the Buddhadharma flourish and be widely propagated.
May all sentient beings enjoy peace and happiness.
May I put the noble dharma into practice day and night,
And accomplish the benefits of self and others spontaneously.*

CELEBRATING VESAK DAY

On May 14th, the day after Chojé completed all his tantric teachings, Singapore welcomed Vesak Day.

Vesak Day commemorates three significant events in the life of the Buddha—his birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana—all on a single day, similar to the Saga Dawa month in Tibetan Buddhism. According to historical records, the Buddha was born on a full moon day of May; 35 years later, also on a full moon day of May, he attained perfect enlightenment under the bodhi tree; and finally, on a similar full moon day in May, he entered parinirvana. Although these three events did not occur on the same day, they all took place on full moon days in May. Therefore, later Buddhists agreed to collectively celebrate Vesak Day on the first full moon day of May each year.

Due to different calendar systems, the date of Vesak Day may vary in different countries. In Singapore, it's set on the fifteenth day of the fourth lunar month. This day is a public holiday and the country's most important Buddhist festival. Regardless of tradition—whether Theravada, Tibetan, or Han tradition—all Buddhist organizations in Singapore hoist Buddhist flags and hold grand celebrations according to their respective traditions and rituals. Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery hosts buddha veneration activities every year, where thousands of devotees chant Namó Fundamental Teacher Shakyamuni Buddha in unison, prostrating every three steps to pay homage to the Buddha. It was a deeply moving scene. Notably, various Buddhist centers

invite eminent monks and masters to participate in the festivities, adding to the auspiciousness of this occasion. It was for this reason that the People's Buddhism Study Society included Vesak Day as part of Chojé's teaching itinerary.



1.79: Chojé gently ladling water over a statue of the infant Buddha on Vesak Day

On the morning of May 14th, Chojé came to the People's Buddhism Study Society and led everyone in the buddha bathing ceremony. When Buddha Shakyamuni was born, he pointed one hand to the sky and one to the earth, declaring, "In the heavens above and on the earth below, I alone am the most honored," causing the earth to tremble and divine nectar descend from the heavens to bathe the newborn Buddha. To commemorate the Buddha's birth, people in different eras celebrate in various ways, and the Dai ethnic group's Water Splashing Festival also originates from this tradition. During the bathing ceremony, Chojé gently ladled water over a statue of the infant Buddha, which was surrounded by fragrant fresh flowers, seemingly recreating the sacred moment of the Buddha's birth. Following this, Rinpoche respectfully took a sip of the bathing water, and all others followed suit, hoping to purify their body and mind and receive the Buddha's blessings through this ritual.



1.80: Chojé respectfully taking a sip of the bathing water

Subsequently, Chojé gave a brief yet profound teaching. After the ceremony concluded, he returned to Khoon Chee Vihara and, in a specially prepared outdoor teaching area, taught the disciples about the twelve deeds of the Buddha's enlightenment. As Rinpoche spoke of the Buddha's great love and compassion, unwavering patience in the face of hardship, and other qualities, the audience was visibly moved, developing deep faith in the Buddha.

In the evening, Chojé and his entourage attended a grand Vesak Day banquet, then proceeded to the Singapore Indoor Stadium to watch a Buddhist-themed evening performance sponsored by the Singaporean government. The venue was magnificent, accommodating up to 12,000 spectators, with a giant statue of Buddha Shakyamuni as the stage backdrop.

Before the performance began, Singapore's Minister of Home Affairs Wong Kan Seng, and the Abbotship of Buddhist Federation, Venerable Long Gen, each took the stage to deliver speeches. They not only expressed profound veneration for the Buddha but also emphasized Buddhism's important role in promoting national prosperity and people's well-being. The buddha offering ceremony that followed brought the event to its climax. As the lights in the stadium gradually dimmed, every attendee, holding a lotus lamp, lifted their hands in deep devotion. The entire stadium instantly transformed into a vast galaxy of twinkling stars, which was an exceptionally solemn and sacred scene.



1.81: The Buddhist-themed evening performance held at Singapore Indoor Stadium



1.82: Chojé and his entourage watching the evening performance

Throughout the evening, a series of remarkable Buddhist performances took place. Particularly touching were the performances by students from Amitabha School and Manjushri Secondary School. With their innocent and lively expressions, they reenacted Buddhist stories, deeply moving the audience. It was truly admirable to see a national government place such great emphasis on Buddhism, ensuring that younger generations are exposed to the dharma from an early age, allowing the Buddha's wisdom to guide them as they grow.

Although the performance lasted quite long and Chojé began to feel physically unwell, wishing to step outside for fresh air, he chose to remain until the end to avoid disturbing the audience.

When we returned to Khoon Chee Vihara after the event, it was already late at night. But everyone's heart was filled with joy and deep reflection. Such a

meaningful celebration inspired people’s deep love for the Buddha, remaining an indelible memory in our hearts.

EMPOWERMENTS AT BRIGHT HILL

After completing his dharma teachings at the People’s Buddhism Study Society, on May 16th, Chojé visited Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery upon the invitation from the chief administrator of the monastery (present abbot), Venerable Kwang Sheng.

This monastery is Singapore’s largest Buddhist temple and one of the most significant and renowned monasteries in Southeast Asia. Situated atop Kong Meng San (Bright Hill), it covers over 75,000 square meters—equivalent to 11 foot-



1.83: Top: People warmly welcoming Chojé’s arrival; bottom: Chojé and Venerable Kwang Sheng

ball fields—and is surrounded by lush greenery, creating a serene and tranquil environment. Its architecture is grand and magnificent, with the Hall of Great Compassion, Hall of Great Strength, Prajna Meditation Hall, Hall of Amrita Precepts, Dharma Hall, and Pagoda of 10,000 Buddhas arranged in perfect harmony. The monastery’s design incorporates ancient Chinese palace architectural styles, with resplendent golden roofs and exquisite reliefs uniquely showcasing the artistic charm of Buddhist culture.



1.84: Chojé at Bright Hill

Many devoted practitioners had long yearned to receive a Dzogchen empowerment, as they had never had the opportunity before. After repeated heartfelt requests, Chojé decided to hold two Dzogchen empowerment sessions at the Dharma Hall, beginning at 8 AM each morning, exclusively for monastics and lay disciples who met the necessary qualifications. This news filled many with immense joy and excitement.



1.85: Chojé and local monastics



1.86: Visiting the temple buildings



1.87: Chojé watching the statues in the temple

On May 16th, Chojé conferred the empowerment of the *Gathering of Vidya-dharas* from the *Longchen Nyintig* cycle, a mind terma of Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa and compiled by Kongtrul Yonten Gyatso. After the empowerment, Rinpoche gave a profound yet accessible teaching on the view, meditation, conduct, and result of Dzogchen. At noon, he had lunch with the monastery's sangha in a warm and dignified atmosphere. In the afternoon, Chojé consecrated all the representations of the Three Jewels in the monastery and toured the magnificent buildings within the complex.

On May 17th, Chojé bestowed the *Peaceful Manjushri* empowerment. Afterward, he skillfully explained the practice method of this teaching, offering pith instructions with deep wisdom. For many disciples hearing this teaching for the first time, Rinpoche's words were like the sun breaking through clouds, immediately illuminating their minds and clarifying their future practice direction.



1.88: Top: Chojé giving teachings to those who could not attend the empowerments at the Hall of Great Compassion; bottom: Everyone listening to Chojé's teachings



1.89: Chojé giving teachings to the people present at the Hall of Great Compassion



1.90: Chojé gazing into space

Additionally, for those who could not attend the empowerments, Chojé gave a special dharma teaching at the Hall of Great Compassion, ensuring that every devotee who came to pay homage could return with spiritual fulfillment. I had the honor of serving as the translator for both the empowerments and the teaching.



1.91: Khenpo Sodargye translating during Chojé's empowerments



1.92: Devotees receiving empowerment blessings in sequence

According to recollections of some local monastics, although other lineage masters had given tantric empowerments in Singapore before Chojé's visit, most were blessing empowerments. This supreme Dzogchen empowerment was their first one that actually established the disciples on the Dzogchen path, making it an incredibly rare and precious opportunity. Among the participants

at that time, besides a few Theravada, Han, and Tibetan Buddhist monastics, the number of lay practitioners was especially large. After receiving these empowerments that ripen the mind and pith instructions that liberate the mind, everyone experienced tremendous inner transformation.



1.93: Chojé bestowing the Dzogchen empowerment

Chojé's teachings not only purified the minds of those present but also planted seeds of liberation deeply in many people's hearts, opening the door for them to embark on the Vajrayana path of practice. To this day, many devotees who were present continue their practice in Canada, Nepal, and other places, constantly drawing wisdom and strength from these teachings.

ings.

Worth mentioning is that the dharma throne used by Yidzhin Norbu for empowerments and teachings in Singapore was specially commissioned by the People's Buddhism Study Society and used for every event. Later, when giving empowerments at Kong Meng San, the throne was moved to the monastery and remained there. In 2013, when I went to Singapore to give dharma teachings, I specifically visited Kong Meng San to pay homage to the throne and the hall where Yidzhin Norbu had given empowerments. However, because I arrived late that day, the hall was already closed,



1.94: Khenpo Sodargye watching the hall and dharma seat where Chojé once gave empowerments

and the person with the key wasn't present. I could only peer through the windows, catching a glimpse of the interior while silently making prayers. Perhaps in the future, I'll have another opportunity to pay my respects in person.

TWO OF US ALSO GAVE SOME TEACHINGS

Although Chojé's time in Singapore was relatively short, his teachings deeply touched many hearts. Many practitioners expressed that it was one of their most transformative spiritual experiences of their lives.

Before Chojé's arrival, many people in Singapore had been exposed to various tantric practices. However, due to a lack of appropriate translation and guidance, even though they had received empowerments and heard many tantric teachings, they still felt confused about how to begin their practice journey. Chojé's teachings were like a ray of light, illuminating their hearts, allowing them to experience the profound essence of Vajrayana and opening a door to new wisdom.

During his teachings, Chojé placed special emphasis on the translator's professional quality. Since Khenpo

Tsultrim Lodro had previously visited Singapore and people were familiar with his teaching style, Chojé primarily had him serve as translator during



1.95: Top: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro translating for Chojé; bottom: Khenpo Sodargye translating for Chojé

the teaching sessions; while I was responsible for translation during empowerments and other special occasions.

Besides empowerments, Chojé systematically taught Vajrayana practices. He meticulously explained every detail from sitting posture and breath control to recitation, ensuring that each participant could clearly grasp the essential points.

To help everyone better understand the profound meaning of the teaching and resolve doubts, Chojé specially arranged for Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro to teach the uncommon preliminaries of *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery to students who had already studied the common preliminaries. Meanwhile, I taught the sutra sections of *Finding Rest in the Nature of the Mind* at the People's Buddhism Study Society to beginners who were fortunate enough to receive empowerments but hadn't yet studied *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*.

Additionally, during our time in Malaysia, I was invited to teach at the Karma Kagyu Dharma Society, Center of Humanistic Buddhism, and Bukit Beruang Buddhist Society in Melaka, where I gave dharma talks on various topics to the local Buddhist community.



1.96: Khenpo Sodargye explaining dharma teachings at the People's Buddhism Study Society



1.97: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro in Singapore



1.98: Photos of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and Khenpo Sodargye in Singapore



1.99: Khenpo Sodargye giving teachings at different buddhist centers



1.100: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro making several visits to Singapore to give teachings on sutras and tantras

In 1997, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro returned to Singapore, gathering previous students to review the five preliminary practices and teach the view of *Guhya-garbha Tantra* and the five root vows. Subsequently, he visited Singapore multiple times in 2014, 2015, and 2016, giving the teachings of sutras and tantras to fortunate Buddhists at the People's Buddhism Study Society, Marina Bay Sands, and other venues.



1.101: Khenpo Sodargye giving teachings at the National University of Singapore

In 1999, I also returned to Singapore to teach the tantra sections of *Finding Rest in the Nature of the Mind* and transmitted the guided meditative instructions of this text, *The Excellent Path to Enlightenment*. Later in 2013 and 2016, I was invited to the National University of Singapore twice to give talks titled *The Realization of Life and Buddhism and Faith* respectively.



1.102: Khenpo Sodargye in Singapore

From these various experiences, it's clear that we have a deep karmic connection with the Buddhist community in Singapore. Their faith in the dharma is very steadfast, and to this day, many continue to diligently practice the profound teachings they received back then, never interrupting their practice.

THE RUBY MALA

The year 1995 was the most significant year for Chojé's magnetizing practice. Throughout that year, whether during the Hundred Thousand Vidyadhara Great Dharma Assembly at the beginning of the year or in his daily mantra recitations and visualizations, Chojé remained deeply focused on chanting the magnetizing prayer *Wangdu*. At this time, he needed a ruby mala as an auspicious support for his practice.

Upon Chojé's arrival in Singapore, we began searching for this special mala. I visited several jewelry stores but couldn't find ruby prayer beads anywhere. Learning of this, Master Kwang Chao reminded me, "In Theravada Buddhism, monastics entering jewelry stores can easily be misunderstood by the public. As monastics, it's better not to go personally, but rather ask a layperson to help."

Following this advice, we sought help from Lim Theng Moh, a lay Buddhist from the People's Buddhism Study Society. Having worked in the jewelry industry for many years, he had rich appraisal experience and some understanding of ruby prayer beads. After numerous inquiries, we learned that high-quality rubies were typically used for making jewelry, and rarely made into prayer beads. Moreover, rubies were expensive, often costing over a thousand Singapore dollars per carat, making such prayer beads almost impossible to find in the market.

However, after further investigation, we learned that ruby prayer beads might be available in India. Fellow Buddhists from the People's Buddhism Study

Society also wanted to take part in this offering and donated over 14,000 Singapore dollars (approximately 50,000-60,000 yuan). With this funding, Mr. Lim immediately set out for India and personally negotiated with local jewelry suppliers to find the best possible mala.

After spending two days in India, he carefully selected three ruby malas in large, medium, and small sizes, spending over 12,000 Singapore dollars. The remaining 2,000 Singapore dollars were also offered to Chojé. Upon his return, he specifically wrote a letter on how the funds were used for this purchase.

Rinpoche was very pleased when he received the malas, saying that the auspicious connection was excellent. He kept one mala for his own practice and gave the other two to his sister Ani Medron and the niece Dakini Mumtso.



1.103: Three ruby malas offered to Chojé

In my memory, Chojé frequently used red malas throughout his life, whether red coral or ruby, and the beads were always quite small. Even when certain practices required malas of other colors, he would not use them for long before returning to his preferred red mala.

致全部金剛同修。

承蒙大家的隨喜資助，令到這次
法王所求的紅寶念珠作特修用的心願得償。
一共送上大中小三串念珠。法王非常高興，
特別送來此一哈達，祝福大家
吉祥圓滿。

余下兩個兩百元，全部轉贈法王。
有蒙達吉堪布、廣超法師見證。



蓮茂代弟

2/6/95

Whenever Chojé was reciting mantras and someone came to see him or he needed to attend to other matters, he would habitually hang the mala on his left ear. Those seeing this for the first time might mistake it for decoration, but in reality, this was Chojé's way of marking his mantra count. After finishing the matter at hand, Rinpoche would take the prayer beads from his left ear and continue reciting.

Years later, Chojé took apart one of his ruby malas that he had used for a long time and distributed the beads to one hundred of us khenpos, with each receiving one bead.

The condition was that each Khenpo had to recite the syllable *ah* one hundred million times. To this day, I'm still not certain whether this was the same mala we had purchased in Singapore years ago. Nevertheless, I received one of those beads, and since then, I have worn it around my neck, treasuring it as the support for faith.



1.105: The red mala hanging on Chojé's left ear





2nd Stop

May 18th – May 28th

MALAYSIA

SCHEDULE

May 18th

Arrived in Melaka

May 19th

Gave the empowerment of the *Gathering of Vidyadharas* from the *Longchen Nyingtig* cycle at the Melaka Karma Kagyu Dharma Society

May 20th

Met with devotees and gave teachings

May 21st

Stayed at Wah May Hotel

May 22nd

Taught the first lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 23rd

Taught the second lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 24th

Taught the third lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 25th

Taught the fourth lecture on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*

May 26th

Visited Cheng Hoon Teng Temple

May 27th - 28th

Arrived in Kuala Lumpur, gave the Amitabha empowerment, and taught *Heart Essence Bindu of the Heart*

ARRIVING AT THE KAGYU CENTER

After completing the dharma teachings in Singapore, at the invitation of Malaysian Buddhist organizations, Chojé departed for Melaka in the afternoon of May 18th.

That day, dharma friends from Singapore spontaneously divided into two groups—one traveled with us to Melaka, while the other accompanied us to customs. It was relatively easy to cross the border between Singapore and Malaysia, as these two countries are separated only by a narrow strait and are closely tied. After completing immigration checks, we got into the car and reached the destination after a drive of just over an hour.

This was our first time stepping onto Malaysian ground, and we found that it was much larger than Singapore. In terms of area, Malaysia is approximately 459 times the size of Singapore. The trade relationship between Singapore and Malaysia is close, with Singapore heavily relying on imports from Malaysia for almost all food and even drinking water. For decades, Singapore has depended on Malaysia for its water supply.



2.1: Malaysia

Around 6:00 in the evening, we arrived in Melaka and were accommodated at the Karma Kagyu Dharma Society, where Chojé was scheduled to lead a two-day teaching program. Although this center belongs to the Kagyu tradition, its students also follow teachers from the Nyingma tradition such as Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, and study teachings from various schools. The center frequently invites high lamas and great masters from different traditions to give teachings. The atmosphere is warm and inclusive, making everyone feel especially welcome.



2.2: Spacious courtyard filled with devotees who had come to hear Chojé's teachings

The center was a two-story building, and its spacious courtyard was already filled with devotees who had come to hear the teachings. Due to the limited space in the main hall, many dharma friends had spread mats or cushions on both the east and west sides of the courtyard, getting ready to receive the nectar of dharma. On the path leading from the main gate to the hall, a red carpet had been laid, with respectful lay practitioners standing on both sides, palms joined in reverence and eyes filled with warm tears. For the local community, this was a grand and magnificent gathering.

Inside the main hall, the solemn dharma throne was set high. At the entrance hung a yellow banner with several lines of red text that prominently read:

“Listen to the Dharma Voice from the Snow Land”

“Warmly Welcome His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche, the Abbot of Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy of Sertar, Sichuan, China, to Preside Over the Auspicious Ceremony of Empowerment and Dharma Transmission”

As Chojé slowly stepped out of the vehicle, devotees greeted him with the warmest of welcomes. The melodies of Buddhist chants echoed through the air, flower petals showered like rain at Chojé’s feet, and reverence and joy sparkled in everyone’s eyes. Rinpoche gave a brief teaching to the assembled devotees and personally blessed each one.



2.3: Chairman Chen of the Karma Kagyu Dharma Society welcoming Chojé’s arrival

On May 19th, Chojé bestowed an empowerment for devotees in the main hall. Initially, the Manjushri empowerment was scheduled, but after observing the interdependent conditions, Rinpoche decided to instead bestow the empowerment of *Gathering of Vidyadharas* from the *Longchen Nyingtig* cycle.

On May 20th, Chojé met with devotees and gave teachings, explaining the importance of faith, compassion, and wisdom. Many devotees had traveled from far away; upon learning of Rinpoche’s visit, they made time to attend, eager to receive



2.4: Khenpo Sodargye serving at Chojé’s side in Melaka

his blessings. Chojé not only shared dharma teachings but also compassionately bestowed blessings upon them.



2.5: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's special visit to the old Karma Kagyu Dharma Society building

Years later, although this building is no longer in use, for many disciples of the Chojé Yidzhin Norbu, it remains a memorable sacred place that holds countless beautiful memories. When Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro later traveled to Malaysia, he also made a special visit to this place.



2.6: Chojé bestowing empowerments upon the assembly in Melaka



馬六甲密宗(卡瑪迦如)佛教會
THE KARMA KAGYU DHARMA SOCIETY
MELAKA.

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TEL: 06-354763

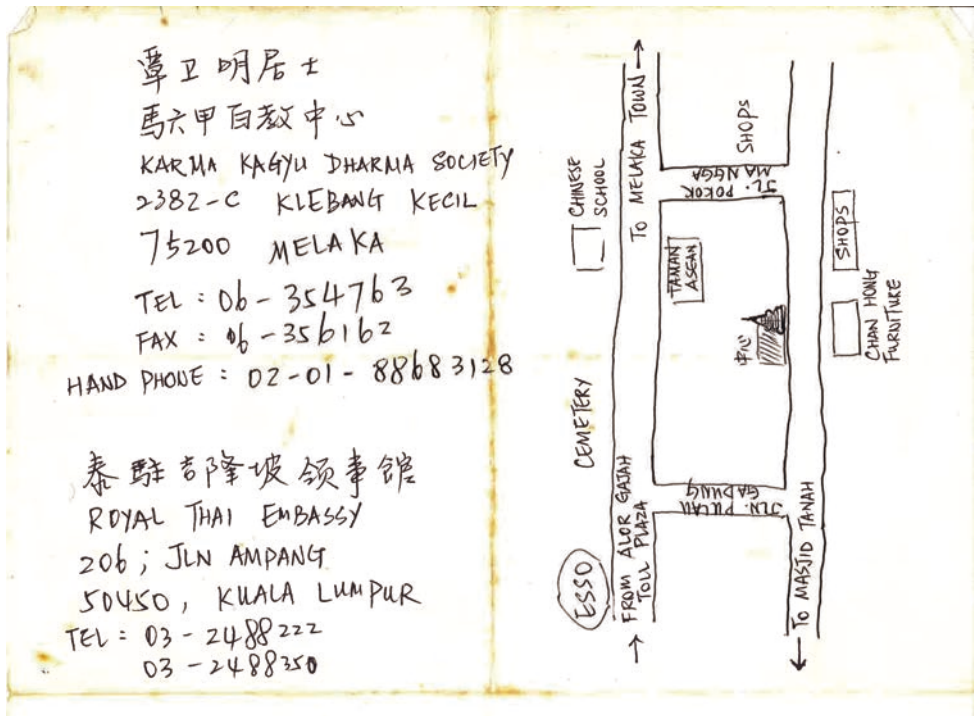
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馬六甲，弘揚無上甚深妙法，令諸善信有情
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全仗貴會鼎力助成，否則我們萬難得遇，大
恩大德，永銘心版。謹南無箋，藉申微忱，
尚此敬致

大衆學佛研究會
會長暨諸理事大德

馬六甲密宗(卡瑪迦如)佛教會

主席  合十

12-6-1995



2.8: Address of Karma Kagyu Dharma Society

晋美彭措法王传法节目大纲
HH JIGME PHUNTSOK RINPOCHE'S PROGRAMME

21-5-95 (星期日) 文殊菩萨灌顶 MANJUSHRI INITIATION	法王主持 BY RINPOCHE	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	上午九时 9.00 AM
会见信众 CONSULTATION	(同上) (AS ABOVE)	(同上) (AS ABOVE)	下午二时至三时 2.00 PM TO 3.00 PM
22-5-95 (星期一) 大圆满灌顶传法* (*请提前报名) DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS* (*Pre-registration required)	法王主持 BY RINPOCHE	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	上午九时 9.00 AM
佛理开示 DHARMA TALK	堪布主持 BY KHENPO	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	晚上八时 8.00 PM
23-5-95 (星期二) 大圆满灌顶传法* DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS*	法王主持 BY RINPOCHE	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	上午九时 9.00 AM
佛理开示 DHARMA TALK	堪布主持 BY KHENPO	人生佛学中心 Humanistic Buddhist Centre	晚上八时 8.00 PM
24-5-95 (星期三) 大圆满灌顶传法* DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS*	法王主持 BY RINPOCHE	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	上午九时 9.00 AM
佛理开示 DHARMA TALK	堪布主持 BY KHENPO	武吉波浪佛教会 BKT.BERUANG BUD.CENTRE	晚上八时 8.00 PM
25-5-95 (星期四) 大圆满灌顶传法* DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS*	法王主持 BY RINPOCHE	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	上午九时 9.00 AM
四臂观音灌顶 4-ARMED CHENREZIG INITIATION	空行母主持 BY DAKINI	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	晚上八时 8.00 PM
26-5-95 (星期五) 释迦牟尼佛供灯法会及灌顶** SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA PUJA** WITH LAMP-OFFERING & INITIATION	空行母主持 BY DAKINI	本会所 CENTRE PREMISES	晚上八时 8.00 PM

Before 13.5.95
* Please contact the center for registration as early as possible. Course fee: Member \$200/- Non-members \$250/-
* 请尽早与本会联络报名, 报名费: 会员 \$200/- 非会员 \$250/- (13.5.95 之前)
** Lamp-offering: \$20/- per person, \$30/- per family.
** 点灯供佛: 个人 \$20/-; 合家 \$30/-

马六甲密宗(卡玛迦如)佛教会启 电话: 06-354763/ 356162
THE KARMA KAGYU DHARMA SOCIETY MELAKA Tel: 06-354763/ 356162

FIRST TIME STAYING AT A FIVE-STAR HOTEL

On May 21st, our Malaysian dharma friends arranged for us to stay at the Wah May Hotel, a five-star establishment.

In fact, during his travels to Han regions or abroad, Chojé never requests luxurious accommodations when lodging is arranged by organizers. Even at hotels, his needs remain simple: a room on a lower floor, a bathroom, and a clean environment. Rinpoche typically prefers staying at lay Buddhists' homes or dharma centers to avoid causing financial burden on others. However, during this Malaysia visit, our dharma friends insisted on providing more comfortable accommodations, which Rinpoche accepted.

At that time, a room at the Wah May Hotel was priced at 500 Malaysian Ringgit per night, but out of goodwill toward Buddhists, the hotel owner offered a special rate of 250 Ringgit. According to the exchange rate of 2:1 at that time, this was equivalent to 500 yuan. Thirty years ago, such a price was undoubtedly quite astonishing.

For Chojé and those of us in his entourage, this marked our first stay in a five-star hotel. Upon entering, we were refreshed by the luxurious decor and high-end amenities. We took some photos to capture this special moment. However, as time passed, we came to realize that such five-star comforts and worldly pleasures were ultimately just fleeting impressions. Our initial amazement gradually faded into indifference; after all, the joy of dharma resonates in our minds far longer than any external pleasure. What truly mattered to us wasn't enjoying these luxuries, but seeing our teacher find moments of relaxation and peace, which brought us deep comfort.

During our stay at the hotel, since we were not far from the sea, Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and I often took walks along the beach. Khenpo had a special

fondness for the ocean; he would always involuntarily stop and quietly gaze at the vast sea surface. Seeing him so captivated, I couldn't help teasing him, "You're so fond of the sea in this life, were you perhaps dwelling in the ocean in your previous life?" Although my feelings for the sea weren't as deep as his, each time I stood by the shore and felt that tranquility and vastness, I too couldn't help but feel refreshed and uplifted.



2.10: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and Khenpo Sodargye by the seaside



2.11: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro in Malaysia



2.12: Khenpo Sodargye in Malaysia

One day, while browsing through newspapers in our hotel, we came across a striking news item: the famous singer Teresa Teng had passed away in Chiang Mai, Thailand. She was the most influential Chinese-language singer of that era, deeply beloved by people. Rinpoche often took interest in current affairs, so I shared this news with him.

Although our time in Malaysia wasn't long, looking back, a great bodhisattva like Yidzhin Norbu would bring blessings to local beings wherever he went, even if staying somewhere for just one night. One could say that places where Rinpoche had stayed would retain a special blessing; the monasteries and dharma centers he visited would bear an indelible mark regardless of how times changed, becoming part of history.

All of this, perhaps, is the power of the dharma.



2.13: Top left: Chojé blessing a devotee; top right: Khenpo Sodargye and Lama Södön; below left: Khenpo Sodargye; below right: Khenpo Sodargye and Khenpo Tsultrim lodro



2.14: Top row from left to right: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro, Khenpo Sodargye; bottom row from left to right: Venerable Kwang Chao, Doctor Rigpa, Lama Södön



2.15: Khenpo Sodargye and Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro at the hotel

THE FIRST LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On May 22nd, Choje began to teach *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* at the Wah May Hotel.

Please contemplate in your mind: “For the sake of all sentient beings throughout infinite space, I shall attain the wish-fulfilling jewel of buddhahood, the unsurpassable, complete, and perfect enlightenment. For this purpose, I will listen to this sublime dharma and put it into practice.” With this, generate the supreme bodhicitta while listening to the teaching.

The teaching being given is *Placing Buddhahood within Reach: The Practice Manual for the Branch of the Peaceful Sadhana of Manjushri*.

The Branch of the Peaceful Sadhana of Manjushri indicates that Bodhisattva Manjushri has two types of form: peaceful and wrathful. Among the peaceful forms, there are various practice methods associated with white, yellow, red, black, and blue Manjushri. According to reliable ancient texts, practicing Yellow Manjushri leads to profound wisdom, while practicing White Manjushri leads to sharp wisdom. Here, we will focus on the branch practice of Yellow Manjushri.

The term *branch*, from the perspective of tantras in general, includes eleven tantric topics: view, samadhi, action, mandala, empowerment, samaya, accomplishment, offerings, enlightened activity, mudra, and mantra. Any one of them, when ascertained and practiced, can be considered a branch practice.



2.16: Chojé teaching *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* at the Wah May Hotel

According to the Dzogchen tradition, there are two ways of explaining the Great Perfection: the extensive pandita approach and the profound kusali approach. The first one relies on scriptural authority, logical reasoning, and pith instructions to extensively and thoroughly elucidate the hidden meanings of the tantras, clarify confused points,

illuminate obscure parts, and integrate scattered contents into a coherent whole. The second approach directly reveals the profound pith instructions and presents the complete path that can lead a fortunate practitioner to full enlightenment. Here in this teaching, we follow the profound kusali approach.

The name *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* signifies that the fruition of buddhahood is handed to you in this very moment. Generally speaking, the wish-fulfilling jewel of the Buddhadharma is transmitted through two main lineages: the common vehicles and the Mahayana vehicle. Practitioners of the common vehicles acknowledge only the attainment of arhatship as the ultimate goal and do not accept the attainment of buddhahood, nor do they strive diligently for it. Therefore, when we speak of “becoming a buddha as the ultimate goal,” this indicates it is a Mahayana teaching. Within the Mahayana tradition, some assert that achieving buddhahood requires three countless eons, while others believe it can be achieved within three lifetimes or sixteen lifetimes. What makes this teaching especially extraordinary is that it bestows the fruition of buddhahood in your hands right now, hence this profound practice manual is called *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*.

*To Manjughosha, primordial lord protector, simultaneous
intrinsic awareness and emptiness,
I pay homage with the realization that you and I are beyond
union and separation.*

Generally speaking, the name *Manjushri* carries multiple meanings. All appearance and existence originally possess the nature of Manjushri, which is called the nature of the aggregate of discriminating consciousness as Manjushri. According to many great tantras, all high mountains are of the nature of Manjushri, all rough things are of the nature of Vajrapani, and all soft things are of the nature of Avalokiteshvara. Understanding this nature of Manjushri is called *the magical illusion web of the aggregate of discriminating consciousness*.



2.17: Chojé, his sister Ani Medron, and his niece Dakini Mumtso

When this nature of Manjushri is directly realized, you will perceive the display of his face, arms, body, and wisdom. This is called *the magical illusion web of provisional meaning*. The ultimate nature of all phenomena is equal, pure, and inseparable from absolute truth, and this is *the magical illusion web of definitive meaning*. When yogis practice this meaning unerringly, it is called *the magical illusion web of the non-duality of the deity and discursive thoughts*, or *Manjushri Jnanasattva*.

During this whole course, when observing and analyzing your own mind, you will discover it is originally empty, without any inherent existence. Yet simultaneously within this emptiness, its luminosity is unceasing. This is the nature of the union of appearance and emptiness, and it is the ultimate Lord Manjushri. He is not someone who previously did not exist and is later united with you through dharma practice, nor is he someone who can be distanced from you by karma and mental afflictions. Instead, he always exists, inseparably from your own mind.

In general, prostration can be performed in three ways: the superior way of realizing the view, the medium way of familiarizing the practice, and the inferior way of expressing devotion through physical actions. Here, *I pay homage with the realization that you and I are beyond union and separation* refers to the superior prostration. That is, directly realizing the state of no separation and no union is termed *prostration*.

*I explain the distilled essence to you, my heart children,
Make sure you never abandon it, but earnestly put it into
practice.*

Generally speaking, our root teacher, the Buddha, who possesses skillful means, loving kindness, and great compassion, expounded 84,000 dharma teachings in accordance with elements, capacities, inclinations, and intentions of different sentient beings. Ultimately, however, the essential point of all these teachings is none other than this Great Perfection, or Atiyoga.

When compiling the teachings of the twelve founding teachers of Dzogchen, Rigdzin Garab Dorje gathered the Great Perfection tantras into 6,400,000 stanzas. His disciple Jampal Shenyen categorized them into three main divisions: the outer category of mind, the inner category of space, the secret category of pith instructions, providing clear explanations for each. His disciple, the great master Shri Singha, further divided the secret category of pith instructions into four cycles: outer, inner, secret, and quintessential secret of the heart essence, organizing them into the two lineages of the oral transmission and the explanatory transmission. His disciple, the great pandita Vimalamitra, compiled the teachings into the four profound scriptures: *The Golden Syllables*, *The Turquoise Syllables*, *The Conch Syllables*, and *The Copper-Colored Syllables*, offering precise elucidations. Later, Guru Padmasambhava consolidated these into three main classifications: the jewel yellow scrolls, the analogue scrolls, and the gray scrolls, further clarifying all the essential points. All these essential teachings transmitted by the early great vidyadharas are known as the *distilled essence*, which

is only entrusted to the heart-like disciples such as you present here, and not casually given to others. Therefore, you should cherish this teaching above your own life, practice it single-mindedly to attain the ultimate fruition of buddhahood.

THE SECOND LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On May 23rd, Chojé continued teaching *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* at the Wah May Hotel.

The dharma to be heard here is the Great Perfection. Its actual practice consists of two parts: the preliminary practices that purify your mind stream, and the main practices that give rise to the actual realization in your mind stream.

The preliminary practices are further categorized into three types: 1) purifying the mind by following the approach of the Paramitayana in the sutra tradition; 2) purifying the mind by following the general approach of the Vajrayana in the tantra tradition; 3) practicing in accordance with the unsurpassable unique path of the clear light Great Perfection.

The first type of preliminary practices is further divided into two kinds: the common outer preliminaries and the uncommon inner preliminaries. The common outer preliminaries include four thoughts that turn the mind away from samsara: contemplating the difficulty of obtaining a human birth endowed with the freedoms and advantages and the impermanence of life to eradicate attachment to worldly affairs in this life; contemplating the karmic law of cause and effect and the defects of samsara to eradicate attachment to future lives in samsara. Now, let's explain these four contemplations one by one.

The Rarity of Human Rebirth

All fortunate ones, first, you should contemplate the following: Now, I possess the jewel-like human body endowed with the freedoms and advantages. Such a human rebirth is extremely difficult to attain—as evidenced by examining causes and conditions, analogies, and numerical data—yet it enables me to accomplish the enlightened results of the paths for individuals of three levels of capacities. Furthermore, I have encountered the qualified spiritual teacher who has imparted to me the profound and sublime dharma. Now, with all these favorable conditions present, I should reflect repeatedly and resolve to diligently practice the genuine dharma, avoiding laxity.

The *fortunate ones* mentioned here refers to individuals who are capable vessels for practicing this profound teaching. First, you need to contemplate that this human existence with the freedoms and advantages is extremely rare from three perspectives: its causes, analogies, and numerical data.

From the perspective of causes, to obtain a human body, one must uphold pure discipline as the main cause, and accumulate various virtuous roots such as extensive generosity as supporting conditions. It cannot be obtained without causes or conditions. Without maintaining pure discipline, even practicing extensive generosity and other virtuous actions are not sufficient to achieve a human rebirth. As Chandrakirti said:

*The fruits of generosity enjoyed in lower realms
Occur through fracturing the limbs of discipline.*

This means that if one does not uphold any form of discipline—such as the lay vows or the monastic vows of a bhikshu or bhikshuni—then

even if one engages in vast acts of generosity, the result will be rebirth in the animal realm rather than as a human. Therefore, the fundamental cause for obtaining a precious human body is the observance of pure discipline. And without encountering the wish-fulfilling jewel of the Buddhadharma, one would have no opportunity to uphold such discipline in the first place.

From the perspective of analogies, it says,

*As the Teacher of both gods and humankind has said,
A turtle could, by strange chance, place its neck
Inside a yoke adrift upon the ocean's waves.
A human life is yet more difficult to find!*

Imagine that an entire trichiliocosm, a universe of a billion worlds, become an ocean, the chance of a blind turtle from the ocean floor putting its neck through a wooden yoke floating on the ocean surface is extremely small, and obtaining a human body with the freedoms and advantages is even more difficult than that. Other scriptures also mention that obtaining a human body is even more difficult than peas staying on a smooth vertical wall without falling when being tossed against it.

From the perspective of numerical data, beings in hell realms are as numerous as particles of dust on the earth, hungry ghosts are as numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges River, and animals are as numerous as dregs left after brewing wine. Among humans and gods, those who do not practice virtue are as numerous as stars at night, while those who practice virtue are as rare as stars visible at dawn.

Now, we have obtained this extraordinarily rare and precious human body. This human body with the freedoms and advantages is not only difficult to obtain but also of great significance. Why is it so significant? Because with this body, we have the capacity to achieve the

fruition of any of the three paths: the path for beings of lesser capacity, middling capacity, and greater capacity.

Practitioners of lesser capacity aspire to be free from the sufferings of the three lower realms and obtain the happiness of the human and celestial realms. Practitioners of middling capacity aspire to be liberated from all sufferings of samsara and achieve the ultimate peace and happiness for themselves. Practitioners of greater capacity will, with great wisdom, directly realize selflessness of all phenomena and do not remain in samsara; and with great compassion, although they attain the peaceful state, they do not fall into extinction but benefit beings throughout infinite space. If one wishes to achieve the full enlightenment of buddhahood that transcends both samsara and nirvana, this can be accomplished through this precious human body.

Not only have we obtained the precious human body endowed with the eighteen freedoms and advantages, but we have also encountered qualified spiritual teachers. In general, qualified spiritual teachers possess many noble qualities, but the most important ones can be summarized in three aspects: first, they are skilled in explaining the dharma while guiding disciples; second, they have meditative experience and realization in their dharma practice; and third, they conduct great activities for benefiting sentient beings. Now, we have met such qualified teachers.

Of course, merely meeting them is not enough to receive actual benefit. But now, the teachers have already gradually opened the vast treasury doors of the genuine dharma according to each disciple's capacity. If we do not take this opportunity to diligently practice the pure dharma, how can we expect to obtain such a rare and extraordinary human body again in the future? As the great bodhisattva Shantideva said,

*So take advantage of this human boat.
Free yourself from sorrow's mighty stream!*

This vessel will be later hard to find.

The time that you have now, you fool, is not for sleep!

This means that samsara is like a vast ocean, while the human body is an excellent vessel that allows one to cross this ocean. We must rely on this human body to traverse the ocean of samsara, and once this opportunity is lost, we cannot reach the other shore. Therefore, we should repeatedly make firm commitments to engage in virtuous dharma practice.

This is the guidance on the difficulty of obtaining a human rebirth. Although the detailed guidance texts provide extensive explanations on the eight freedoms and ten advantages, here we have only summarized the essential points.

The Impermanence of Life

Contemplate that your body will inevitably die, but the time of death is uncertain. At that moment, nothing but the genuine dharma will be of any help. Having understood this principle, resolve to quickly practice the dharma without delay.

Even though we have obtained this precious human body with all eighteen freedoms and advantages, it will certainly end in death. As long as there is birth, there must be death. Once born, death becomes inevitable. As the great bodhisattva Shantideva said,

Never halting night or day,

My life drains constantly away,

And from no other source does increase come.

How can there not be death for such as me?



2.18: Chojé giving the guidance

Like a pond cut off from its source will eventually dry up, our life only decreases without increasing, continuously flowing away, and ultimately heading toward death. However, merely thinking about the certainty of death is not enough to motivate us to practice the dharma. Unlike animals, all humans are aware that they will inevitably die. We must further acknowledge that we never know when death will come,

perhaps next year, the year after, or even tomorrow or the day after. The time of death is entirely uncertain. Bodhisattva Nagarjuna said:

*With all its many risks, this life endures
No more than windblown bubbles in a stream.
How marvelous to breathe in and out again,
To fall asleep and then awake refreshed.*

This means that after falling asleep at night, being able to wake up between one breath and the next is a rare occurrence. Why? Because the conditions that sustain life primarily depend on food and clothing, while the causes of death are numerous, including illness, demonic obstacles, fire, floods, enemies, falling from heights, and many other dangers. Even the food that sustains life can become poison if consumed incorrectly, and even clothing can bring enmity and lead to death. Therefore, the time of death is uncertain and could arrive at any moment.

When death comes, wealth, status, and fame will be of no help. We will have to leave, empty-handed and alone, for an unfamiliar place. Even a leader who commands hundreds of millions of people has no right to take a single servant with them. Even a billionaire who owns the entire world's wealth cannot take a single thread or needle with them. At that time, only the dharma will truly benefit us. If we have not practiced the dharma before death arrives, our hearts will surely be filled with deep regret and sorrow. Therefore, we must hasten to practice the dharma. Contemplate this and make a firm resolution.

This is the guidance on the impermanence of life.

The Infallible Karmic Law of Cause and Effect

After death, sentient beings do not cease to exist; rather, they will inevitably experience suffering or happiness driven by their negative or positive karma without any deception.

If everything disappeared after death, like a fire going out or water drying up, then things would be simple. But that is not the case. We will inevitably experience the corresponding effects of the positive and negative karma that we have created. The Buddha once said:

*The karmic effect of every action of sentient beings
Will not be destroyed even after a hundred eons.
When conditions come together,
Their fruits will definitely ripen.*

This means that the virtuous and non-virtuous karma created by sentient beings will not be wasted even after a hundred eons. When the right causes and conditions come together, the results will unfailingly manifest without obstruction.

In samsara, while there is inherently no self, sentient beings cling to the existence of self. This self does not truly exist, yet sentient beings continuously reinforce the identification with it. As long as we have self-grasping, we will accumulate negative karma for the sake of it and be reborn in the lower realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals. But if we practice generosity, observe precepts, and perform other virtuous actions, we can be reborn in higher realms of gods and humans. Further, if we directly realize the true reality of selflessness, then through all our virtuous actions, we can temporarily attain the fruition of shravakas and pratyekabuddhas, and ultimately achieve supreme buddhahood.

Therefore, we should believe from the depths of our hearts that the law of cause and effect is infallible and never deceptive. We should be careful in accepting or rejecting even the smallest positive or negative actions, so that we can face death without regret, knowing that we have accomplished pure and virtuous deeds. Ideally, we should not create negative karma at all, but if we do, we should completely

purify it through the practice of confession. With such confidence, obtaining a human life becomes truly meaningful, and only then can we be called genuine Buddhists.

This is the guidance on the karmic law of cause and effect, abandoning non-virtue and cultivating virtue in accordance with the dharma.

The Suffering of Samsara

You must develop a deep and unwavering conviction that the suffering of samsara is boundless, long-lasting, and unbearable. With that conviction, resolve to follow the vast and extensive dharma path that can liberate you from samsara.

As we take rebirth in samsara due to the force of karma, we may occasionally experience some happiness in the higher realms of humans and gods. However, this happiness is neither permanent nor stable. Even if we are currently enjoying comfort and pleasure, it is contaminated by mental afflictions and karma and often becomes the cause of future suffering. It cannot transcend the fundamental nature of suffering, namely, the all-pervasive suffering of conditioning and the suffering of change.

Especially in the lower realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals, the suffering is vast and unbearable. As Nagarjuna said:

*For one whole day on earth three hundred darts
Might strike you hard and cause you grievous pain,
But that could never illustrate or match
A fraction of the smallest pain in hell.*

Even the mildest suffering in hell is more unbearable than being violently stabbed by three hundred spears in one day in the human realm.

The suffering of hell beings is immense, and their lifespans are extraordinarily long. Hell beings' bodies are as tender as newborn infants', and yet, the ground in hell realms is made entirely of burning iron, causing immeasurable torment that is impossible to endure. Therefore, before experiencing the suffering in the hell realms, we should make full use of this precious human body to practice the dharma. While we are still alive, we must engage in meaningful and beneficial actions, making a firm commitment to follow the vast and extensive dharma path, so that we can avoid being trapped in the endless cycle of samsara in the future.

This is the guidance on contemplating the defects of samsara.

Then, fervently pray to the guru and the deity so they will bless you to fulfill the above three resolutions.

After contemplating the difficulty of obtaining a human rebirth, you should vow to practice the pure dharma. After contemplating the impermanence of life, you should vow to quickly practice the dharma, no longer procrastinating day after day. After contemplating the karmic law and the faults of samsara, you should vow to practice the vast and extensive dharma, so that you will have sufficient confidence and certainty at the time of death. These are the three resolutions you should make.

Next, we should pray to the guru. Pray for the guru's blessings to fully accomplish these three vows; pray for blessings to recognize that the root guru who bestows empowerments, explains tantras, and grants pith instructions is inseparable and non-dual from Bodhisattva Manjushri, the embodiment of all buddhas' non-conceptual wisdom; pray for blessings to have great diligence to abandon non-virtue and cultivate virtue. You should earnestly make these prayers with single-minded devotion.

This is the guidance on relying on a qualified spiritual teacher.

Taking Refuge

Taking refuge is the cornerstone of all Buddhist paths. It is the doorway for you to enter Buddhism. Thereby, clearly visualize the object of refuge as described in the root sadhana.

The first of the uncommon inner preliminary practices is taking refuge.

Among the Three Jewels, you should view the Buddha as your root teacher, the dharma as the right path, and the sangha as spiritual companions. From the moment you make the vow to take refuge in them, you become a Buddhist. If one does not regard the Buddha as the teacher, the dharma as the path, and the sangha as spiritual companions, one cannot be considered a Buddhist.

Taking refuge is not only the sole key to entering Buddhism but is also a prerequisite for following any path of the Shravakayana, Bodhisattvayana, or Vajrayana of Secret Mantra. As Acharya Ashvaghosha said, "All precepts can be received, but without taking refuge, none can arise." For example, even when observing the lay vows of eight precepts, one must first take refuge in the Three Jewels; otherwise, the essence of the precepts will not arise. Without taking refuge, no matter what virtuous practice one undertakes, it cannot be considered a Buddhist practice.

Before receiving the bodhisattva vows or training precepts, or engaging in any actual practice of Mahayana, one must first take refuge. Likewise, before practicing any outer or inner tantric teachings, one must begin by taking refuge. Taking refuge is the foundation of all dharma practices and the only essential key to entering the Buddhist path.

(In the state of emptiness, visualize that in the sky before you, among a vast expanse of magnificent rainbow light and white clouds is your root guru in essence, appearing in the form of Manjushri Jnanasattva. He smiles serenely, appears youthful, and is graced with perfect signs and marks. Orange in color and brilliant as rainbows, he is adorned with jewels and silken ornaments. His right hand wields a wisdom sword in the air while his left hand holds an utpala flower bearing a volume of scripture. He sits majestically in the full-lotus posture upon a lotus and full-moon seat. From every pore of his body, countless mandalas of self-occurring tantras emanate. Throughout all directions—cardinal and intermediate, above and below—an expanse of densely arrayed rainbow rays of light pervades, within which naturally appear lineage gurus, dakas, dakinis, and dharma protectors in a gathering so vast and incalculable, like specks of dust in sunlight.)

Within the beautiful rainbow light and white clouds in the space before you, visualize your root guru. His essence is the root guru, and his form is that of Bodhisattva Manjushri. His majestic appearance and adornments are vividly seen just as described in the sadhana.

Our present root guru has bestowed empowerments, explained tantras, and granted blessings, thereby establishing many outer, inner, and secret connections with us. Because of this, praying to the root guru allows us to receive blessings more easily. If we pray to other deities, since the karmic connections are not as profound, the blessings will not come as swiftly.

The guru appears in an impure, flesh-and-blood form due to the impurity of our karmic perception. However, the guru's true entity is an undefiled body perfected through immeasurable merit and is inseparable from the deity. Therefore, following the sadhana, you should visualize the guru's form as Manjushri Jnanasattva.

Having visualized this, contemplate, “From now until perfect enlightenment, I take refuge only in you and follow your instructions. Until I attain the same fruition as yours, my lord guru, I will continuously and diligently practice together with companions who share the same view and conduct.” Making such a commitment constitutes the approach of taking refuge in accordance with the common Sutrayana tradition.

Abide in the realization of your own mind’s nature—the great original purity; this is Manjushri Jnanasattva on the ultimate level. Maintain this state as it is recognized; this represents the specific approach of taking refuge in this practice that is uncommon to others.

After clearly visualizing the guru in this way, make the aspiration, “From now until I attain full enlightenment, I take refuge only in you. I will follow your teachings and practice diligently with dharma friends who share the same view and conduct. Until I attain the same realization as you, I will persevere in my practice.”

Here, the guru is the embodiment of the Three Jewels. Regarding the guru as the Buddha and entrusting your mind to him constitutes taking refuge in the Buddha; following his teachings and instructions and practicing accordingly is taking refuge in the dharma; practicing diligently with dharma friends who share the same view and conduct is taking refuge in the sangha. Thus, all the Three Jewels are encompassed within the root guru, taking refuge in him as the fundamental teacher, the right path, and the spiritual companion is known as the *causal refuge*. Aspiring to practice continuously until you attain the same realization as the guru, who is inseparably one with Manjushri, is known as the *resultant refuge*.

Remain in this state without deviating from it and chant the refuge verse as many times as possible:

*The ground is primordially pure space, the youthful
vase kaya;
Its radiant energy is unceasing—my own awareness,
bodhicitta
Is of the nature of the hero Manjushri on an ultimate level.
In recognition of this, my own true essence, I take refuge.*

Finally, visualize the guru dissolving into light and merging into your body, so that your own mind becomes inseparable from the guru's wisdom. Rest single-pointedly in this state.



2.19: Chojé with devotees at the Wah May Hotel

THE THIRD LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On May 24th, Chojé continued teaching *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* at the Wah May Hotel.

The teaching to be received is the quintessential practice manual of the most profound and ultimate secret category of pith instructions in the clear light Dzogchen teaching, which stands as the pinnacle of the nine yantras. It is titled *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*. The explanation of this teaching is divided into the preliminary practices and the main practices. The preliminary practices are further divided into the common outer preliminaries and the uncommon inner preliminaries. The latter includes the three practices of taking refuge, generating bodhicitta, and guru yoga.

First, taking refuge is directed at all Buddhists. As Buddhists, one should regard the Buddha as the root teacher, the dharma as the right path, and the sangha as companions. One must make firm vows and engage in actual practice. This is the practice of the common vehicles, applying to all who enter the Buddhist path.

Second, generating bodhicitta is the practice of the Mahayana bodhisattva path. More extraordinary than the common vehicles, the Mahayana bodhisattva path views all sentient beings as mothers and children, loves them more than oneself, and emphasizes benefiting others rather than seeking self-benefit. This is the motivation of a bodhisattva.

Third, guru yoga is the supreme path unique to the Mahayana Vajrayana of Secret Mantra. The Vajrayana recognizes that all impure phenomena are originally the display of the pure three kayas and five wisdoms. This view constitutes an uncommon path of Vajrayana.

Therefore, these three practices respectively encapsulate the essentials of the three paths: the common vehicles, the Bodhisattvayana, and the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra, and they are thus established as the preliminary practices of the Great Perfection.

Regarding where these three paths are widely spread and how they differ, we need to gain some basic knowledge. If this is not clear, some might mistakenly think that the three paths are incompatible like water and fire—that practicing one means not being able to practice another—considering them contradictory, which is a serious mistake. Others might think there are no differences among the three paths, and they are all exactly the same, which is also incorrect. Each of the three paths has its unique characteristics, so we need to correctly understand the distinctions between them.

Looking at the regions where the three paths of Buddhism have been widely propagated: The teachings of the common vehicles have primarily flourished in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, and other countries south of Bodh Gaya, India. The teachings of the Bodhisattvayana have spread extensively in China, Japan, and other countries east of Bodh Gaya. The teachings of the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra, as prophesied by the Buddha in many scriptures, have primarily flourished in the Snow Land of Tibet north of Bodh Gaya.

It can be said that the present time marks the peak of the spread of Tibetan Buddhism. Regarding the situation in the Land of Tibet, although it is a region of an ethnic minority and its modern scientific and technological knowledge lags somewhat behind that of other ethnic groups, from a religious perspective, 95% of Tibetans deeply cherish Buddhism, and approximately 50% have attained a relatively profound level of study and practice in Tibetan Buddhism. Consequently, Tibetan Buddhism is now being widely propagated in about thirty-two countries across Europe, America, and other regions.

For example, this very Buddhist center belongs to the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism. In the past, there was a Kagyu master in the United States named Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, who alone established over a hundred dharma centers. Two years ago, when I traveled to the West, I visited many of these centers. Another example is the Kingdom of Bhutan, which was reportedly once a territory of Tibet. Today, Tibetan Buddhism flourishes in Bhutan and many countries in both the East and West.

What are the differences in view, meditation, and conduct among the three paths?

Not harming others is the path of the common vehicles; solely benefiting others is the path of the Mahayana Bodhisattvayana; while extensively, easily, and swiftly benefiting others is the path of the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra.



2.20: Chojé's joyful smile

Is there a contradiction among these three paths? There are different viewpoints on this: Lower vehicle practitioners believe that the higher vehicle teachings were not taught by the Buddha—practitioners of the common vehicles have varying degrees of doubt about whether the Bodhisattvayana teachings were spoken by the Buddha; some Mahayana practitioners also dispute whether the Vajrayana teachings of Secret Mantra were personally taught by the Buddha. However, higher vehicle practitioners unanimously and without dispute recognize all lower vehicle teachings as the Buddha's words.

What is the reason for this? Because practitioners of lower vehicles are unable to comprehend the views and conducts of higher vehicles. For example, when the Buddha expounded the Bodhisattva teachings of the Mahayana treasury, apart from bodhisattvas like Manjushri and Samantabhadra who had already attained the mastery of realization, all practitioners of the common vehicle lineages did not perceive it at all, and therefore they doubted these teachings were truly spoken by the Buddha. The Secret Mantra Vajrayana is even more extraordinary—the Buddha transmitted it to Vajrapani and others in the pure realm of Akanishtha, rather than teaching it to ordinary disciples, which is why there are disputes about whether these teachings came from the Buddha. However, practitioners of the higher vehicles are able to understand all the teachings of the lower vehicles. Therefore, they recognize the Shravakayana, Mahayana, and Secret Mantrayana as all being authentic teachings of the Buddha.

How can we prove all of these were spoken by the Buddha? For instance, after the Buddha's parinirvana, practitioners influenced by demonic forces caused divisions within the teachings, leading to the Shravakayana splitting into eighteen schools. This was foretold in the time of Buddha Kashyapa when the daughter of King Kriki dreamed of eighteen people pulling on a large piece of cloth, each eventually getting a piece. When inquiring of Buddha Kashyapa about this, the

Buddha explained that it foreshadowed the future, when Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings would be disputed and the Shrivakayana would fragment into eighteen schools. However, he affirmed that all of these would still be pure teachings of the Buddha. Based on this prophecy, the great masters of the past unanimously recognized that all eighteen schools of the Shrivakayana that emerged after the Buddha's parinirvana were authentic Buddhist teachings. All these doctrines originated from the same Buddha Shakyamuni. In his early years, the Buddha primarily expounded the teachings of the common vehicles, in the middle period he focused on the Bodhisattvayana, and in his final years, as he approached nirvana, he personally taught the Secret Mantra Vajrayana. After his parinirvana, the Buddha manifested as Vajrapani and others to continue expounding the tantric teachings.

Looking at the rise and decline of the teachings, the common vehicles go through the four periods of fruition, accomplishment, transmission, and mere symbols. At present, the period of transmission has already passed, and we are approaching the last one when only the symbols are retained. As a result, the teachings are gradually declining, and their power is becoming feeble. Although the Bodhisattvayana teachings will never perish, there are fewer and fewer practitioners, and their experiences and realizations are becoming weaker. In contrast, the Vajrayana teachings of Secret Mantra become increasingly effective as we enter the degenerate age. Like sunlight shining ever more brilliantly in the darkness, the Vajrayana teachings do not deteriorate as time progresses; rather, its power becomes increasingly evident.

Then how should we practice these three vehicles? We should practice all three vehicles simultaneously without contradiction. First, establish a foundation with the pratimoksha vows of the common vehicles, ideally by taking the novice or full monastic vows. If one cannot become a monastic, as male or female lay practitioners, one should at

least take the five lay precepts or the eight-precept vows, maintaining pure discipline. Otherwise, without discipline, one cannot even achieve temporary rebirth in higher realms of humans and gods, let alone the ultimate fruit of buddhahood.

At the same time, one needs to develop the Mahayana motivation in alignment with bodhicitta. By constantly seeking the welfare of all sentient beings, one can swiftly complete the two accumulations and thereby attain buddhahood. If one focuses solely on personal liberation without benefiting others, although one might be free from the suffering of samsara, one cannot accomplish the vast and boundless benefit for both self and others. Therefore, one should practice the bodhisattva path.

Of course, the bodhisattva path requires practicing for many eons and countless lifetimes to liberate innumerable beings, making it an extremely arduous journey. For this reason, one should practice the Secret Mantra Vajrayana or the Great Perfection, which enables the attainment of the same fruition as the Buddha in a single lifetime. Thus, one must understand how to practice all three vehicles simultaneously in one's mind stream without contradiction.

For example, in this country, the teachings of the common vehicles, the Bodhisattvayana, and the Secret Mantra Vajrayana are all flourishing. If you believe these teachings are truly contradictory and you consider some teachings good and others bad, you would accumulate the karma of abandoning the dharma, which leads to rebirth in hell. As Nagarjuna said:

*Those who practice good with inverse views
Will yet experience terrible results.*

There is nothing more dangerous than developing wrong views about the Buddha's words, so this is something to be especially cautious about.

For us Tibetans in the Snow Land, except for a few who are attached to the eight worldly concerns and politics, the vast majority do not speak with the minds of attachment or aversion about “your sect” or “our sect,” or “your monastery” or “our monastery”. No one argues about whether the three vehicles were taught by the Buddha or not; rather, they practice them harmoniously without contradiction. In Singapore, many Buddhist teachings of different schools are spreading, and you should approach your practice in the same way. This is extremely important.

I once asked one of your teachers, “If our Tibetan Buddhist monks went to Thailand, could we join the Theravada monastic community?” He replied, “You are monastics, meaning you are followers of the Buddha, but I’m not sure if you can formally join their sangha.” I think his response is reasonable. If one is a good practitioner who understands the essential points of all vehicles, one certainly understands that Buddhist monastics are all followers of the same root teacher, like brothers born from the same father and mother. The only thing worth discussing is whether an individual upholds their vows purely, how can we say which tradition is better or worse?

In some places, laypeople who lack understanding may say that Mahayana is the most supreme, or that Vajrayana is more profound, or that the common vehicle is the best. However, in reality, everyone should absolutely avoid accumulating such negative karma. Never forget this point.

Though my time here has been short, I have emphasized the key point of “practicing the three vehicles without contradiction.” I have taught this twice in Singapore, and now once again in Malaysia. All of you who have entered the Buddhist path should practice in this way. This point is extremely important, which is why I emphasize it repeatedly.

Generating Bodhicitta

Contemplate how wonderful it would be if sentient beings, who are constantly tormented by endless suffering, could be liberated from that suffering! Reflect in this way until intense compassion arises and tears spring from your eyes.

Continue to contemplate, “I must accomplish buddhahood that provides me with the ability of saving and liberating all sentient beings. The path that enables me to attain buddhahood smoothly and swiftly—without enduring prolonged hardship—is none other than the clear light teaching of Dzogpachenpo. Therefore, I must engage in the actual practice of the Great Perfection.”

Then, abide in the great placement beyond all extremes and recite the prayer of generating bodhicitta as many times as possible:

*In the illusory city of incidental deluded perception,
Beings roam endlessly through clinging to things as real.
To bring them all to the dharmakaya's primordial freedom,
I generate bodhicitta in the great placement beyond extremes.*

Finally, visualize that from the heart centers of the noble beings who are the objects of refuge, infinite light rays radiate to you and all other sentient beings, purifying all your negative karma and obscurations without remainder. Then, your bodies melt into light and dissolve into the object of refuge. Rest in meditative equanimity, free from all fixation.

Here, bodhicitta mainly includes two types: aspirational bodhicitta, which is motivated by great compassion for others and wisdom directed toward buddhahood, and practical bodhicitta, which involves upholding one's vows through diligent practice. Developing bodhicitta while abiding in the vast state of primordial freedom and practicing the essential meaning of the clear light Great Perfection is the unique approach to generate bodhicitta in the Dzogchen tradition.

Guru Yoga

Clearly visualize the guru as before.

Guru yoga refers to the process of visualizing and praying to one's teacher. In order to engage in actual dharma practice, we must rely on our guru. As it is said,

*Better than meditating for a hundred thousand kalpas
On a deity with all the major and minor marks
Is to think of one's teacher for an instant.
Better than a million recitations of the approach and
accomplishment practices
Is a single prayer addressed to the teacher.*

This means that visualizing countless deities over hundreds of thousands of eons is not as beneficial as simply recalling the guru's qualities and blessings once; repeatedly reciting the mantras of other deities over eons is not as powerful as praying to the guru once.

Why is this so? Because we have an inconceivable karmic connection and shared aspirations closely linked with our guru. Through the power of our own purified karma, we are able to see our guru's form, hear his teachings, and receive his blessings of wisdom in our mind stream. The guru is the embodiment of the blessings of all buddhas of the three times, appearing in human form to benefit sentient beings. Therefore, we should first observe the guru, then rely on the guru,

and finally practice according to the guru's intentions and activities, understanding that the guru embodies the essence of the Three Jewels.

The guru's body is the sangha, speech is the dharma, and mind is the Buddha. The Buddha once said, "During the five hundred years of the Age of the Final Dharma, I will manifest as spiritual teachers to benefit you and others." The time when the Buddha directly guided beings has passed, and now it is spiritual teachers who truly benefit sentient beings. Therefore, we should practice guru yoga.

Then how should we practice guru yoga?

Pray wholeheartedly, "From now on, in all my future lives, and even in my dreams, I will seek no sources of hope other than you, my supremely kind guru, the embodiment of all sources of refuge. I will rely upon you as my sole refuge and offer you my body, all my possessions, and root of virtue accumulated throughout the three times.

In the sutra tradition, the Buddha is the object of refuge, but here, the guru is the sole refuge. Contemplate as below:

Apart from you, my root guru who embodies the Three Jewels, I rely on no other refuge—not during the day, not even in my dreams at night. I entrust myself completely to you. Whether I rise high or fall low, whether I experience suffering or enjoy happiness, whether I encounter auspicious or dangerous circumstances, only you, my great and gracious root guru, know me; only you care for me; only you are my hope and support.

I offer to you my most precious body, possessions, and all virtuous root accumulated throughout the three times. This body is surely to be offered to you, my most kind root guru. As Shantideva said:

*Enlightened ones and all your bodhisattva heirs,
I offer you my body throughout all my lives.
Supreme courageous ones accept me totally.
For with devotion I will be your slave.
For if you will accept me, I will be
Undaunted by samsara and will act for beings' sake.*

I offer this body to you, my greatly kind root guru. From now on, I no longer possess my own body, and it belongs entirely to you, my guru. Now, I will spread the dharma and benefit beings according to your wishes. Unlike before, I am no longer afraid of the sufferings of samsara; I am no longer timid.

Similarly, I offer all my cherished possessions—food, clothing, ornaments, and so on—as well as all virtuous root accumulated in the past, present, and future, along with all offerings that are owned, unowned, mentally created, manifested through concentration, and manifested through mantric power, entirely to you, my great and gracious root guru.

This is the guidance on mandala offering.

“I disclose and confess all my misdeeds and downfalls committed since beginningless time.

With all buddhas and bodhisattvas as witnesses, serving as the power of support, you feel regret for all proscribed misdeeds and inherent misdeeds committed under the driving force of greed, hatred, and ignorance from beginningless time until now, and vow not to commit them again. Through recitation of dharanis and mantras, the practice of meditation and so on, you confess and pray for blessings to purify your mind stream.

This is the guidance on the recitation and meditation practice of Vajrasattva, the remedy for purifying negative karma and obscurations.

“Please ripen and liberate my mind stream, bless me to fully realize the clear light Great Perfection and attain the supreme fruition equal to yours, my sublime teacher.”

Contemplate, “I beseech you, my greatly benevolent guru, to ripen my unripened mind stream through your empowerments, to liberate my ripened mind stream through your pith instructions, so that I can ultimately realize the clear light Dzogchen of original purity and spontaneous presence, attaining a state that is inseparable from you, my supreme guide.”

While contemplating this, chant the prayer with sincere devotion:

*Appearing in the form of a youthful kaya,
Splendidly adorned with the wisdom luminosity
That can dispel the darkness of ignorance in the world—
To you, Lord Manjushri, I pray.*

This four-line prayer was spoken directly by the Buddha himself and its Tibetan version was blessed by the nirmanakaya lochens⁴ through the accomplishment of the power of authentic words. Later, at Mount Wutai, it was further blessed by Manjushri’s lotus tongue, making its blessing power even greater. When reciting this prayer in the future, it will be more excellent if you understand its profound meaning and recite it in Tibetan.

Appearing in the form of a youthful kaya signifies that Manjushri had already attained buddhahood before all buddhas of the three times, and moreover, he was the one who guided all 1,002 buddhas of the fortunate eon to initially generate bodhicitta and subsequently train in the six perfections; yet, in front of beings to be tamed, he continuously abides at the culmination of the tenth bhumi, appearing in the form of a sixteen-year-old youth. This indicates his inconceivable

secrets of body, speech, and mind. Manjushri is none other than the illusory manifestation of the wisdom of all buddhas of the three times, hence he is praised as *splendidly adorned with the wisdom luminosity*. Simply recollecting Lord Manjushri can dispel ignorance, the root of all karma and mental afflictions, thus the verse goes,

*That can dispel the darkness of ignorance in the world—
To you, Lord Manjushri, I pray.*

Before concluding the meditation, visualize rays of white, red, and blue light radiating from the three places of the guru and merging into your own corresponding three places. This purifies the karmic obscurations of your three doors and bringing forth all excellent qualities of body, speech, and mind. Finally, the guru dissolves into light that is absorbed into you. Rest in the equanimity of the genuine nature beyond conceptual mind. When emerging from this meditative state, recognize that all appearances and existences are the essence of the guru. Dedicate the root of virtue to ultimate enlightenment.

Visualize a white *om* in the middle of the guru's eyebrows, a red *ah* at the throat, and a blue *hung* at the heart center, radiating white, red, and blue light and dissolving into the corresponding three places in your body, thus purifying the three obscurations of body, speech, and mind, and receiving all the qualities of the guru's body, speech, and mind.

Completion Stage

Visualize in the center of your ordinary body a clear blue central channel, straight like a bamboo arrow shaft. The top of this channel opens at the top of your head while its bottom is closed below your navel. To its right is the red rasana channel, and to its left is the white lalana channel.

The lower ends of these two channels curve and connect with the lower end of the central channel, forming a shape like the Tibetan syllable *cha* (ཅ). Their upper ends curve into your two nostrils. Visualize this clearly and exhale the stale wind.

As you inhale, visualize the wind entering through the two nostrils, passing through the *lalana* and *rasana* channels all the way to the junction of the three channels below your navel. At this junction rests the fierce *tummo* wisdom fire, about the size of a barley grain, with a solid base and a sharp tip, hot to the touch. When your inhaled wind touches the fire, its flame grows stronger, completely incinerating your contaminated body—including its winds, channels, and *bindus*—leaving not a trace behind. In the end, everything disappears into the non-referential state.

Within this state of emptiness, visualize yourself appearing in the *vajra* body of *Manjushri*—completely transparent, like a fully inflated placenta. In the center of your body are the three channels and four *chakras*. Below the navel is a short *a* (ʌ), and at the top of the central channel is a white, inverted syllable *hang* (ཨ). This syllable *hang* represents the essence of all buddhas and even the mere recollection of it can bring about the experience of emptiness and bliss.

When the wind inhaled through your nostrils touches the fierce wisdom fire (the short *a*) below your navel, a flame as tiny as a needle quickly ascends to the top of the central channel and touches the inverted *hang*. Then, the flame intensifies, causing nectar to descend continuously from the syllable *hang*. The flame and the *bindu* chase each other up and down. In succession, this nectar fills the four *chakras*, enabling you to experience the four wisdoms of joy (joy,

supreme joy, exceptional joy, and connate joy) and four wisdoms of emptiness (emptiness, great emptiness, extremely great emptiness, and everything as emptiness), thus realizing the genuine wisdom of emptiness and bliss. Rest in this state for as long as possible, and at the conclusion, dedicate the root of virtue.

DAKINI MUMTSO ALSO BESTOWED EMPOWERMENTS

Dakini Mumtso possesses profound spiritual attainments and noble qualities. She has bestowed empowerments and transmitted instructions to countless beings in both the Land of Tibet and western countries, earning immense reverence as a vajra guru. No matter where she goes, those who meet her deeply feel her compassion and wisdom, naturally developing boundless faith and devotion in their hearts.



2.21: Dakini Mumtso's empowerment ceremony at The Concourse

In countries that follow Theravada Buddhism, there are almost no female monastics. In countries that follow Northern Buddhism, it is also difficult to find female teachers who can confer empowerments and transmit tantric teachings to the public. Therefore, when Dakini Mumtso visited Southeast Asia this time, Buddhists in Singapore and Malaysia had been eagerly awaiting, hoping

to establish deep dharma connections with her and receive her unique blessings. Even though the teaching schedules were already packed, the organizers made special arrangements for her to give empowerments to fulfill devotees' wishes.

The first time was on May 1st at The Concourse in Singapore, where Dakini Mumtso bestowed the Four-Armed Avalokiteshvara empowerment, with Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro serving as her translator. That day, the venue was packed with devotees from different regions. As the empowerment proceeded, when Dakini Mumtso distributed blessed items to everyone, Buddhist nuns from the Northern tradition also carefully assisted, creating a warm and harmonious scene.



2.22: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro serving as translator for Dakini Mumtso at The Concourse



2.23: Dakini Mumtso bestowing empowerment upon the assembly at The Concourse



2.24: Dakini Mumtso on the dharma throne



2.25: Khenpo Sodargye serving as translator for Dakini Mumtso in Melaka



2.26: Dakini Mumtso bestowing empowerment and presiding over a lamp offering ceremony in Melaka

The second empowerment was held on May 25th in Melaka, where Dakini Mumtso once again bestowed the Four-Armed Avalokiteshvara empowerment, and I had the honor of serving as the translator this time. Additionally, on May 26th, she presided over a lamp offering ceremony for Buddha Shakyamuni. She attentively lit oil lamps one by one, gently holding each lamp in both hands, silently praying, "May the light of the Buddhadharma dispel the darkness of ignorance in all sentient beings." At that moment, the entire ceremony venue was filled with warmth and auspiciousness.



2.27: Dakini Mumtso with female disciples

Dakini Mumtso is humble and low-key, kind and approachable, always maintaining a serene and peaceful temperament, deeply respected and loved by Southeast Asian Buddhists. Many female disciples, in particular, felt drawn to her, taking refuge in her and eager to draw wisdom and strength from her teachings and personal example.



2.28: Dakini Mumtso by the seaside

On one occasion, a group of Buddhists anxiously found me, holding a dying pigeon in their hands. The bird had been injured by a cat and was on the verge of death. They desperately pleaded with me to ask Dakini Mumtso to bless this little life. Dakini Mumtso has always been full of compassion for small animals. Upon learning this, she immediately came over. She bowed her head, gently looked at the pigeon, softly stroked it, and quietly recited prayers to bless it.

The next morning, everyone was surprised to discover that the pigeon had completely recovered and spread its wings to fly toward the blue sky.

THE FOURTH LECTURE ON PLACING BUDDHAHOOD WITHIN REACH

On May 25th, Chojé gave his final teaching on *Placing Buddhahood within Reach* at the Wah May Hotel.

The teaching you are about to hear is *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, the practice manual that encompasses all the key points of the actual practice of the clear light Dzogchen, the ultimate essence of the Buddha's 84,000 dharma teachings. It consists of the preliminary practices and the main practices. What we are currently discussing is the preliminary practices.

When following the path of Dzogchen, if you do not first establish a solid foundation through the preliminary practices, the true realization of this path will not arise in your mind stream. Therefore, from the very beginning, you should not attempt to grasp at the so-called advanced teaching of the clear light Dzogchen. Instead, you should earnestly and diligently cultivate the preliminary practices.

Generally speaking, the great masters of the past have explained the preliminary practices in many different ways. In *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, all these essential points are summarized into the key

points of four thoughts of renunciation, taking refuge, generating bodhicitta, guru yoga, and the stages of generation and completion. Even if you cannot fully comprehend all these teachings, you must at least give rise to the mind of renunciation and bodhicitta.

Renunciation

Renunciation means recognizing the intense suffering of samsara. Beings in the lower realms such as hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals constantly endure both physical torment and mental distress. Naturally, nobody would desire or aspire to such states, making it easy to develop disenchantment and renunciation toward the lower realms. Even in the seemingly fortunate realms of humans and celestial beings, suffering is still inescapable. Humans and gods may enjoy abundant food and clothing, prestigious status, power, fame, and wealth, and without careful examination, all these enjoyment and pleasure may bring them happiness. But indeed, such happiness is neither lasting nor stable and will disappear quickly. Hence, they are also of the nature of suffering.

Especially in the meditative states of the form and formless realms, there exists a neutral feeling that is neither pleasure nor pain, similar to being asleep. Most people mistakenly view this as bliss and pursue the rebirth in these realms, and many non-Buddhist practitioners also strive for this. However, this so-called bliss is merely a temporary and contaminated virtuous result. Once it is exhausted, one will still fall into lower realms and keep cycling endlessly in samsara, like a bee trapped in a bottle or a waterwheel spinning continuously. Being bound in the cyclic existence of samsara, they cannot transcend the inherent nature of all-pervasive suffering.

Therefore, regardless of which realm one is reborn into in samsara, as it is said:

*Beings in the three lower realms are tormented by intense suffering,
Humans and gods are afflicted by the suffering of change,*

And those in the form and formless realms are bound by all-pervasive suffering.

May I see the true face of samsara.

Once we recognize that samsara is inherently suffering, we will no longer desire or yearn for it but will instead develop a genuine mind of weariness. Wherever we are born in the desire, form or formless realms, we will have to experience suffering and pain, and afflictions will inevitably arise. It is like falling into a pit of fire, entering a land of rakshasas, or walking upon the edge of a sharp sword, and there is not the slightest opportunity for true happiness.



2.29: Chojé expounding the actual practice of Dzogchen

Upon realizing this, if a genuine desire for liberation from samsara arises in your mind, that is renunciation. Before developing the recognition of the entire cycle of samsara as a prison, you must repeatedly contemplate and reflect on this truth. Otherwise, there will be no opportunity for the state of Dzogchen to arise in your mind.

The aspiration to be liberated from the entire samsara and attain the fruition of shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, bodhisattvas, and buddhas is called renunciation. It also applies to the wish to take rebirth in Sukhavati, Buddha Amitabha's pure land of Ultimate Bliss in the West, where even the name of suffering is unheard of. Once reborn there, the body will be free from illness, the mind free from distress, and one will never again fall back into samsara. Except for those who have committed the crime of abandoning the dharma or the five misdeeds with immediate retribution, anyone who has faith in Buddha Amitabha and wishes to be reborn in his pure land, regardless of their level of capacity being superior, average, or inferior, will definitely be reborn there. Their aspiration will not become invalid. Therefore, everyone should make this aspiration and long for the rebirth in Sukhavati.

Buddha Shakyamuni prophesied in the *Sutra on the Array of the Pure Land of Sukhavati*, "Countless sentient beings from the saha world will be reborn in Buddha Amitabha's pure land." Now is the time to verify this prophecy. Particularly today, those who recite Amitabha's name in Chinese are all fortunate beings guided by the Buddha. Generally speaking, almost all Chinese-speaking people know how to recite *Namo Amitabha Buddha* in Chinese, and these people will have the opportunity to be reborn in the pure land in the future.

Therefore, every one of you should pray to Amitabha and make aspirations to be reborn in his pure land. From now on, strive not to give rise to any desire to return to samsara.

To abandon attachment to the samsara as a whole, you must first eliminate attachment to this present life, letting go of clinging to this life's wealth, possessions, friends and family, and even resentment toward enemies and those you dislike. Of course, simply listening to the dharma for a few days from one or two teachers is unlikely to completely cut off attachment to food, clothing, and worldly pleasures. Whether you can relinquish these attachments mainly depends on your own

effort. It is essential to repeatedly make firm resolutions, carefully examine your mind, and engage in genuine practice.

In the same manner, regardless of whether one's capacity is superior, average, or inferior, anyone who practices the Great Perfection can undoubtedly attain buddhahood in this very lifetime. However, some practitioners of the common vehicles, as well as ordinary people who have not entered the Buddhist path, may doubt this and ask, "Can it really be so easy to attain buddhahood? Is the Great Perfection truly authentic?"

Certainly, whether one can achieve buddhahood or not ultimately depends on the practitioner themselves. If one genuinely practices and actualizes the Dzogchen teaching, one will definitely achieve buddhahood. This is absolutely not deceptive. However, if one merely remains preoccupied with worldly affairs and scattered in mind, no matter how profound the teaching may be, it will be of no benefit to his or her spiritual progress. This is known as turning away from the dharma. Even if the teaching is extraordinarily profound, if one's mind stream remains untamed and preoccupied by worldly concerns, it is still helpless, like sunlight unable to reach into a cave with a north-facing entrance. Therefore, the first and most crucial step is to let go of attachment to this present life.

Sadly, in today's world, most people are solely busy with matters of this present life, completely disregarding their afterlife. As dharma practitioners, you should not follow their example but instead strive for liberation for future lives.

Often, wealthy people worry about diminishing wealth, repeatedly accumulating more and more, making it impossible for them to engage in spiritual practice. On the other hand, those without wealth spend their days busy with pursuing food and clothing, their minds scattered, making it equally difficult to practice. I have traveled from the Land of Tibet to Singapore and Malaysia, and by now, I am kind

of familiar with these places. In my hometown, there is a vast disparity between the rich and the poor, and most people spend their days struggling to obtain food, leaving them unable to engage in virtuous practices. In contrast, Singapore and Malaysia have relatively smaller wealth gaps, and most people enjoy a comfortable life. However, since much of the food and material goods here must be imported from other countries, people frequently worry about their availability, and always remain anxious about gains and losses.

Especially among you, once acquiring some wealth, one may desire to accumulate more. If you have a small fortune, you seek to double it; if you have two, you wish for three; if you acquire a hundred thousand, you may aim for a million. Like this, you continuously pursue wealth and possessions. When I see how much some affluent individuals possess, I am truly astonished. Yet, they remain unsatisfied and seem never to have considered the importance of preparing for their next life. Indeed, we should restrain ourselves and adopt a simple lifestyle—just as one eats today’s food today and seeks tomorrow’s food tomorrow—living with modest clothing and sustenance. A true practitioner will never starve to death. So, please set aside all matters, big and small, and devote yourselves wholeheartedly to practicing virtue.

As Buddhists, from the very beginning, we should cultivate contentment and less desire. *Less desire* means not coveting the wealth of others, while *contentment* means being satisfied with what we have, as long as they suffice to sustain life, and focusing entirely on dharma practice. Today, all of you gathered in this hall are not only Buddhists, but most should have seen through this life, putting aside various worldly affairs and practicing for the sake of your future lives. If you can relinquish all distractions and wholeheartedly engage in dharma practice, you absolutely won’t die from cold, heat, hunger, or thirst.

Even if a person possesses all the wealth in the world, at the time of death, they cannot take a needle with them; even if a person governs

all countries in the world, they cannot bring a single servant along when they die. Upon death, not even your own children can accompany you beyond that threshold—you must be well prepared to face everything alone. Therefore, from now on, please stop clinging to this life, let go of all worldly affairs and wholeheartedly cultivate renunciation. Do not miss the rare opportunity to practice the dharma for your future lives.

This is the first preliminary practice.

Bodhicitta

All sentient beings, boundless and infinite, have at some point been our parents. Therefore, we should repay the kindness of all these parent-like sentient beings. However, no worldly pleasures or wealth within samsara can truly repay their kindness. The ultimate way to express our gratitude is to help them attain the fruition of buddhahood that is endowed with forever happiness and freedom. Therefore, we should place all sentient beings in the state of buddhahood. Yet, before we ourselves attain buddhahood, we are incapable of guiding all beings to that state. Thus, we must first swiftly attain buddhahood ourselves. To accomplish this, we should rely on such a profound and supreme swift path as the clear light Great Perfection. Otherwise, all sentient beings will have to wait for an unbearably long time.

This aspiration to swiftly achieve buddhahood is bodhicitta. To generate bodhicitta in our mind, we must cultivate an absolutely pure and benevolent intention. In the past, we have harbored negative thoughts, feeling jealous toward those more accomplished than ourselves, competing with our equals, and looking down on those we deem inferior. These negative attitudes should be abandoned like poison. From now on, we must solely cultivate good intentions, constantly wishing that all beings, regardless of their status being high or low, noble or humble, be free from physical pain and mental suffering.

First, cultivate the bodhicitta of equalizing self and others. Then, develop the bodhicitta of cherishing others more than oneself. Ask yourself, "Can I strive harder to eliminate others' suffering than my own? Can I exert myself even more diligently and persistently to accomplish others' happiness than my own?" Finally, practice the bodhicitta of exchanging self and others, giving away all your happiness and goodness to others while willingly taking all their suffering upon yourself. In this way, solely cultivate virtuous intention in your mind.

This is the second preliminary practice.

Non-dual Wisdom

If you have possessed renunciation and bodhicitta, you should ascertain the emptiness of all phenomena and practice the three paths in a way that is free from contradiction.

What does this mean? All phenomena of the external world and beings within it, although appearing, do not truly exist, just like last night's dreams, reflections, or magical illusions. Though empty, the unobstructed power of emptiness itself remains unceasing, manifesting as the boundless appearances of samsara and nirvana.

For example, a reflection in a mirror may appear vast and enduring, yet it lacks even the slightest material substance. Similarly, while the appearances of samsara and nirvana are limitless and infinite, they are merely the illusory manifestations of the mind and do not truly exist.

Another example is a movie: although various scenes and actions unfold on the screen, not even the tiniest particle of physical substance is actually present. Likewise, all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are merely the nature of emptiness.

By realizing that everything is empty in nature and single-pointedly meditating on this realization, you are cultivating the non-dual wisdom. You must focus your efforts on the meditation of this ultimate and only view in the main practice.

Before coming to the main text, I have spoken at length yesterday and today. As Vasubhadu said, “While teaching, it is necessary to summarize the meaning, explain the words, sort out the structural connections, and engage in debates and responses.” This tells that when explaining any sutra or treatise, there are five methods to be employed. Following this approach, I have concisely explained the practice of the three paths to you.

Nowadays, all three paths—the common vehicles, the Bodhisattvayana, and the Vajrayana of Secret Mantra—are flourishing in this world. I have briefly explained how to practice these three without contradiction, as well as the essential points of why they must be practiced.

For a person wishing to practice the three paths without contradiction, the source of the key instructions can be traced back to the great Khenpo Bodhisattva who came from India to Tibet. He taught,

*Outwardly maintain pure discipline,
Inwardly cultivate bodhicitta,
Secretly attain mantric accomplishment,
Thus achieve full enlightenment in Alakavati.*

The great Nyingma scholar Ngari Panchen Pema Wangyal also stated:

*The foundation of noble qualities is the pratimoksha vows.
Generate bodhicitta to the best of your ability,
Which is a branch of the Secret Mantra.
Receive empowerments that ripen your mind stream.
Guard the three vows like your eyes.*

*Practice and accomplish the three aspects of the deity in the
generation stage,
And the completion stage with and without signs.*

The non-contradictory practice of renunciation of the common vehicles, bodhicitta of the uncommon Mahayana, and the right view of the Secret Mantra Vajrayana, is precisely the wisdom intention of the Eastern Conqueror Tsongkhapa.

Therefore, I have integrated the intentions of the great Khenpo Bodhisattva, the great scholar Ngari Panchen Pema Wangyal, and the venerable Lama Tsongkhapa, to present this brief explanation to all of you.

Subsequently, Choje gave the oral transmission of the final part of *Placing Buddhahood within Reach*, thus completing all the contents of this teaching. Afterward, Rinpoche led everyone in the dedication of merit:

*By this accumulation of merit, may I obtain all-seeing omniscience,
And may all faults be defeated.
The whirling, turbulent waves of birth, aging, sickness,
And death—from this ocean of samsara, may I liberate beings.*

*Just as the Bodhisattva Manjushri attained omniscience,
And Samantabhadra too
All these merits now I dedicate
To train and follow in their footsteps.*

*As all the victorious buddhas of past, present, and future
Praise dedication as supreme,
So now I dedicate all these roots of virtue
For all beings to perfect Good Actions.*

*When it is time for me to die,
Let all that obscures me fade away, so*

*I look on Amitabha, there in person,
And go at once to his pure land of Sukhavati.*

*In that pure land, may I actualize every single one
Of all these aspirations!
May I fulfil them, each and every one,
And bring help to beings for as long as the universe remains!*

*May the Buddhadharma flourish and be widely propagated.
May all sentient beings enjoy peace and happiness.
May I put the noble dharma into practice day and night,
And accomplish the benefits of self and others spontaneously.*

After the recitation, Chojé led everyone in performing a grand tsok offering ceremony to thank the Three Roots and dharma protectors for their compassionate blessings, which made this dharma teaching tour in Southeast Asia so smooth and successful.



2.30: Group photo of Chojé and devotees at the hotel

VISITING CHENG HOON TENG TEMPLE

Melaka is the oldest historical city in Malaysia. After completing the dharma teachings there, on May 26th, Chojé was invited by the local devotees to visit Cheng Hoon Teng Temple, the oldest Chinese temple in Malaysia.

Cheng Hoon Teng has a history of four to five hundred years. It is not just a religious site but also an important symbol of Chinese culture in Malaysian. Historically, it served as an official administrative center and a court of justice for the Chinese community, handling civil



2.31: Cheng Hoon Teng Temple

disputes and providing legal and social services. The temple primarily enshrines Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, while also venerating Mazu, Baosheng Emperor, Guan Gong, and other deities, demonstrating a fusion of Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian beliefs and showcasing Malaysia's rich multicultural heritage.



2.32: The bodhisattvas and deities enshrined in Cheng Hoon Teng Temple



2.33: Chojé visiting Cheng Hoon Teng Temple



2.34: Chojé and devotees in Cheng Hoon Teng Temple

Upon arriving at Cheng Hoon Teng Temple, Chojé appeared very pleased to see this majestic and ancient temple. He then led everyone in a circumambulation around the temple. The abbot warmly received him, inviting Chojé and his entourage into the reception hall and serving fragrant tea.

During their conversation, the abbot remarked, "I have heard that your Academy has trained many outstanding monastic talents and has brought tremendous benefits to sentient beings through the propagation of the dharma. Could you share more about this?" In response, Chojé introduced Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy. After listening, the abbot was filled with joy and admiration, offering words of praise and appreciation.

Before departing, everyone gathered in front of the Avalokiteshvara Hall for a group photo, capturing this precious and memorable moment.

ARRIVAL IN KUALA LUMPUR

After completing his dharma teachings in Melaka, on May 27th, Chojé traveled by car for more than two hours to Kuala Lumpur, the final stop of this Southeast Asia journey. As the capital of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur is not only a culturally diverse metropolis but also has deep connections with Buddhism. Especially within the Chinese community, many families enshrine buddha images in their homes and regularly participate in Buddhist activities.

Upon arriving in Kuala Lumpur, Chojé checked into the Swiss-Garden Hotel, where he stayed for three days and two nights. During this time, he received local devotees, including dharma friends and leaders of dharma centers in Kuala Lumpur. He bestowed the Amitabha empowerment and taught *Heart Essence Bindu of the Heart* in a practical and direct manner.



2.35: Swiss-Garden Hotel

One afternoon, at the warm invitation of local devotees, Chojé took some time to visit a nearby supermarket. Although he did not buy anything in particular, this short outing allowed him to personally experience the unique customs of Kuala Lumpur and gain insight into the daily lives of the local people.



2.36: Dining together around a round table

On May 29th, Chojé left the hotel and headed to the airport, preparing to transit through Hong Kong before returning to Chengdu. While taking the

elevator, he met a 19-year-old girl surnamed Tham. She was the daughter of the director of a Malaysian dharma center and had just graduated from high school. Chojé asked if she recited any prayers. She replied that she had previously completed 1.2 million recitations of the Padmasambhava mantra but had since stopped. Chojé encouraged her to continue reciting the mantra, at least 108 times daily, and reminded her to have unwavering faith in the Three Jewels.

According to her recollection, Chojé's words "have faith in the Three Jewels" gave her tremendous strength and inspiration. She had originally been introverted and timid, but from that moment on, whenever facing difficulties, she would recall Chojé's teachings, and her confidence would grow, enabling her to face challenges head-on.

After Rinpoche returned to the Land of Tibet, she began earnestly listening to recordings of his teachings, and gradually immersed herself in the study and practice of *Peaceful Manjushri*, from which she gained great benefit. To this day, her practice has never been interrupted. She still carefully preserved the nectar pills, white khata, and yellow vajra knot left by Chojé, as well as the discs of Chojé's teaching recordings. She treasures these items immensely, which moves me deeply. Some people may follow a guru for a long time, yet the guru's teachings may not necessarily impact them profoundly. However, for those truly fortunate disciples, even a short time with the guru can bring lifelong benefit.



2.37: Chojé's nectar pills, yellow vajra knot, white khata, and teaching recording disc preserved by Ms. Tham



2.38: Two Khenpos, Doctor Rigpa, Lama Södön, and several devotees

In Singapore and Malaysia, there are many devotees with profound virtuous roots, just like her. For example, Mr. Cham from Melaka told me that even today, most of the disciples present at that time are still practicing the teaching given by Chojé. Some older disciples have passed away, while the younger remain dedicated to their practice, which is truly heartening.

He also shared:

“Over time, as I continued practicing, I noticed significant changes in my mind and body. My bodhicitta has continuously grown, and I have also developed some understanding of emptiness, which is very rare. If we follow Rinpoche’s oral instructions and practice methods and engage in actual practice with perseverance and faith, we will undoubtedly gain profound experiences and realizations. The feeling is beyond words.

“I was 38 years old then, and now 30 years have passed. Fortunately, I am still in good health and can continue to practice. We have always kept Rinpoche’s teachings in our hearts, never stopped, and continued practicing until today. This must also be a kind of blessing from Rinpoche.”





3rd Stop

May 29th – June 21st

RETURNING

SCHEDULE

May 29th

Arrived in Hong Kong

June 3rd

Arrived in Chengdu

June 14th

Visited Yongxing Monastery in Ya'an, conferred the empowerment of *Jampal Yeshe Sempa* and gave teachings

June 15th

Arrived at Dorje Drak Monastery in Dartsedo, conferred the Manjushri empowerment and gave teachings

June 20th

Passed through Dawu

June 21st

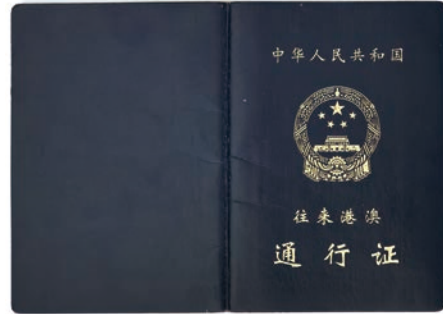
Returned to Larung Gar

PASSING THROUGH HONG KONG

On May 29th, Chojé arrived in Hong Kong from Kuala Lumpur after a four-hour flight. At that time, Kai Tak Airport in Kowloon still served as Hong Kong's main international airport.

As soon as the plane landed, devoted lay disciples who had been waiting at the airport respectfully welcomed Rinpoche. They warmly invited Chojé to a vegetarian restaurant for a meal. Following local tradition, monastics and lay disciples sat at separate tables—the disciples collectively covering the cost of the monastics' meals while paying individually for their own. This custom of separate payment arrangements continues to this day.

After the meal, we stayed at the home of a lay disciple surnamed Baak. The living space was quite different from what we were used to—somewhat cramped. In Hong Kong, land is extremely valuable, and both public and private spaces are generally very small. Baak's home was less than 70 square meters, with only two bedrooms and a living room. Chojé stayed in one room, Ani Medron and Lama Mumtso shared the other, while



3.1: Exit-Entry Permit for Traveling to and from Hong Kong and Macao



3.2: Hong Kong

Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro and I took turns using the sofa in the living room. Everyone else squeezed onto floor mats, with barely enough space to walk.



3.3: Chojé at Baak's home

Despite the tight quarters and unusually muggy weather, devotees came to see Chojé every day. Rather than holding elaborate ceremonies, Rinpoche simply gave the *Vajrakilaya Gurkhukma* empowerment to a select few, offered teachings on taking refuge, and blessed visitors by placing his hand on their heads.

One day, while serving breakfast, I couldn't help but ask Rinpoche, "You usually prefer bright rooms, but the windows here are quite small. Don't you feel a bit uncomfortable?" Rinpoche smiled and replied kindly, "When traveling to benefit sentient beings, one encounters all kinds of situations, which is quite normal. Haven't I said before,

*Accompanying Manjushri, the Buddha's eldest son,
I journey through countless worlds, one by one,
Surely to witness the scenes of extreme joy,
As well as the displays of extreme sorrow.*

Following Bodhisattva Manjushri to travel across the ten directions in order to spread the dharma and benefit beings, I can enjoy scenery in every environment. The accommodation here is perfectly fine."

Chojé stayed in Hong Kong for a few days. Before leaving, we selected some electronic products from local shopping malls as gifts to take back with us.

ARRIVING IN CHENGDU

On June 3rd, Chojé departed from Hong Kong and, after more than two hours of flight, safely arrived at Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport.

As soon as we got off the plane, we saw a large crowd that had gathered to welcome Rinpoche. Among those welcoming him were not only disciples from

our academy led by Tulku Tendzin Gyatso, Khenpo Sherab Zangpo, Khenpo Yeshe Phuntsok, Khenpo Chimé Rigdzin, and Khenpo Norpa, but also numerous lay practitioners from Chengdu, Mianyang, and other places.

Shortly afterward, Chojé traveled by car to the International Metropolis, where a lay practitioner surnamed Liu had offered an apartment to serve as Rinpoche's residence in Chengdu. Mr. Liu later took monastic vows at Larung Gar and spent many years studying under Rinpoche.

Chojé's residence was on the seventh floor. Although there was no elevator, making going up and down somewhat difficult, Rinpoche was finally settled in.

In the days that followed, devotees from various cities in Han regions came to meet with Rinpoche, arriving in a continuous stream. Rinpoche compassionately



3.4: Everyone warmly welcoming Chojé at the airport



3.5: Chojé in his apartment in International Metropolis

blessed each visitor and bestowed empowerments such as the *Vajrakilaya Gur-khukma* upon disciples with the fortunate karmic connection.



3.6: Chojé meeting with government officials

During this time, disciples including lay practitioner Shang from the Mi-nyang Dorje Chötsok (Vajra Dharma Center) earnestly requested Chojé to visit, give teachings, and perform animal release ceremonies. Rinpoche explained that it might not be possible to make the trip this time, but he promised to go at the end of the year. In addition, Chojé also met with some government officials from Sichuan Province.

Upon returning from Southeast Asia this time, Chojé brought back several thangkas he had received as offerings. While he distributed most as gifts to disciples, he kept one particular thangka of Bodhisattva Manjushri for himself. Rinpoche explained that this thangka was inseparable and indistinguishable from him and requested it be displayed above the head of his bed. There are some miraculous stories about this thangka, though I will save those details for another time.



3.7: Chojé compassionately teaching



3.8: The Manjushri thangka that Chojé personally said was inseparable and indistinguishable from him

VISIT TO YONGXING MONASTERY IN YA'AN

On June 14th, Chojé left Chengdu to continue his journey back to Larung Gar. Along the way, monastic and lay disciples from the Ya'an region extended an invitation for Rinpoche to bestow dharma teachings. Accepting their request, Rinpoche traveled by car to Yongxing Monastery, which is perched high on Mount Mengding.



3.9: Yongxing Monastery in Ya'an

This ancient monastery, steeped in over a millennium of history, clings to the mountainside and is accessible only by a winding, rugged dirt path. Yet upon arrival, we found ourselves transported to what seemed like a celestial realm that instantly refreshed both body and spirit. A gentle mist descended from above, offering sweet relief from Chengdu's sweltering heat. Cool mountain breezes caressed our faces while the air was filled with the fragrance of wild blossoms and herbs. Standing at a high vantage point looking down at the sea of clouds below, we felt as though we had entered a mythical realm beyond the human world.



3.10: Chojé blessing each devotee with a statue of Manjushri

News of Chojé's arrival spread quickly, drawing throngs of devotees to the monastery that day. The gathering was impressive—three or four buses and numerous vans lined the monastery grounds, bringing an estimated one to two thousand followers. At the entrance of the Mahavira Hall, Chojé offered a concise teaching before bestowing the empowerment of *Jampal Yeshe Sempa*. After the empowerment, Rinpoche held a statue of Manjushri and personally blessed each devotee in turn. He then walked into the Mahavira Hall to consecrate the buddha statues. At noon, Rinpoche had lunch with monastic and lay disciples at the monastery. That evening, he stayed at the Bayi Hotel in Ya'an, where devotees from nearby counties continued to arrive. Despite the unceasing flow of visitors, Rinpoche remained tireless, giving head-touch blessings to each person with unwavering compassion.

Decades later, I heard a remarkable story from Mr. Zhao about his experience at Yongxing Monastery. Just five days after breaking her ankle—a serious injury—Mr. Zhao’s mother-in-law insisted that he take her to receive a blessing from Rinpoche. They chartered a vehicle to Yongxing Monastery, where Rinpoche was giving teachings to the gathered devotees. Though Mr. Zhao had not yet taken refuge in Buddhism, something extraordinary happened the moment he first glimpsed Chojé Yidzhin Norbu. It felt as if an electric current surged through his body, surrounding him with a powerful force.

Following the empowerment ceremony, devotees formed a line to offer their respects and gifts to Chojé, who blessed each person with his Manjushri statue. After receiving the blessing, Mr.

Zhao’s mother-in-law yearned for another. Balancing on her good foot, she hopped up the steps toward Rinpoche. Upon seeing her, Chojé gently tapped her head several times with the sacred statue, then softly blew on her. In that instant, the crowd surged forward, inadvertently pushing her backward down several steps. Yet instead of worsening her injury as one might expect, something miraculous occurred—her previously immobile foot was instantly healed. She could walk again.



3.11: Chojé with devotees at the Bayi Hotel in Ya’an

Until that day, Mr. Zhao had maintained his skepticism about Buddhism despite having heard tales of Buddhist masters' supernatural abilities. His mother-in-law's spontaneous healing shattered his doubts, awakening a profound faith in Chojé and opening his mind to the Buddha's teachings. As Rinpoche prepared to depart from Yongxing Monastery, Mr. Zhao joined others in the farewell gathering. Somehow sensing the transformation in Mr. Zhao's heart, Chojé reached past several people in the crowd and deliberately placed his hand on Mr. Zhao's head. In that moment, Mr. Zhao knew with absolute certainty that Chojé could see into the hearts of all beings. This encounter marked the beginning of his Buddhist path. He took refuge shortly thereafter and has since devoted himself to dharma study and practice. Through Chojé's blessing, his life was profoundly transformed.

ARRIVING AT DORJE DRAK MONASTERY IN DARTSEDO

On June 15th, Chojé left Ya'an and headed toward Dartsedo. On the way, as we passed through Mount Erlang, a sudden downpour made the mountain road extremely difficult to navigate. Vehicles moved slowly, and traffic became heavily congested. Rinpoche finally reached Dartsedo by evening.



3.12: A massive flood ravaging Dartsedo

At that time, a massive flood was ravaging Dartsedo. Days of rainfall had caused mudslides and landslides in many areas, blocking waterways and bridges, and large parts of the urban area were submerged under floodwaters. When we arrived, the flooding had not yet peaked. However, as soon as we reached Dorje Drak Monastery, the floodwaters surged onto the streets. Roads were completely cut off, and Dartsedo's urban area was engulfed in water. This situation was later reported in the local newspaper.

The monks at the monastery felt deeply honored by Chojé's arrival and warmly welcomed him to a residence specially built for him. This house had two stories: the sturdy stone structure below and an elegant wooden dwelling above, situated on the site of the former Thangtong Gyalpo Longevity Hall. Several years earlier, the monastery had begun planning this residence for Rinpoche within the monastery grounds. Finding the circumstances auspicious, Chojé gladly agreed and personally provided the layout and design for the building. On this visit, the residence had just been completed, and everyone was overjoyed that Rinpoche could be present to stay in it.



3.13: The house built for Chojé in Dorje Drak Monastery

Upon his arrival, officials from various departments of Garze Prefecture—the United Front Work Department, Religious Affairs Bureau, and Public Security Bureau—hastened to meet him. Chojé briefed them on his journey to Southeast Asia. While staying at Dorje Drak Monastery, he fulfilled requests from both individual monks and doctors from the Tibetan medicine hospital by conferring the Manjushri empowerment. Morning and afternoon, large groups of devotees arrived to pay their respects, and Chojé blessed each one personally with the gentle touch of his hand upon their heads.

Among the visitors, a famous Tibetan singer caught Chojé’s attention. He advised her, “You should sing more Buddhist songs. Despite your beautiful voice, what remains when impermanence arrives? Consider Teresa Teng, the globally famous singer who recently died...” Her husband, not having heard Rinpoche’s words clearly, anxiously knelt nearby and asked, “Is Yidzhin Norbu saying she’s going to die?” I quickly clarified, “No, Yidzhin Norbu is simply reminding her about impermanence and the importance of diligent practice. When death comes, we can take nothing with us.” Later, in gratitude, the singer offered a performance of the Guru Padmasambhava and the Avalokiteshvara mantras.

During this period, Chojé also made a special pilgrimage to a stupa in Dartsedo City built by Thangtong Gyalpo. At the crowd’s request, Rinpoche consecrated the stupa, emphasizing its vital importance for all sentient beings and the necessity for its protection.



3.14: The stupa in Dartsedo City built by Thangtong Gyalpo



3.15: The top and first floor of the stupa

Chojé stayed at Dorje Drak Monastery for four full days. To this day, the house where he stayed remains perfectly preserved, untouched even during monastery renovations. His bed and personal belongings remain exactly as he left them, placed in their original positions, serving as a deep remembrance of Chojé Yidzhin Norbu.



3.16: Chojé's room at Dorje Drak Monastery

RETURNING TO LARUNG GAR

On June 20th, Chojé departed early from Dartsedo and began his journey home. After spending the night in Dawu, he proceeded directly to Larung Gar the following day.

As our convoy approached the academy, disciples in monastic robes lined both sides of the road, holding khatas reverently in their hands to welcome their beloved guru's return. The scene was deeply moving. At the sight of their long-absent teacher returning safely, many disciples were overwhelmed with emotion, tears streaming down their faces, their hearts filled with boundless joy.



3.17: Chojé returning to the academy by car



3.18: Disciples in monastic robes lining both sides of the road, holding khatas reverently to welcome Chojé's return



3.19: Chojé sharing his experiences abroad with the monastic assembly

Upon returning to Larung Gar, Chojé went directly to the Dharma-dhatu Palace, where he addressed the monastic assembly gathered in Kunga Rawa, the academy's main sutra hall. He briefly shared his experiences abroad. Rinpoche mentioned, "It is truly joyful that we can all gather here once again. My visits to Singapore and Malaysia

bore fruitful results in spreading the Buddhadharma and benefiting sentient beings. The journey unfolded smoothly from beginning to end. Throughout the trip, my body remained healthy without illness, and my appetite was good.

Despite traveling with a physician, I required little more than occasional blood pressure checks. The attendants traveling with me got along harmoniously, and everyone was very compatible. After nearly two months away, I now find myself somewhat fatigued. Tomorrow, I will retreat to the Joyful Forest on the western mountain for two days of quiet restoration. Afterward, I will continue to teach the Buddhadharma for all of you.”



3.20: Disciples listening attentively to Chojé

The next day, while Chojé was on his way to the western mountain, I waited by the roadside with my father, who had not eaten for seven days and was critically ill. We hoped to receive Yidzhin Norbu’s blessing. Chojé’s car stopped, and he compassionately performed the phowa practice for my father, instructing him to pray sincerely to Buddha Amitabha to ensure rebirth in the pure land of Sukhavati. My father was filled with joy upon hearing these words.

That afternoon, he passed away peacefully, his hands joined in prayer, chanting Buddha Amitabha's name, accompanied by the prayer chants of Khenpo Tepas and Asuk Tulku. Though I grieved my father's passing, I found immense comfort in knowing that he had received Chojé Yidzhin Norbu's blessing in his final moments.



3.21: Chojé imparting the essential teachings of Buddhism at Larung Gar

After resting for two days on the western mountain, on June 24th, Chojé bestowed the empowerment of *Jampal Yeshe Sempa* upon the entire sangha. Afterward, Yidzhin Norbu announced, "Starting tomorrow, I will spend four days

giving you the empowerment of *Lama Yangtig*, and begin teaching Lama Mi-pham Rinpoche's Dzogchen instructions, which have already been printed in advance. These teachings are especially profound and extraordinary. Since I began teaching at age 14 until now at 63, I have wanted to share these teachings many times but have always hesitated to transmit them publicly. If I don't teach them now, there may not be another opportunity in the future. Although the requirements for listeners are quite strict this time, I hope everyone will cherish this opportunity. Throughout this summer, we will continuously teach and study the Dzogchen teachings."



3.22: Chojé bestowing empowerment at Larung Gar

From then on, as always in the peaceful Larung Gar, day after day we immersed ourselves in listening to, contemplating, and meditating on the Buddhadharma under the seat of Chojé Lama Yidzhin Norbu, insatiably tasting the nectar of dharma...



3.23: Disciples listening to, contemplating, and meditating on the Buddhadharma under Chojé's guidance

*Thus, these water-moon memories dancing in reflection,
 Images of a dreamlike life lingering in recollection,
 As a joyful feast for the benefit of future generations,
 Are set down here, my pen spurred on by faith.*

*This is beyond compare with ordinary books—
 It is filled with the precious treasures of the guru's pith instructions,
 Guarded by dakinis and dharmapalas as their very eyes.
 The fragrance of blessings and siddhis now pervades.*

*In this age when minds are lost in digital realms,
 The nectar of pith instructions is discarded like grass,
 Yet for those with faith, diligence, wisdom, and good fortune,
 How could a hundred thousand gold pieces compare to it?*

*The meaning of this journey to the human realm
 Is fulfilled by encountering the guru's teachings—this alone suffices.
 With the thought of having obtained a wish-fulfilling jewel,
 Would it not be wonderful to merge this into your heart?*

*Our gracious guru, like a garuda soaring through space,
 Passed to the pure land twenty-two years ago.
 We orphaned siblings, united in harmony,
 Have guarded our beautiful homeland without dispersing.
 Amid storms, hail, and blizzards in the snowy lands,
 Gazing at the sky of impermanent heat and cold,
 Enduring years of hope, worry, sorrow, and joy,
 We pray for the guru's blessings to remain ever fierce and powerful.*

*Through the pure virtue of composing this work,
May the victory songs of white dharma gods resound through the three
realms,
May all black magic demons and their retinues be subdued,
May beings throughout vast lands enjoy the bliss of dharma.*

*May the noble teachings—treasury of all auspiciousness, happiness, and
benefit,
Never decline, and their golden victory banner fly high,
May all beings enjoy virtue and bliss,
And may sublime luminosity adorn this world.*

This memoir, *Moon in Water*, was completed by Sodargye on November 11th, 2025, the auspicious day of stellar conjunction, the twenty-second day of the ninth month of the Wood Snake Year in the Tibetan calendar. May it be auspicious!

Appendix A: English Translation of Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's 1994 Teaching Schedule in Singapore

Buddhist Vajrayana Dharma Assembly

An Invitation to Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro's Dharma Teachings in Singapore

Biography: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro was born in 1962 and is currently 32 years old. He was ordained as a monk in 1979. In 1983, at the Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy, he received the bhikkhu and bodhisattva vows from the great accomplished master of the Nyingma tradition, Dharma King Jigme Phuntsok, and studied the sutras and tantras of Tibetan Buddhism. He later obtained the degree of khenpo. Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro is currently a dharma teacher and ordination master at the Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy.

Date	Day	Topic	Venue	Time
11/6/94	Saturday	The Four Causes for Rebirth in the Pure Land	Singapore Conference Hall, Shenton Way	7:30 PM
12/6/94	Sunday	The Stages of Practice and Doctrines of Vajrayana	Singapore Conference Hall, Shenton Way	7:30 PM
13/6/94	Monday	(Topic to be confirmed)	Bodhi Association	8:00 PM
14/6-17/6	Tue-Fri	The Words of My Perfect Teacher	People's Buddhism Study Society	8:00 PM
18/6/94	Saturday	(Topic and Venue to be confirmed)		
19/6/94	Sunday	(Topic to be confirmed)	The Buddhist Library	2:00 PM
20/6/94	Monday	(Topic to be confirmed)	Bodhi Association	8:00 PM

Date	Day	Topic	Venue	Time
21/6-24/6	Tue-Fri	The Words of My Perfect Teacher	People's Buddhism Study Society	8:00 PM
25/6/94	Saturday	(Topic and Venue to be confirmed)		
26/6/94	Sunday	(Topic to be confirmed)	The Buddhist Library	2:00 PM
27/6/94	Monday	(Topic to be confirmed)	Bodhi Association	8:00 PM
28/6-30/6	Tue-Thu	The Words of My Perfect Teacher	People's Buddhism Study Society	8:00 PM
1/7/94	Friday	The Three Seals of Dharma	Tai Pei Buddhist Center	8:00 PM
2/7/94	Saturday	(Topic to be confirmed)	Karma Kagyud B.C.	8:00 PM
3/7/94	Sunday	(Topic to be confirmed)	Karma Kagyud B.C.	8:00 PM
4/7/94	Monday	The Words of My Perfect Teacher	People's Buddhism Study Society	8:00 PM
5/7-7/7	Tue-Thu	Bodhisattva Vows	Singapore Buddhist Lodge	8:00 PM
8/7/94	Friday	Amitabha Practice	Tai Pei Buddhist Center	8:00 PM
9/7/94	Saturday	The Words of My Perfect Teacher	People's Buddhism Study Society	8:00 PM
10/7/94	Sunday	The Words of My Perfect Teacher / Empowerment and Blessing Ceremony	People's Buddhism Study Society	7:30 PM

Organizer: People's Buddhism Study Society, No. 25 Lorong 22 Geylang S (1439), Tel: 746 9352

Note: Khenpo Tsultrim Lodro will hold a dharma talk at Man Fatt Lam Temple at 2:00 PM on July 3rd (arranged before the press deadline).

Appendix B: English Translation of the Registration Notice for Chojé's Dzogchen Teaching

People's Buddhism Study Society

No. 25, Lorong 22, Geylang Road, Singapore 1439

Tel: 746 9352

Introduction to the Registration for the Dzogchen Study Class

Thanks to Venerable Kwang Chao's efforts in seeking the dharma, the encouragement of Vice President Layperson Jun Hui, and the sincere requests of a group of dharma friends, everything has proceeded smoothly. If all goes well, His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche and his entourage will come to our country in early May this year to preside over dharma assemblies and give teachings. Among these, one is Dzogchen teaching—the most supreme and extraordinary path to liberation in the Nyingma tradition. It is only through the accumulation of special merit and auspicious connections that we have this rare opportunity to receive these teachings.

A) Content of the Teachings:

1. His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche will personally confer the empowerment, explain the lineage, and teach the Dzogchen practice. The main teaching will be *Peaceful Manjushri*, with khenpos providing Mandarin translation on site. The Society will arrange for live audio recordings, so that students can review the teachings in the future if needed.
2. Practice texts will be provided for use during the class and for self-study.

3. Due to the requirements of the lineage and the stages of practice, this dharma teaching is not open to the general public.

4. Tentative dates and times for the teachings are as follows:

- Dzogchen Empowerment: 8:00-10:00 AM, May 3rd, 1995
- Oral Transmission and Explanation on Dzogchen: 8:00-10:00 AM, May 4th-13th, 1995

B) Requirements for Applicants:

According to the instructions of His Holiness, those wishing to attend the Dzogchen teachings must meet the following requirements:

1. Must have previously attended the teaching on *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* given by Lama Tsultrim Lodro in 1994.
2. Must have practiced the preliminary practices (ngöndro) in the Dzogchen tradition, with at least some experience in these practices.
3. Practitioners from other traditions who have completed the four preliminary practices and wish to study the Nyingma Dzogchen teachings may also apply, subject to approval by the Society's review committee. However, the number of such participants will be limited.
4. The Society's board members and organizing committee members will be granted special admission, but they must still complete the registration procedures and pay the required fees.

Appendix C: English Translation of Lim Theng Moh's Letter on the Use of Funds

To all Vajra Dharma friends,

Thanks to everyone's generous contributions, the wish of His Holiness to obtain red ruby malas for special practice has been fulfilled. A total of three malas—large, medium, and small—were presented. His Holiness was very pleased and especially sent this khata as a blessing to everyone.

May all be auspicious and perfect.

PS: The remaining sum of 2,200 Singapore dollars has been entirely offered to His Holiness. This was witnessed by Khenpo Sodargye and Venerable Kwang Chao.

Lim Theng Moh

June 2nd, 1995

Appendix D: English Translation of the Letter of Gratitude from the Chairman of the Karma Kagyu Dharma Society to the People's Buddhism Study Society following Chojé's Visit

The Karma Kagyu Dharma Society, Melaka

2382-C, Klebang Kecil, 75200 Melaka, Malaysia

Tel: 06-354763

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are deeply grateful that His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche was able to visit Melaka and propagate the supreme and profound dharma, allowing all devoted followers to receive the nectar of his teachings and to benefit greatly. Such an auspicious dharma connection was made possible entirely through the generous support and assistance of your Society. Without your help, it would have been extremely difficult for us to encounter such a rare opportunity. We will always remember your great kindness and virtue.

With this humble letter, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and respect to the President and all esteemed board members of the People's Buddhism Study Society.

With palms joined,

Chairman

The Karma Kagyu Dharma Society, Melaka

June 12th, 1995

NOTES

1. Throughout this book, the terms Chojé, Khenpo Rinpoche, Rinpoche, His Holiness, and Yidzhin Norbu refer to His Holiness Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche.
2. celestial chimney: A literal translation of a Tibetan term for the central energy channel at the throat chakra, considered the passage for breath and subtle energies in Vajrayana and Dzogchen teachings.
3. This refers to *Freedom from All Adversity: A Sur Offering to Harmful Influences, Obstacle-Makers, and Elemental Spirits*.
4. Great Translators





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ཡི་གེ་ཉི་ཤུ་རྩ་དྲུག་པ་འདི་དཔེ་ཚལ་ནང་དུ་བཞག་ན་དཔེ་ཚད་ཅི་ཅི་འདྲར་
བགོ་མཁམ་ཀྲང་ཉེས་པ་མི་འབྱུང་བར་འཇམ་དཔལ་ལ་རྩ་རྒྱུད་ལ་མ་གསུངས་སོ། །