

# Chögyam the Translator

The Vidyādhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche had a great passion for translating the dharma from Tibetan to English. By the time North American students began encountering Rinpoche in 1970, his command of the English language was already completely fluent, idiomatic, and intimate. It may be hard to believe, but his vocabulary surpassed many of his native English-speaking students. His English syntax ranged from the extremely loose to near perfect at times, and this was always difficult to predict and seemed totally situational. But his command and eloquence with all the skills English required was impressive.

He taught the dharma in English—directly and with penetrating precision and gentleness. Did he formulate ideas and dharmic concepts in Tibetan and then translate them into English? Rarely, I think, and perhaps only when the topic was very technical or textually based. There were often as many interpretations of what he had said as there were people who heard him, which I think reflects how intimately he connected with his audience. And he used to amazing effect the fact that no one expected him to speak syntactically perfect English. Subtle, complex, and mind-opening ambiguities, as well as multiple shades and layers of meaning emerged easily from his often slippery sentence structures. But the teachings came out spontaneously, effortlessly—again, a product of his passion to connect with our world totally and without pretense. Dr. Alton (“Pete”) Becker, professor of linguistics, commented after attending a lecture by the Vidyādhara in 1974, “Rinpoche did something I’ve always known was possible, but that I’ve never experienced before: he used language to destroy conceptuality.”

Just as the Buddha Shākyamuni taught in the vernacular as he wandered the Indian subcontinent over twenty-five centuries ago, Trungpa Rinpoche spoke our language, with simplicity and directness. The kind of students he attracted never imagined they would learn his language, let alone recite liturgies or study commentaries in Tibetan. It had to be in English, and there seemed to be little effort needed, since he taught so completely in our language.

But, in truth, effort was required, especially as the students entered into the vajrayāna disciplines of ngöndro (preliminary practices of tantra) and sādhana (yidam deity practice). Initially, Rinpoche composed his own liturgies in English, as he had left Tibet with only the smallest amount of his personal practice texts; and by the time he had journeyed to the United States, his books remained in Scotland, along with a number of important relics. But as we required more traditional liturgy, we began to obtain texts from other exiled lamas and scholars we encountered. Through the efforts of Tibetologist E. Gene Smith and his colleagues at the Library of Congress New Delhi Field Office, much of the wealth of the huge corpus of Tibetan literature slowly became available; in this way we began to acquire much of what Rinpoche needed—both for his more in-depth presentations and for his students’ meditation practice.

Years before, in the United Kingdom, Chögyam the Translator emerged, working closely with some of his very articulate and literate students. With some works, he dictated a spontaneous translation in English, allowing his scribes to help him shape and edit the phraseology. His work with Künga Dawa (Richard Arthure) is perhaps the most notable; their translation of *The Sādhana of Mahamudra*, one of the termas (“treasure” texts) discovered by Rinpoche, is a beautiful and evocative practice liturgy, held very dear by all his students. With others who were studying Tibetan, he worked with Tibetan texts directly. Rigdzin Shikpo (Michael Hookham) was one member of the small initial group of translators who worked closely with Rinpoche in rendering the arcane language of another culture into their own. We look forward to seeing more of Rigdzin Shikpo’s work with the Vidyādhara in the near future. Francesca Fremantle, who was completing a Ph.D. in Sanskrit at the University of London, was another early translator who collaborated with Rinpoche. She even crossed the Atlantic not long after him to teach Sanskrit at the University of Colorado and work with him to complete their translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1975), which is still a classic in the field.

### *The Nālandā Translation Committee*

In America, the translation effort developed slowly and organically, as a few of us who had the interest, though not necessarily any special talent, began to study Tibetan. The Vidyādhara himself taught a few actual classes on the “Supplication to the Takpo Kagyüs” sometime in 1973 and 1974, and this text, which we already knew well in English from his earlier translation in Britain, became a vehicle for teaching us aspects of Tibetan grammar. A small group emerged, with enthusiasm and some diligence, and Rinpoche began to meet with us periodically. We worked with him on songs of realization by some of the Karmapas and a beautiful sādhana he wrote while in the United Kingdom to his root guru, Jamgön Kongtrül Padma Tri-me of Sechen. This period was very much an apprenticeship for us in terms of education; and though it suffered from informality and lack of structure as compared with a classroom style, it gained much from the passion of both the students and their teacher working intimately together. And, moreover, it was “jolly good fun” at times, as he used to say.

The first project I was given by the Vidyādhara, at the 1974 Vajradhatu Seminary, was to prepare an edition in Sanskrit of the hundred-syllable Vajrasattva mantra, making sure that this was in accord with classical grammar. Sanskrit had been one of my main areas of focus while completing a B.A. in religious studies at the University of Michigan a couple of years earlier. The following year, this work became the basis for our first real group translation—the Vajrasattva liturgy of the ngöndro. A handful of students were completing their prostrations and refuge practice, and Rinpoche felt that it was important for them to begin to utilize the traditional ngöndro text. Up to that point we had been practicing based on oral instructions, and contemplating the four reminders with short verses spontaneously composed in English by the Vidyādhara.

The fact that Rinpoche was keen for his students to know this long mantra in a grammatically correct form in Sanskrit reveals his allegiance to providing as authentic and literate a transmission as possible, now that we in the West had access to such resources long forgotten in Tibet (since the days of the main translation activity of Tibetans had ended centuries ago). Not only did he want the mantra to be accurate in terms of its spelling, but he wanted us to be able to pronounce it as the Indians would their native classical language. This was in stark contrast to Rinpoche's Tibetan contemporaries, both his teachers and colleagues, who pronounced the Sanskrit syllables as if they were reading Tibetan—what we have sometimes referred to humorously as the “whores dew vrey” (*hors d'oeuvre*) style of pronunciation. He made great effort, though it seemed natural, to pronounce the many Sanskrit technical terms he utilized in his talks in the way these words would be said in India. However, when he chanted Sanskrit mantras encountered in Tibetan liturgies, whether during his own practice or reading transmissions, he would default to the ingrained Tibetan style of articulation, occasionally even poking fun at himself for doing so.

A related topic is the visualization of Sanskrit seed syllables and mantras, a common feature of tantric practice. In general, the Vidyādhara counseled us to follow the Tibetan tradition of visualizing such syllables using the Tibetan uchen (Tib. *dbu can*; “possessing a head”) script. When asked why we couldn't use the Roman alphabet, he said, “I'm not willing to make that leap.” He went on to discuss how important he felt it was that such visualizations be done using a syllabary (like those employed by Tibetan and Sanskrit) rather than an alphabet. The difference is that with a syllabary, a complete syllable is represented by one character, which contains both a consonant and a vowel. With an alphabet, the consonants and vowels are separate letters. Rinpoche thought it was important in one's visualization practice for the consonant and vowel to be inherently inseparable, and an alphabet cannot accomplish this as well as a syllabary.

As would be readily evident to anyone reading the Vidyādhara's books and teachings, his liberal use of Sanskrit and relatively rare usage of Tibetan terms again demonstrated his strong bias toward showing us the Indian roots of Buddhism, as well as the Indian vajrayāna traditions, including the bodhisattva ideal of the mahāsiddha lineage and their way of life as lay practitioners. We always attempted to find an appropriate English word or phrase to translate the seemingly endless number of important terms. But if nothing suitable was found, we often preferred to employ the original Sanskrit, especially if this was not too difficult to pronounce or read for the English-speaking audience. Rinpoche wanted his students to develop a technical Buddhist vocabulary and required us to study the meaning of foreign terms. Using these somewhat unfamiliar words in a translation instead of always trying to coin English equivalents was meant to encourage further learning on the part of the reader. Perhaps it goes without saying, but we've found that most English speakers handle Sanskrit pronunciation quite well without any training; whereas the less familiar and linguistically unrelated Tibetan is often much more difficult.

When Rinpoche sought to name an organization or project, he often would turn to Sanskrit again—examples range from Vajradhatu to Shambhala, Nalanda to Naropa (all

written without the more scholarly use of diacritics)—though he remained mostly in his native idiom for the names he chose for his military and service organization, known as the Dorje Kasung (Tib. *rdo rje bka' srung*), as well as for hierarchical titles within the Shambhala organization. Ultimately, it was a blending of several influences, but his hope was that many of the foreign words we used, especially the many important technical terms, would eventually enter the English language formally, as a number of Sanskrit words have.

For the Nālandā Translation Committee, the year 1976 was a watershed in many ways. We were joined by Lama Ugyen Shenpen, a longtime attendant and secretary to Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, a close teacher of the Vidyādhara, and among the very few to have escaped the Communist regime. Lama Ugyen proved to be an invaluable teacher and guide for us, and he assisted Trungpa Rinpoche in so many ways, being the only other Tibetan in our midst. Everything we translated was carefully reviewed with Lama Ugyen and often drafted with his help, though he too was engaged in learning a new language in order to improve what he could offer. After this draft was complete, we would begin again, reading the entire translation, line by line, to the Vidyādhara.

Our first project that included Lama Ugyen fully was our translation of the short and long Karma Kagyü Vajrayoginī sādhanas. Some of the preparation was done before the 1976 Vajradhatu Seminary, held at Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin; but most of the work proceeded there, from working to complete a draft with Lama Ugyen to reviewing it all carefully with Rinpoche. This process was very intense, usually involving eight to twelve hours a day, and the text demanded much more than our knowledge allowed. But our understanding grew, and Lama Ugyen's English improved steadily. At times it seemed magical, Rinpoche sneaking into our workroom while we pored over a passage with Ugyen; he would come just to check on our progress, prodding us along playfully and offering interesting details that transformed our understanding. Sometimes we were so immersed in our work that we wouldn't even notice him approaching, much to his mischievous delight.

It was during this intensive training program that *The Golden Sun of the Great East* was revealed to the Dorje Dradül, as the Vidyādhara was known in his Shambhala manifestation. This is the root terma text of Shambhala, the first of several mind termas he was to discover during his years in America, and these too required translating. (Years later, Rinpoche's discoveries were confirmed as authentic termas by his teacher Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.) As is the case with all such revealed treasure teachings, these were intentionally hidden centuries earlier (usually by Padmasambhava, but in this case, more likely King Gesar of Ling). A terma is hidden in order to benefit future generations, and the timing of its manifestation is an aspect of its prophecy. . The Shambhala teachings are extremely important in the Vidyādhara's transmission of dharma. In fact, he once said that it was this intention alone—to propagate the kingdom of Shambhala—that provided the necessary inspiration to leave his homeland and make the arduous journey to India and the West.

## *Translation Methodology*

From 1976 on, the annual three-month Vajradhatu Seminary, which included alternating periods of intensive meditation and advanced study, became for us a fabulous translation intensive and retreat. There were always at least two or three of us in attendance, sometimes many more, coming and going as our livelihoods permitted. Rinpoche seemed to have lots of time to work on our projects, and we sometimes met daily—rarely fewer than several times a week. Seminary was also his laboratory, where he would experiment with how to use our translations within his students’ meditation practice. He sometimes spent hours in the shrine room with a handful of us, experimenting with different styles of chanting, drum patterns, gong ringing, and so forth. It was a very creative and fluid process of adapting the Tibetan ritual tradition to a new land and vocabulary, and every year there would be new advancements in our ritual and understanding.

Back home in Boulder, Colorado, the translation work continued, though generally at a slower pace. Meetings with Rinpoche were held once or twice a week when he was in town, perhaps more if a project was nearing completion. He once commented that the translation committee members were like “ladies to the court,” connecting him to his mother tongue—no matter that most of us were male. Perhaps the translation work would have been easier without us, since for the most part he really didn’t need us. But Rinpoche was training us, teaching us, and being so very kind to us. He was also building an institution.

As a translator, Rinpoche was both highly creative and meticulous. He gathered his students into a committee, usually at least a few of us at any given time, in order to develop a warm and collegial spirit of adventure and learning, always seeking to achieve just the right turn of phrase to ignite students’ understanding of the text. In this way, Rinpoche was harking back to a very traditional time—during the transmission of the dharma from India to Tibet—when translators worked with accomplished scholar-practitioners. . His resemblance to Marpa the Translator and to Padmasambhava is not lost on us. At first we were mostly his secretaries and editors, and were just beginning our journey into a different mind. A new mind was required, as Rinpoche explained, to learn a new language. It was the beginning of a long and rewarding collaboration.

Rinpoche composed much of his poetry in Tibetan, including tantric dohās and songs of realization, and frequently translated his verse into English himself. His private secretary, David I. Rome, and others would transcribe the spontaneous oral translation, editing somewhat on the fly, usually with Rinpoche’s active participation. Occasionally these would be reviewed later by our committee, especially if they were to be included in an important publication. Most of his more extensive Tibetan writings, whether they were tantric sādhanas, treatises, or termas, were translated by the committee from the start in our usual fashion.

Rinpoche searched carefully for certain words, exploring with us how the intended reader might respond to a phrase. When we met at his home, the Kalāpa Court, we always had the complete, thirteen-volume edition of *The Oxford English Dictionary* nearby, and had

great fun exploring the etymologies and nuances of a word. Clearly it was such a method that had resulted in Rinpoche's enormous vocabulary, and he often impressed us by knowing far more about certain words than we did. No doubt, Rinpoche would be so pleased and honored to know that the *OED* now cites his usage of the word egolessness as one of its historical references under the entry for ego.

Some words that might otherwise seem to be excellent choices were so heavily laden with problematic connotations that we found them unusable. Words such as *sin* and *prayer* came with too much of a theistic orientation and Judeo-Christian baggage; and so, after an initial trial of "neurotic crimes," we settled on "evil deeds" instead of "sin" for the Tibetan *sdig pa* and Sanskrit *pāpa*, and "supplication" and "aspiration" (instead of "prayer") for *gsol 'debs* and *smon lam*. Other words were not quite as problematic for a nontheistic connotation, such as "blessing" for *byin rlabs*. On his own, Rinpoche came up with some marvelous and inventive translations, though we did not always use these in our committee's work; to give just a few: "alpha pure" for *ka dag* (rather than "primordial purity"), the "eight logos" for *sgrub pa bka' brgyad* ("eight sādhana teachings"), and "the three lords of materialism" for *phyi nang gsang ba'i kla klo* ("outer, inner, and secret barbarians").

The group spirit was a very important component of our methodology as translators. Sometimes the work would go extremely slowly, when it seemed no one understood a passage, or when we each had to weigh in on our own way of reading or casting a line. At times there were effortless leaps or even flights of creative expression, and of course Rinpoche himself was often the instigator or articulator of these. The group process did seem to produce a much greater degree of care and consistency, even if it greatly increased the time involved. We were with our guru, a most precious opportunity, and time rarely seemed to matter, except when a deadline loomed. It was always a collaborative effort; discussions could become passionate, humorous, emotional, argumentative, but there was always a basic respect for each other and, of course, great reverence for our teacher. Looking back, I think we accomplished quite a lot during those formative years, especially given our lack of expertise. The committee approach may sometimes have squashed an inspired or lyrical turn of phrase one person offered, especially when it was far from the literal renderings we usually preferred. But the advantages usually outweighed the inevitable idiosyncrasies of the individual-translator method, and the group easily undermined individual ego trips. (There are, it is important to note, a number of exceptional dharma translators working individually as well.) If there is an example of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts, it is our Nālandā Translation Committee.

Our methodology also developed quite naturally, with everyone's participation. We strove to be as literal and accurate as possible, avoiding a more interpretive style of English composition. We viewed the Buddhist practitioner as our main audience, though we still made efforts to include some amount of scholarly reference and context for readers in the academic community. We crafted the language in a fairly simple idiom, avoiding overly complex or philosophically abstruse terminology. Rinpoche was concerned about the

natural theistic and dualistic tendencies in language, perhaps somewhat more prevalent in English than Tibetan, and so we looked for ways to minimize or undermine this. One such example was our style of capitalization, which was as minimal as possible without becoming idiosyncratic. Only the most strictly defined proper nouns were capitalized, such as the names of people and places. The names of various *yānas*, or vehicles, were treated as stages on the path rather than as fixed schools or institutions. Important teachings, too, such as *shūnyatā*, *mahāmudrā*, and the four noble truths, were also written lowercase so as to deemphasize any substantialistic or static connotation. Rinpoche also minimized our personal pronoun usage whenever possible, though English demands these much more than his native Tibetan.

Improvement and refinement were constant aspirations. And so, as our translations were used by more and more practitioners, inconsistencies and obscure phrases surfaced, and we responded with corrections. In Tibet, there was the Old Translation school (*snga 'gyur*) and the New Translation school (*gsar bsgyur*). It seemed at times that we were developing the “retranslation school,” but the Vidyādhara wanted it to be correct, and so improvements were made periodically. There was, however, very little time for such backtracking, as the work ahead loomed large indeed.

The design of our publications also was an area of exploration and experimentation, as this too was an important component of how the dharma was to be communicated. It had to be both dignified and functional. Long texts that served as liturgies to be chanted during one’s meditation practice needed to be able to open wide and lie flat on the practice table, especially when the practice involved much ritual such as mudras (hand gestures) and music offerings (of bell and drum). With the help of graphic designers, we came up with a nearly square paper size that, when opened up, approximated the size of an open Tibetan-style book; however, the pages were to be turned like a Western book. This allowed for one’s ritual implements to fit on a table nicely with the text, just as was done traditionally. The pages were left unbound, as they were in Tibet, which also allowed for easy rearrangement of liturgies at different times as required.

When playwright Jean-Claude van Itallie, a longtime student of Rinpoche’s, became a *sādhana* practitioner, he urged us to consider including much more annotation of ritual instructions and commentary within the *sādhana* text itself. The Vidyādhara agreed that some amount of direction would be very helpful, especially for the first such practice text encountered; and so we republished the *Vajrayogini Sādhana* with a significant amount of marginalia, noting when to offer music, perform a *mudrā*, or to use other ritual aids. The margins of such texts were purposely left very generous so that the students could include plenty of notes to facilitate their understanding. Rinpoche wanted us to do mostly our own annotation through personal study and practice of the material.

There was to be no hint of inferiority in our presentation of the dharma in English, a language that Rinpoche considered to be as suitable as any for transmitting the teachings. And so there was no interlinear Tibetan present, whether in the native Tibetan script or a pronounceable phonetic transcription (though such publications have proved extremely useful to students learning Tibetan). The practitioners were going to read and chant in

English, and most of the Vidyādhara's students would have been completely lost if they were left to chant in Tibetan. For those few Westerners who learned the Tibetan language, the original text might suffice, depending upon their fluency.

Rinpoche once commented that it was not such a good idea to learn the dharma by means of learning the Tibetan language, and he had noticed that some strange or mistaken ideas seemed to creep in when that became the primary process of learning. Of course, we learned an immense amount about the dharma through our study of the language and the task of translating the texts for others. But Rinpoche's point was that it was best to learn the basic dharma principles in one's native language, without any additional cultural filters or projections beyond the usual.

Rinpoche delighted in word play of all kinds, and he apparently grew up writing clever little poems amid his lessons. (The eighteenth-century master Jigme Lingpa was his favorite poet.) In America, he also dabbled with translating English into Tibetan, with such forays as the opening sections of the *Tao Te Ching* and the Lord's Prayer. The latter text served as a terribly funny prank he played on us, giving it to one of our members as a small project to translate (back) into English. The translator quickly got the joke and burst out of his room laughing. The next "victim," of Jewish descent, was not so lucky, having never encountered this prayer before; and thus an entire translation was prepared for us to consider. The meeting to review this with Rinpoche was excruciatingly funny.

### *Tibetan Writings and Terma*

Though the writings of Trungpa Rinpoche are not the main subject of this essay, I have alluded to various of them, some of which were composed in Tibetan, and some of which were also translated by him. As mentioned in his autobiography, *Born in Tibet*, Rinpoche wrote at least two sizable works while still in Tibet: a thousand-page treatise on mahāmudrā and meditation, "showing its gradual development up to the final fruition," and a two-volume "allegory about the kingdom of Shambhala and its ruler who will liberate mankind at the end of the Dark Age." Unfortunately, both of these works remain lost. However, we were excited to learn recently that a number of his other texts written in Tibet have survived.

Through discussions with Lama Yönten Gyamtso, an attendant of Trungpa Rinpoche from when he was still an infant in Tibet and a member of his escape party in 1959, we learned that Rinpoche began to discover termas at the age of six. Lama Yönten explained that often Trungpa Rinpoche would sit with his good friend Ugyen Tendzin (a tülku from Sip Dzokchen Monastery) and an older khenpo (senior philosophy teacher). The Vidyādhara would sometimes decode the terma finds orally, with Ugyen Tendzin often serving as scribe to record his pronouncements. Apparently, many of Rinpoche's termas in Tibet were what are called "earth treasures"—texts and ritual objects actually taken out of the earth or rock. Before his recent death, Ugyen Tendzin—in compiling a table of contents of Rinpoche's writings in Tibet—wrote a beautiful essay about Trungpa Rinpoche

as a tertön (terma discoverer). Trungpa Rinpoche's nephew, Karma Senge Rinpoche, who is from Kyere Monastery (a branch of Surmang), has spent many years traveling throughout Kham (Eastern Tibet) and beyond, in search of his uncle's writings. Thus far, he has collected over four hundred pages, and we were very fortunate to receive copies of these during his first visit to the West in the summer of 2003. We are now beginning to read and translate these texts, many of them termas, and so yet another chapter begins in our continuing work with the Vidyādhara.

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Parinirvāṇa Anniversary, 04/04/04

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## SADDHARMA PUNSTERS

In the primordial world there is no language;  
There is no need for translation.  
In the manifested world there is the language of onomatopoeia.  
In the fully evolved world we have languages of direct expression.  
So we stumble, in this way:  
The translator says, "What do you mean by ocean?"  
The interpreter says, "I mean ocean."  
The translator says, "What do you mean by ocean?"  
The interpreter says, "I mean ocean,  
Such as Mediterranean, Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Antarctic—  
On the whole I mean oceanic."  
Then the translator says, "What do you mean by oceanic?"  
The interpreter says, "I mean ocean-like."  
And the translator says, "What do you mean by ocean-like?"  
The interpreter says, "I mean salty, waves, divides continents, ships can sail through."  
Then Robin Kornman says, "What do you mean by: Ships can sail through?"  
The interpreter says, "Ships are miniature islands where people can stay, and they  
commute from one continent to another continent so that dry goods can be  
delivered."  
Then Larry Mermelstein says, "What do you mean by dry goods?"  
The interpreter says, "Dry goods means that they are dry because they are carried  
from mainland to mainland in ships without being spoiled by the water."  
Lodro Dorje says, "Ah, that makes sense!"  
David Rome says, "There is a grammatical error in this language. Why do we have  
to say: Mainland to mainland? Since they have to travel by water, they are  
bound to get wet somewhat. Therefore we might say: From off the mainland  
on to the mainland. On the whole, if the water is wet, why do we bother to  
say wet as opposed to water? But on the other hand if water means wet, why  
do we say water instead of saying wet? Why don't we use one language?  
Either we should decide to say wet or water."  
So the translators go on and the interpreters expound their thing  
And one of these days, who's kidding who?  
Whether skull means head or head means skull;  
And we have confusion about why jackal is coyote or coyote is jackal;  
And we have further problems: why worm is snake, and so forth.  
Until the philosophy is carried out between translators and interpreters,  
We will have to talk about why blue is not black,  
Why a round earth,  
Why the solar system.

So we end up agreeing with each other,  
And the final agreement and conclusion between translators and interpreters is that  
the truth of suffering and the truth of prajna have no synonyms.  
Let us be that way;  
Let us understand those two,  
So we can translate happily with the interpreter,  
So we can interpret happily with the translator.  
Iris is blue.  
Blood is red.  
Bone is white.  
Marrow is grey.  
When we look at the first sun we squint our eyes.  
When we touch our finger to fire we go Ouch.  
When we pee in the toilet, we assume a serious face.  
When we wipe our bottoms, we assume a pragmatic look.  
Let us translate that way;  
Let us continue that way,  
With or without Kornman Mermelstein Dorje Rome,  
Happily ever after or sadly.  
Let us translate fully.  
The truth is:  
When you say mind,  
The translation is mind,  
The interpretation is mind.  
Good luck!

*30 April 1978*

Excerpted from *First Thought, Best Thought: 108 Poems*, by Chögyam Trungpa (Boulder & London: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1983), pp. 144-146. Used by special permission of Shambhala Publications, © 1983 by Chögyam Trungpa.

## Texts Translated by Vidyādhara the Venerable Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche

“The Meditation of Guru Rinpoche” with John Blackwood (Oxford, 1965/66)

With Rigdzin Shikpo (Michael Hookham, mid-to-late 1960s):

Refuge Vow and Shilas \* Bodhisattva Vow and Shilas \* “The Three Terrible Incantations of the Lord of Dharma” (a Kadampa text) \* “Invocation to Mamo” \* *Tharpe Delam* (Könchok Chindu ngöndro) \* two texts on gCod/Kusulu mandala \* Samantabhadra meditation with the dharmata mantra \* Guru Sadhana (an Ati Guru Yoga of Guru Rinpoche)

“Supplication to the Gurus of the Kagyu Lineage” (ca. 1967)

With Richard Arthure: *Sādhana of Mahāmudrā* (1968) \* “Advice from Me to Myself” by Paltrül Rinpoche and “Nyingthik or The Innermost Essence” by Jigme Lingpa (translated in London, 1969; published in *Mudrā: Early Poems and Songs*, 1972)

*The Golden Dot* (partial translation) and “Political Treatise,” both by Chögyam Trungpa (1972)

With Francesca Fremantle: *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (Shambhala Publications, 1975)

Dozens of poems composed and translated by Trungpa Rinpoche with various secretaries

### With the Nālandā/Vajravairochana Translation Committee

**1975:** Kagyü Ngöndro: Vajrasattva and Maṇḍala liturgies from *The Chariot for Traveling the Noble Path* by Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje

**1976:** Kagyü Ngöndro: Guru Yoga \* several songs by the Karmapas \* *The Sun of Wisdom: The Guru Sādhana and Feast Offering to Jamgön Guru Padma Trime* by Chögyam Trungpa \* Vajrayoginī Sādhana: *The Sādhana of the Glorious Coemergent Mother Vajrayoginī* by Karmapa Thongwa Tönden & “Abbreviated Daily Practice” by Shamar Chökyi Wangchuk

**1977:** several songs by Dilgo Khyentse [VCTR on retreat most of this year]

**1978:** Daily Chant Book \* Kagyü Ngöndro (completed) \* Shambhala Terma by Dorje Dradül of Mukpo: *The Golden Sun of the Great East, The Letter of the Black Ashe, & The Letter of the Golden Key Which Fulfills Desire*

**1979:** Milarepa Sādhana: *Glorious Flame of Wisdom: The Guru Yoga and Feast Offering to Great Jetsün Repa* by Jamgön Kongtrül \* Trungpa lineage supplication: “Ocean Waves of Devotion: A Supplication to the Garland of Births of the Surmang Trungpa Rinpoches” by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö \* *Proportions of the Maṇḍala of the Five Devas of Chakrasaṃvara* \* Oryoki Liturgy: *The Sūtra of the Recollection of the Noble Three Jewels* \* Fire Offering Liturgy: *The Source of the Precious Karmas* by Loter Wangpo \* Shambhala Terma and Texts by Dorje Dradül: *The Scorpion Seal of the Golden Sun: The Shorter Text & The Golden Dot: The Epic of the Lha*; Shambhala aphorisms \* “The Warrior Song of Drala: The Long Werma Lhasang” by Jamgön Mipham

**1980:** Daily Chant Book (more selections) \* Mañjuśrī Sādhana: *The Sun of Prajñā* by Chögyam Trungpa \* *The Rain of Wisdom* \* Shambhala Terma and Texts by Dorje Dradül: *The Scorpion Seal of the Golden Sun: The Full Text & The Roar of the Werma: The Sādhana of the Warrior*

**1981:** *The Guru Yoga for the Four Sessions* by Karmapa Mikyö Dorje \* “Crying to the Gurus from Afar” by Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye \* Lojong Text: *The Root Text of the Seven Points of Mind Training* by Chekawa Yeshe Dorje \* Shambhala Texts: “Shambhala Edict on Wholesome Human Conduct” by King Songtsen Gampo; “Lightning of Blessings: Supplication to the Imperial Warriors” & *Shambhala Chant Book* by Dorje Dradül

**1982:** “Confession Liturgy” \* Daily practice texts: Medicine Guru by Dilgo Khyentse, Vajrakīlaya by Jamgön Mipham \* “Fulfilling the Aspirations of Gyalwang Karmapa” \* Kālachakra Texts: Daily Sādhana by Jamgön Kongtrül, Abhiṣheka Text, and History by Kalu Rinpoche \* “Mahāyāna Morning Liturgy” \* *The Sādhana and Feast Offering of Lord Karma Pakshi* \* *The Life of Tilopa* by Pema Karpo \* *Seeing Accomplishes All: The Life of Marpa the Translator* by Tsangnyön Heruka \* Sakyong abhiṣheka from “Blazing Jewel of Sovereignty” terma \* “Shambhala Slogans” by Dorje Dradül

**1983:** *Guru Yoga: The Life-Drop of Blessings* by Dilgo Khyentse \* *Lives of the Mahāsiddhas: The Wondrous and Marvelous Biographies of the Lineages of the Seven Special Transmissions* by Tāranātha \* *Torch of True Meaning* by Jamgön Kongtrül (chapter on mahāmudrā) \* Vaishākha Day Liturgies: *The Prostration Offering to the Sthaviras* by Khyentse Wangpo; “Praise to the Buddha” by Drigung Kyoppa; “Shorter Praise to the Buddha” by Āchārya Āryasūra

**1984:** *The Lion’s Roar That Proclaims Shentong* by Jamgön Mipham \* “King Gesar of Ling Windhorse Banner” by Jamgön Mipham \* *The Heart of Siddhi: The Sādhana of Black Jambhala* by Chökyi Wangchuk & Khyentse Wangpo

**1985:** “Aspiration” by Chogyur Lingpa \* Buddhist Monastic Text: *The Rites of Poṣhadha* by Karmapa Thekchok Dorje \* “A Very Condensed Daily Practice of White Tārā” by Khyentse Wangpo \* “Offering Chant for Presenting Representations of Body, Speech, Mind, Quality, and Action” from terma of Surmang Tertön Silnön Namkhe Dorje \* “Political Treatise” by Chögyam Trungpa

**1986:** *The Sādhana of the Five Devas of Chakrasaṃvara* by Karmapa Mikyö Dorje \* *The Life of Jetsün Tilopa* by Wangchuk Gyaltzen & “The Songs of Tilopa”

**1975-1986:** dozens of poems; hundreds of calligraphies; and thousands of refuge, bodhisattva, and secret names by the Vidyādhara

## Tibetan Texts Written or Discovered by Vidyādhara the Venerable Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche

The following list of texts was compiled through the efforts of Karma Senge Rinpoche, the nephew of Trungpa Rinpoche. This is extracted from *The Precious Garland: The Table of Contents for the Collected Works of Chökyi Gyatso*, translated by the Nālandā Translation Committee, which includes a poetic essay by Ugyen Tendzin Rinpoche. We have reprinted here our translation of the actual list of texts only. Since this was first compiled, Karma Senge Rinpoche has collected another hundred pages or more of Trungpa Rinpoche's writings, and so this remains a preliminary list of works composed or discovered before 1960.

KA: *Light Rays of the Sun and Moon: A Biography of the Gem and the Stone*, 14 pages.

KHA: A compilation of pith texts: *A Piece of the Rainbow: A Supplication and Explanation of Practice* and so forth, 26 pages.

GA: A collection of supplications: a refuge ("ĀḤ The threefold display of my awareness . . ."), [a text] for the beginning of a session when there is a bell and ḍamaru ("E MA HO Beyond causes and conditions") and so forth, 35 pages.

NGA: *Self-Liberated Confusion: A Primordial Vision of the Guru Sādhana of Samantabhadra Gangshar Wangpo: Father, Mother, and Children*, 13 pages.

CA: A guru sādhana ("Homage to the primordial deity of luminosity..."). 4 pages.

CHA: *The Profound Heart-Essence Guru Sādhana*, 7 pages.

JA: *The Lotus Stem Sādhana*, from *The Profound Heart-Essence Guru Sādhana*, 7 pages.

NYA: *The Lotus Branch Supplication*, from *The Profound Heart Essence Guru Sādhana*, 4 pages.

TA: *The Lotus Net: Feast Offering of the Lotus Stem Sādhana*, from *The Profound Heart-Essence Guru Sādhana*, 3 pages.

THA: *The Lotus Essence: A Feast Song of the Great Guru Sādhana*, 2 pages.

DA: *A Condensed Feast* (HÜḤ rang bab chos sku'i . . .), 1 page.

NA: *A Condensed Feast for the Sādhana of the Embodiment of the Three Jewels*, 1 page.

PA: *Clouds of Wisdom and Space that Liberate upon Hearing: An Arrangement of the Ultimate Buddha Activity of Samantabhadra*, from *The Heart Essence of Profound Dzokchen*, 12 pages.

PHA: *The Sādhana of Nonmeditation: A Practice of No Activity*, from “*The Heart Treasure of Samantabhadra*,” 18 pages.

BA: *The Sādhana of Dechen Öbar: . . . Three Condensed Sādhanas of Peaceful, Fierce, and Wrathful Deities*, 5 pages.

MA: *The Essential Daily Practice of the Sādhana of the Supreme Yidam*, from *The Collected Wisdom of the Three Roots*, 3 pages.

TSA: *A Condensed Feast* (RAM YAM KHAM . . .), 1 page.

TSHA: *Iron Hook of the Sun: A Sādhana of Red Chakrasaṃvara*, 4 pages.

DZA: *Transparent Recollection*, from *The Great Secret Wisdom*, 9 pages.

WA: *A Liturgy of Supplication and Offering to Mamo, the Queen of Space*, 3 pages.

ZHA: *A Condensed Torma Offering for Daily Practice*, 17 pages.

ZA: *The Blazing Fire of Prajñā: A Sādhana of Mañjushrī*, 7 pages.

‘A: *A Condensed Sur Offering for Snow, Aspiration for the Glorious Mountain, and Extensive Aspiration of the Supreme Teachings of Ati Simplicity*, altogether 10 pages.

YA: *A Collection of Advice: The Advice of a Corpse: A Collection of Pretentious Words from Someone Unqualified*, and so forth, 29 pages.

RA: *The Sun of Wisdom Dispelling the Darkness of the Barbarians: The Condensed Meaning of the Effortless Yāna, the King of All Oral Instructions*, 16 pages.

LA: *Song of the View* (SO YA SO . . .), 3 pages.

SHA: *Yearning for the Guru: A Cycle of Songs of Experience, (A Cycle of Realization Songs: Crying to the Guru and so on; Words of Rebuke: An Invocation of the Truth for the Samaya-Bound on the Side of the Good; Feast Songs; Oral Instructions; A Collection: The Letter “Meteoric Iron Lightning” and so on)*, 75 pages.

SA: *Upper Yu, Kyere Shelkar: History of the Sacred Place “Luminosity Sky Palace”; The Blessings of Dharmakāya; Extensive and Condensed Guide to Sacred Places of Buddha Activity; and How the Termas Abide*, 27 pages; 356 pages in total.

## Tibetan Writings Post-1960

Over 50 poems and a large collection of correspondence and lecture notes.

### Liturgies:

[\* indicates terma]

Ekajaṭī

Feast Offering

Four-Armed Mahākāla

Magyal Pomra

Mudra Theater Group

The Sādhana of Mahāmudrā, Which Quells the Mighty Warring of the Three Lords of Materialism  
and Brings Realization of the Ocean of Siddhas of the Practice Lineage\*

Sādhana of Mahāmudrā Fire Offering for Funeral

Shambhala Meal Chants

The Sun of Prajñā: The Sādhana of Mañjushrī Vajratīkṣhṇa

The Sun of Wisdom: The Guru Sādhana and Feast Offering to Jamgön Guru Padma Tri-me

Supplication for the Favorable Rebirth of Khamtrül Rinpoche

Supplication to Guru Rinpoche

Vajrakīlaya Sādhana [unfinished]

Vajrasādhu

### Shambhala Texts:

College of the Ashe Prince\*

The Golden Dot: The Epic of the Lha

Homage for *The Tiger Lion Garuda Dragon Glory*

Investiture Ceremony

The Letter of the Black Ashe\*

The Letter of the Golden Key Which Fulfills Desire\*

Lightning of Blessings

The Roar of the Werma: The Sādhana of the Warrior

The Scorpion Seal of the Golden Sun: The Full Text\*

The Scorpion Seal of the Golden Sun: The Shorter Text\*

Shambhala Aphorisms

Shambhala Meal Chants

Shambhala Oath

Shambhala Request for Teachings

Shambhala Slogans

## Other Writings:

Blessing for Longchen Foundation

Blessing for Vajradhara Thangka

Colophon to the *Chakrasaṃvara Sādhana*

Colophon to *The Life of Marpa the Translator*

Colophon to *The Rain of Wisdom*

Colophon to the *Vajrayoginī Sādhana*

Diary from his years at Oxford

Political Treatise [unfinished]

The Seal of Pure Intention: A Spontaneous Song Sent from England in the West  
(for Neten Choling Rinpoche)