

CHAPTER NARRATING THE PURE VISION OF GESAR

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Chapter Narrating the Pure Vision of Gesar
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NARRATING THE PURE VISION OF GESAR

A CHAPTER

I pay homage, with a mind of sincere respect, to the Great Noble One, Lord of the Three Worlds,¹ and his entourages.

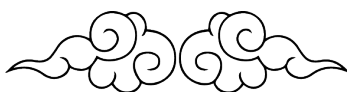
The many tales of the Great Noble One, Gesar Dorje Tsegel,² known throughout the Three Worlds,³ are deep and hard to fathom, passing beyond our ability to comprehend.

There are many different ways in which the story has come down according to a disciple's individual karmic lot. Even today, such tales continue to be told in all directions without distinction in Dokham, Utsang, and so on.

And although all these various life stories differ in style and content, they need not be considered contradictory since they are the life stories of a thus-gone one.⁴ It is for this reason that there is variance.

Here, not long after the [annual] grand festival to celebrate the joining of the Great Queen of Medicine, Dorje Yudronma,⁵ and the Great Noble One of Ling (Gesar), at the Zangdokpelri [hermitage] in the Lelung region of the eastern land of Olga⁶ [in Lhodrak, southern Tibet] in the year of the Earth Female Bird [1729 CE], an emanation of the Great Noble One (Gesar) was encountered in the form of an iron man wearing iron armour, brandishing a silk-pennanted spear. And the following life story was heard:

Now in the realm of the gods above, from a primordial state of complete nothingness, a White Light, like the Victory Star,⁷ arose. Being born from the Divine Wish-Fulfilling Jewel,⁸ it resided in an egg-like womb of light, a light born out of its own radiance.



And soon afterwards, desire arose in the breast of one daughter of the gods called Bum Okimetse,⁹ and she replicated that luminous sphere. For this she was ridiculed and cursed by the gods and grew ashamed. So she went to a victorious sage of the gods and humbly beseeched him thus:

“They accuse me of having done that which I have not done!
They blame me for having attachments that I do not have!
I just can’t take their chastisements anymore!
I can dwell no longer in the realm of gods above,
And nor can I go to the land of the *lu* water-spirits¹⁰ below.”

“So I should take a quick look at the middle world of humans.
I shall take that young godling along with me [as a companion].
Is there any fault created by my going there?
Great sage, please tell me; I implore you!”

Thus she spoke, and the old sage of creation, born into the caste of Yungdrung Bon,¹¹ replied thus:

“*A-ya-ya*, you crowned girl,
Light Garland Goddess!
It is very good that you have come here, as I have been wanting to see you.
Last night, beings in the land of men
Had hurried dreams of various kinds.
So many good signs! Such as cannot be spoken.”

“*A-ya-ya*! These were signs; these were premonitions,
That you, my girl, would come at this time.

For now you should stay awhile longer in the land of gods,
For from [your nurturing] mother’s lap, a son will be born.
Call upon the god Gertso Nyenpo¹² for help
But don’t dismiss your young godling,
For he will be of benefit to all beings of all countries and regions.”¹³

“*A-ya-ya*! A godling is better than a man,
Unlike other little men born of gods!
Three fives make fifteen! Possible danger can come of this!
Three sixes make eighteen—certainly a chance of such!
O beautiful maiden, may your innermost mind be at peace.”

Then the goddess Bum Okimetse went back to her own dwelling place and, [in accordance with his instructions], made offerings of female yak milk to the worldly god Nyenchen Gertso.¹⁴ As she prayed, Gertso actually came before her and, taking her tightly on his lap, he made love to her fifteen times, inducing in her a state of great pleasure. And after a while, just as the sage had prophesied, the goddess became pregnant.

Initially, a venomous black snake was born, and the gods gave it the name White-Turbaned Nele (Nele Tokar),¹⁵ king of *lu*, and it went into the great ocean.

Next, a red man and a red horse were born. He was named Tsen Yawa Kyachik.¹⁶ He went to Zangthang Jangmar in the western direction, one of the five regions of the Gawa Valley in the northern part of Pemako.¹⁷ It was a hub of pernicious harmful spirits near a town of the



Chim [clan]¹⁸ and barbarians. He stayed there as lord of gods and spirits.¹⁹

Then a blue man wearing fine blue clothes and a blue horse were born. He was given the name Lord of Waters, Lap-born Masang (Chudak Pangkye Masang).²⁰ He went to the land of Lato.²¹

After that, a malicious harmful spirit was born with a chin of iron and a yellow beard spiked like tongues of fire. He was respectfully given the name King of Demons (Dudje Gyelpo)²² and, in fact, was none other than the mind-lord Indra.²³ He went to the land of Gyatri Gotri Shing²⁴ and was also known as Gyaje Tsenpo,²⁵ or the One-eyed Demon King of the Eastern Direction.

Following that, a black man and a black horse were born. He was given the name Moon-faced Demon (Dudawai Gonchen).²⁶ He had unimaginable power and magical abilities, difficult for others to defeat. Going to the northern land of Mizhung,²⁷ he became a hunter. Having killed many beings by gathering their life-breath, he accumulated about a hundred thousand human and horse corpses and stayed there enjoying their flesh and blood.

Subsequently, a daughter of the gods—so beautiful that a single glance nulls contentment—was born. She was given the name Charming Goddess (Lhamo Yitrok).²⁸ By and by, she went to the red copper plain of the *tsen*²⁹ and lived there as the wife of the noble *tsen*, Lutsen.³⁰

Then the harmful spirit Genuine Knowledge (Yangdak Shay)³¹ was born, beautiful and

heroic. In the Palace of Braids,³² he joined the entourage of Vaishnavana,³³ and together with the servants of this great wealth-god and lord of treasures, he stayed as the Great Protecting King of the Northern Direction.³⁴

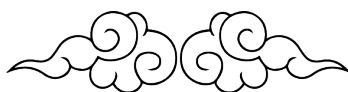
Next, a being with the appearance of a *sinpo* demon,³⁵ skilled in martial arts, was born, known as Raksha Lightening-Garland (Yaksha Loktremg),³⁶ who in the depths of the ocean, by the power of karma, joined with the female *lu* Toad-headed Bloodshot-eyed (Belgo Trakmikma),³⁷ whose desire boiled like water. By entering into sexual union, they became husband and wife. It is said that she gave birth to the four-faced Vishnu King of Rahu.³⁸

Then Black Shiva (Wangchuk Nakpo)³⁹ was born, and staying in the land of turban-wearers, he became the protector of the Muslim regions.

After that, the Red Lord of Death (Shinje Marpo Chidak),⁴⁰ the colour of blood, was born. He was also known as Bandit Bringer of Fire, the Red Lord of Life (Sokdak Marpo), or Great Abse, among other names.⁴¹ He was the master of swift and sharp martial skills and possessed magical abilities. It is said because he had sex with his own sibling, the Charming Goddess, kith and kin were ashamed. The gods insulted them, and they were belittled by shame.

Following that, the protector of China, the land of the Eastern Direction, called Lhanyen Lhaje,⁴² was born. He became the protector of White Confucius. And until now, he stays in those bad regions.

Then a demoness the colour of blood, with the body of a *sinmo* demoness and the head of a



lion, was born. She was known as Red Lion-faced (Sengdong Marmo)⁴³ and became the wife of the demon Black Yabshar,⁴⁴ otherwise known as the Lion-faced Kunga Zhonu, the protector of the realm.⁴⁵

Next, Simultaneously Red (Chikchar Marpo)⁴⁶ was born and went to Tsaritra,⁴⁷ enjoying flesh and blood. Since he had little compassion for those mired in the passion of life, he became lord of the haughty spirits, and there he remained.

After that, the one called Great Apo,⁴⁸ who resides now as a protecting god of Pemako, was born. Going to the lands of Lo Dra and Hor Ga,⁴⁹ he protects the outer, inner, and secret regions of Pemako and subregions.

Then when all these fourteen elder siblings were born, the fifteenth, the Great Noble One, Gesar, King of Dralha,⁵⁰ was born. He was youthful in stature and beautiful with all the signs and characteristics [of a special being] complete, transfixing to look upon, and capable of bringing all the Three Realms⁵¹ under his dominion.

Initially, he thrice played dice⁵² in the realm of gods and gained respect from all of them. Then, going to the land of humans, he again thrice played dice games, casting gambling dice,⁵³ and playing pebbles,⁵⁴ thereby bringing all the beings of the human realm into complete submission; he was left unrivalled. Then, having crossed to the water realm, he trice did swimming, jumping and other such games, and all the female *lu* lusted after him. Hence, he gained mastery over them, neutralized their viciousness, and calmed their fury.

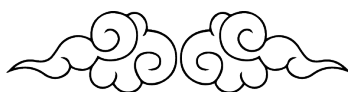
And in that way, being without rival in the Three Worlds, the Great Noble One traversed instantly through the central region⁵⁵ [of Tibet] to Serzhong Zangri.⁵⁶ In the female Earth Bird Year, the Great Noble One took care of the reincarnation of the son Gadol Gali.⁵⁷ For our benefit, he turned his horse towards the hermitage of the supreme sacred site of Zangdok Pelri [in Lelung Valley] and took the Great Queen of Medicine, Lachik Yudronma, as his consort. All lords and ministers, from the treasurer and attendant to the hen keeper and swineherd [who witnessed this], are still alive to this day.

In the past, when Great Noble One came to Tibet, he visited all these places and blessed all the hermitages, mountains, and cliffs. And previously, his flying-mount-tree,⁵⁸ [the tree from which he gets his flying stick], was [considered to be] at the upper slopes of Lhunpo Dza.⁵⁹ But today it is not there, as it has been felled.

And from the upper slopes of Lhunpo Dza to the area of Chabumpa,⁶⁰ the stones Gesar placed there can be seen even now. Later, the secret caves, sacred sites, and holy lakes were discovered eventually, as they were pointed out and taught in the secret transmission.

COLOPHON:

This is the first chapter of the three-part oral instruction of the Pure Vision of Gesar.



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¹ 'jig rten gsum. Referring to the worlds of lha 'gods' above, klu 'water spirits' below, and gnyan 'worldly deities' in the middle. This tripartite scheme of a vertically-ordered world is a central theme in most tellings of the Gesar epic. In this text, two or three terms are used to refer to the scheme: 'jig rten gsum, sa gsum, and srid gsum. The first two we have translated as "Three Worlds" and the last as "Three Realms", since it could also be interpreted as referring to the Buddhist scheme of Form, Formless, and Formless Realms (more commonly known as as khamsum).

² skyes bu chen po ge sar rdo rje tshe rgyal

³ sa gsum

⁴ de bzhin gshegs pa, tathāgata

⁵ Sman btsun chen mo rdo rje g.yu sgron ma is one of the bstan ma bcu gnyis, the 12 native goddesses who according to Nyingma lore were converted in the 8th century by Padmasambhava and Pelgyi Senge (dpal gyi seng ge; BDRC P4236) to become protectors of the tantric teachings of the Old School.

⁶ 'ol ga

⁷ The Victory Star (rgyal skar, puṣya/pauṣa) is one of the twenty-eight stars/constellations (rgyu skar nyi shu rtsa brgyad, aṣṭāviṃśati nakṣatrāṇi) in the Indo-Tibetan system of lunar mansions, an ancient Indian division of the ecliptic. In the Tibetan tradition, a period associated with one of these constellations is determined by the moon's position. If the moon was in the Victory Star at sunrise on a lunar day, that day would be considered to be ruled by that constellation.

⁸ lha'i yid bzhin nor bu rin po che

⁹ 'bum 'od kyī me tshe

¹⁰ klu (Skt: *nāga*) are beings of the world below, associated with water, health, and wealth.

¹¹ g.yung drung bon

¹² lha ger mtsho gnyan po. The deity ger mtsho, in various spellings, is frequently encountered in tellings of the Gesar epic as the *gnyan* father of Gesar. Gnyan are a class of powerful worldly deities in Tibetan culture who inhabit the middle world, in which humans also dwell. They are often associated with mountain deities.

¹³ yul gling dgu'i skyes 'gro yongs

¹⁴ srid pa'i lha gnyan chen po ger mtsho. See note above.

¹⁵ ne le thod dkar

¹⁶ btsan ya ba skya gcig

¹⁷ zangs thang byang dmar gyi gling and dga' ba lung

¹⁸ 'chims

¹⁹ lha srin

²⁰ chu bdag pang skyes ma sang

²¹ la stod

²² bdud rje rgyal po

²³ brgya byin ("hundred sacrifices") is the usual Tibetan name for Indra (also known as Kauśika or Śakra), king of the heaven of the Thirty-Three gods (of the desire realm).

²⁴ rgya khri sgo khri shing

²⁵ rgya rje btsan po

²⁶ bdud zla ba'i gdong can

²⁷ mi gzhung

²⁸ lha mo yid 'phrog

²⁹ btsan. These are non-human entities of the world characterized in Tibetan culture. They are included in the eight classes (sde brgyad) and are primarily seen as greatly powerful and nefarious beings who inhabit a specified locale.

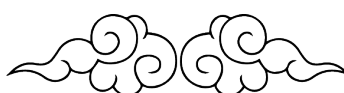
³⁰ klu btsan. This name is familiar from many tellings of the Gesar epic in which Lutsen is one of the hero's main adversaries. In many tellings, he is the Demon of the North, whose beautiful wife waylays Gesar for many years.

³¹ yang dag shes

³² lcang lo can gyi pho brang

³³ rnam thos sras, Vaiśravaṇa

³⁴ byang phyogs skong ba'i rgyal po chen po



³⁵ Srin po (or feminine srin mo) are a prominent class of harmful being or demon in Tibetan culture. This is the term used in Tibetan to translate the Sanskrit *rākṣasa*. They are human-eating and bloodthirsty.

³⁶ rak+sha glog phreng

³⁷ klu mo sbal mgo mig khrag ma

³⁸ khyab 'jug gza'i rgyal po

³⁹ dbang phyug nag po

⁴⁰ gshin rje dmar po 'chi bdag

⁴¹ jag pa me len; srog bdag dmar po; ab se chen po. Among the “other names” alluded to would be beg tse and lcam sring.

⁴² lha gnyan lha rje

⁴³ seng gdong dmar mo

⁴⁴ yab shar nag po

⁴⁵ zhing skyong seng ge'i gdong chen kun dga' gzhon nu

⁴⁶ cig car dmar po

⁴⁷ tsa ri tra

⁴⁸ a pho chen po

⁴⁹ klo gra; hor ga

⁵⁰ dgra lha

⁵¹ srid gsum. This could refer to the “three worlds” (worlds above below and in the middle) or to the classical Buddhist scheme of Three Realms (usually known as kham gsum) of the Form, Formless, and Desire Realms.

⁵² sho

⁵³ cho lo

⁵⁴ rdo

⁵⁵ dbu ru

⁵⁶ gser gzhong zings ri

⁵⁷ bu ga 'dol ga li'i skye ba

⁵⁸ chibs phur gyi ljong shing

⁵⁹ lhun po rdza'i mgul

⁶⁰ bca' 'bum pa. These areas, Lhunpo Dza and Chabumpa, might be in the area of Lelung, but their exact locations are unknown to the translator and the organisation. Please contact Tib Shelf if you are aware of their whereabouts.





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