

THE BIOGRAPHY OF GYELSE  
RIGPAI RELTRI

BY TUBTEN CHODAR



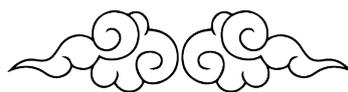
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The Biography of Gyalse Rigpe Raltri  
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## THE BIOGRAPHY OF GYALSE RIGPE RALTRI

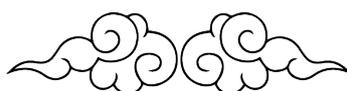
*The playful display of the great being Jigme Nyinche  
Once again genuinely manifested in the human realm.  
Leading all the helpless students to the city of liberation  
The erudite lord, Rigpe Raltri.*

### CONCERNING THE NAMES OF HIS SUCCESSIVE LIFETIMES

As mentioned in *Drigung Monastery's Golden  
Garland of Monastic Seat Holders*<sup>1</sup>

- (1) The Great Brahmin of India, Saraha
- (2) The Dhama King, Dharmasoka
- (3) The Vidyadhara Humkara<sup>2</sup>
- (4) The King of Tibet's divine son, Mutik  
Tsenpo<sup>3</sup>
- (5) Kutön Tsöndru Yangdrung (1011–1075)<sup>4</sup>
- (6) The Third Monastic Seat Holder, Chen  
Ngawa Chökyi Drakpa (1175–1255)<sup>5</sup>

- (7) Gompa Rinchen Namgyal, elder  
brother of The Fifteenth Monastic Seat  
Holder, Kunga Rinchen (1475–1527)<sup>6</sup>
- (8) The Sixteenth Monastic Seat Holder,  
Rinchen Puntsok (1509–1557)<sup>7</sup>
- (9) The Twenty-Third Monastic Seat  
Holder, Urnyön Chökyi Drakpa, aka  
Rigzin Chödrak the son of Drigung  
Chögyal Puntsok (1595–1659)<sup>8</sup>
- (10) The Twenty-Fifth Monastic  
Seat Holder, Dondrub Chogyel, aka  
Konchok Trinle Dondrub (1704–1754)<sup>9</sup>
- (11) The Twenty-Seventh Monastic Seat  
Holder, Könchok Chökyi Nyima, aka  
Könchok Tenzin Chökyi Nyima (1755–  
1792)<sup>10</sup>
- (12) Drigung Gyalse, aka Jigme Tenpe  
Nyima (1793–1826), the son of the  
Omniscient Jigme Lingpa (1730–1798)<sup>11</sup>



(13) Dechen Rigpe Raltri, the son of the  
Refuge Lord, [Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje]  
(1800–1866)<sup>12</sup>

Rigpe Raltri's previous birth, Drigung Rinchen Puntsok, was the father of the Refuge Protector [Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje's] previous birth, Drigung Chögyal Puntsok. Based on this, one time, Rigpe Raltri was the father of the Refuge Protector. Rigpe Raltri as well as his previous births [the First Drigung Chungtsang], Urnyön Chökyi Drakpa, and [the Forth Drigung Chungtsang], Jigme Tenpe Nyima, were the sons of the Refuge Lord. Thus, Refuge Protector's connection with Drigung and with Gyalse Rigpe Raltri is endowed with many essential auspicious connections.

Later, it seems Raltri's reincarnation was not recognized in Do Gar.<sup>13</sup> However, the third incarnation of Dzong-ngön Rinpoche, Jigme Chökyi Gocha (1912–1953) recognized the reincarnation of Rigpe Raltri.<sup>14</sup> The reincarnation's name was Tubten Jigme Gawa also known as Könchok Dargye.<sup>15</sup> In the Iron Dragon Year of 1940, the sixteenth sexagenary cycle, he was born in the Beza [family] in Amdo's Bayul district,<sup>16</sup> [which is located in the Chabcha prefecture in the south of the Tso Ngönpo province].<sup>17</sup> His father was Tutob and his mother was Bochok.<sup>18</sup>

At twelve years of age, he received the novice vows from Mewa Khenchen Tsewang Rigzin (1883–1958) and was given the name Tubten Jigme Gawa.<sup>19</sup> He then received many empowerments and instructions from Khenchen Tsewang Rigzin and others. He received generalized and specific explanations of the sūtras and tantras along with the pith instructions of the Great Perfection

(Dzogchen), especially from the supreme Khenchen Tsewang Rigdzin's heart son, Könchok Rinchen (b. 1922).<sup>20</sup> He studied and trained in these teachings to their completion. He then restored Dzong-ngön Jigme Chökyi Gocha's monastic seat of Orgyen Sangchen Chökhör Ling [in 1984].<sup>21</sup> He died in the Fire Dog year of the seventeenth sexagenary cycle, 2006.

#### CONCERNING HIS BIRTH

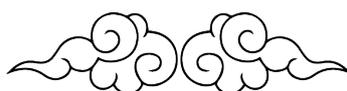
Dechen Rigpe Raltri was born in the place called Pema Rito located in Golok in the Iron Tiger year, 1830, of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle.<sup>22</sup> He was the younger son of the precious Refuge Protector [Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje] and Akyong Bumo Dzompa Kyi.<sup>23</sup> His birth was accompanied by a multitude of wonderful signs.

As soon as he was born, a sword made of a red gold, the size of a cubit (18 inches), fell from the sky and landed in the Refuge Protector's hand. Due to this suitable and auspicious interconnection, he was named Dechen Rigpe Raltri ("Sword of Blissful Awareness"). The top portion of the sword handle contains wondrous signs including the hand imprint of the Refuge Protector. This sword still exists in these present times.

The 126<sup>th</sup> folio of the Refuge Protector's *Autobiography: The Speech of the Dākinī*.<sup>24</sup>

"According to the lord lama's prophecy, a tulku (Sherab Mebar) was born as a new family heir in the Ox year. Another tulku (Rigpe Raltri) was born into our family in the Tiger year."<sup>25</sup>

Do Dasal Wangmo's work, *The Abridged Biographies: The Lineage of the Do Family*.<sup>26</sup>



“The son, Dechen Rigpe Raltri, was born in the Iron Tiger year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle. At that time, a red-gold sword the size of a cubit fell into the hand of the Refuge Lord, and he was named after it. He was the reincarnation of Rigzin Jigme Lingpa’s son, Jigme Nyinche.”

When the Refuge Protector was staying at Drigung, Drigung Gyalse [Tenzin Chökyi Gyaltzen] (1793–1826) said: “In my next life, I will definitely come close to you.”<sup>27</sup> In accordance with what was said, Refuge Protector recognized Raltri as the reincarnation of Drigung Gyalse.

The 111<sup>th</sup> folio of the Refuge Protector’s *Autobiography: The Speech of the Ḍākinī*:

“Gyalse Rinpoche said, ‘At this time I thought there would be little to no need that we would be separated, but it wasn’t that way. The Lord Father, the Victor of the Doctrine, ended up giving me to Drigungpa, but that didn’t go very well.’

“ ‘In some past life as well as this one, concerning our lineage—a lineage of mantra-holders and knowledge-holders, if we were to maintain our Lord Father’s personal lineage and pay service to him, then it would become supreme. However, now that it is under the influence of others, there’s nothing we can do. Consequently, if we don’t pay service to the teachings and worldly actions in the precious Refuge Protector’s life then it will become the cause for our root guru’s intentions to be discredited. Otherwise, I don’t have the intention to stay in this place; but there is nothing I can do. Therefore, in the next life, I will certainly come to your side.’ ”

Thus he made a completely pure prayer to never be separated in any lives, which created their connection.

#### CONCERNING THE ACTIVITIES DURING HIS LIFE

Since there is no written biography specifically for him, I do not have the good fortune to write about all the facets of his activities here. His life story is briefly accounted in the Refuge Protector’s *Autobiography: The Speech of the Ḍākinī*, Do Dasal Wangmo’s *The Abridged Biographies: The Lineage of the Do Family*, Dharmavajra’s biography *The Excellent Wish-fulfilling Tree: The Biography of Dharmavarja, the Sovereign Dzogchen Yogin Who Appeared in the Eastern Land*,<sup>28</sup> and others. If I would give a brief account based on these sources, it would be the following:

From his first year to his second year, the Iron Tiger year until the Iron Rabbit year, [1830–1831], it is clear that he stayed in Pema Rito in Golok because the Refuge Protector’s camp and Ḍākkima [Losal Drölma] (1802–1861) were there.<sup>29</sup>

From his third to fifth year, the Water Dragon year until the Wood Horse year, [1832–1834], he stayed at the Refuge Protector’s main seat of Mahā Kyilung Monastery because the Refuge Protector and especially Ḍākkima were staying at that monastery.<sup>30</sup>

From his fifth year to his seventh year, the Wood Horse year until the Fire Monkey year, [1834–1836], it appears that he stayed primarily at Yikhok and the mountain hermitage of Chak Kyang Decha Gyalse because the Refuge Protector’s and Ḍākkima’s camp stayed in those places.<sup>31</sup>



From his seventh to his eighth year, the Fire Monkey year until the Fire Bird year, [1836–1837], he definitely stayed at Minyak Zhagtra Mountain and La'utang Monastery because the Refuge Protector's and Ḍākkima's camp was at those monasteries.<sup>32</sup>

From his ninth year to his thirteenth year, the Earth Dog year until the Water Dragon year, it is clear that he stayed in the Mahā Kyilung monastery because the Refuge Protector's camp and Ḍākkima, in particular, were staying at that monastery.

At the end of Raltri's thirteenth year, his older brother and [Do Khyentse's] son, Sherab Mebar, died [in 1842]. Consequently, having seen that Raltri had a significant demonic obstacle, that year the Refuge Protector exiled him from the camp. Thus, he resembled a beggar with a walking stick, and it is uncertain where he wandered.

He eventually arrived at Dzogchen Monastery where he stayed and received empowerments, oral transmissions, and instructions for many teachings of the sūtras and tantras from Dzogchen Rinpoche Mingyur Namke Dorje (1793–1870),<sup>33</sup> Dza Patrul Orgyen Jigme Chökyi Wangpo (1808–1887),<sup>34</sup> Gyalse Zhenpen Taye (1800–1855/1869),<sup>35</sup> Khenchen Pema Vajra (1807–1884),<sup>36</sup> and so forth. He was very young while he was staying there and was given clothes, necessities, and care.

There Raltri experienced many hardships including the monks repeatedly and terribly mistreating him and calling him, “Flat head!” At one time he became seriously ill and on the verge of death. The Dzogchen guru's residence

took care of him including performing healing ceremonies and giving him medicines.

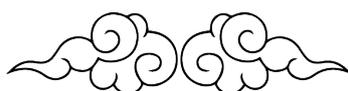
One night during that time Raltri dreamt that his Lord Father the precious Refuge Protector and Ḍākkima arrived. They gave him a skull cup full of nectar, and he drank it in its entirety. The very next day he was free from illness.

The precious Refuge Protector saw with his clairvoyance that Raltri was free from the obstacle to his life, and he came to Dzogchen Monastery to check on him. Then they both went to Khenchen Pema Vajra and received many streams of instructions for the *Guhyaqarbhatastra*.<sup>37</sup>

Khenpo Pema Vajra thought, “It seems that I am knowledgeable since even the Refuge Protector is listening to my teaching.” As soon as that occurred, the Refuge Protector realized it and intensely rebuked him: “I'm not receiving teachings because you are a scholar, you copper ladle head! You have an excellent *Guhyaqarbhatastra* lineage, and we are here to receive it for the benefit of my son.”

Raltri then went back to the encampment and fully received from his father the cycle of *The Heart Essence (Nyingtik)*<sup>38</sup> in general as well as the empowerments, oral transmissions, and instructions for his father's teachings in particular. He remained there to attend his Lord Father as much as he could.

When he was eighteen years old in the Fire Sheep year of 1847, Raltri and the king of Gutang along with his entourage left Minyak La'utang Monastery and headed to Lhasa in central Tibet.<sup>39</sup>



They visited the holy places of Lhasa, such as the Jowo Śākyamuni statue and the Jowo Mikyö Dorje statue. They also made pilgrimages to [places of the] three supports<sup>40</sup> as well as Samye, Tseringjong, and Drigung. He made spiritual connections [by giving and receiving teachings] and other activities. Having successfully completed the pilgrimage for the benefit of the teachings and beings, they returned to the encampment.

The 214<sup>th</sup> folio of the Refuge Protector's *Autobiography: The Speech of the Dākinī*:

“As soon as he completed all of his sessions of teachings and their activities, Raltri held the name of the family lineage and then went with the king of Yutang and his entourage to Lhasa.<sup>41</sup> Me (Do Khyentse) and my sister (Losal Drölma) went to Mt. Zhagtra to offer a feast and praises, then we returned to our place.”<sup>42</sup>

After traveling to monastic centers such as Dzogchen Monastery, Raltri primarily went with the precious Refuge Protector to Golok, Derge, Dzachukha, Yikhok, Minyak, Gyalmo Tsawa Rong,<sup>43</sup> Rebkong in Amdo, and other destinations.

They benefited the teachings and beings by wandering to mountain retreats, practicing severance (*chö*) in rugged terrains, accepting disciples, and so forth. It appears that Raltri stayed and attended his Lord Father, because in the Refuge Protector's biography of the signs of accomplishment, *The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: A Compilation Describing the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the first sign of attainment states:

“Among the six mountain ranges of Dokham, the supreme sacred place is the mountain Gyalmo Ranggi Gang.<sup>44</sup> In that area is the sacred place of the *Great Glorious One* (*Palchenpo*) called Gyalmo Mudo.<sup>45</sup> Drubwang Rinpoche Kyebu Yeshe Dorje and his son Raltri stayed there together; they slept in the same bed.

“One night in the son's dream he experienced a magnificent blue-black deity with a wrathful expression. It had many faces and brandished various implements; it was overwhelming to behold. ‘This is the *Great Glorious One*.’ he thought. ‘Although, its faces and implements are unable to be distinguished—how wonderfully strange.’ As soon as he thought that, he awoke.

“The Lord Father Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] asked him, ‘Raltri, what did you see?’ Raltri told him about his dream.

“[The Lord Father Yeshe Dorje] reassured him, ‘Oh good. You had a vision of the *Great Glorious One*, who is the principle [deity] of Mudo.’”

*The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: The Compilation of the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the second sign of attainment:

“Once again when we arrived at Yudra's Cave, the meditation cave of Yudra Nyinpo (8<sup>th</sup> cent.) in Gyalmo Mudo,<sup>46</sup> the Lord Father [Yeshe Dorje] slept in the center of the cave, and I (Raltri) slept near the entrance. After some time, a frightful spirit appeared at the entrance of the cave. It rose above me and approached the Refuge Protector.

“Raltri was slightly afraid, and he pulled his head under his blanket and laid down. The pair



had a conversation about the words and meaning of the Great Perfection (Dzogchen).

“After a while it became quiet. I peeked out from under the blanket, but the spirit had vanished without a trace.

‘Ratri, there’s no need to be scared.’ The Lord Father [Yeshe Dorje] said. ‘The local protector of Mudo came here to listen to the teachings.’”

*The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: A Compilation Describing the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the fourth sign of attainment:

“Again, when we stayed in a camp in Mudo, the Refuge Protector said to the monks and entourage ‘Raltri and I are going to visit the sacred site. You all stay here at the camp.’

“When we went up for a little while, we reached a cliff so high that [even] a vulture couldn’t settle on it. [Standing] on the ledge Do Khyentse said, ‘Raltri, you stay here. Do not follow me, nor go anywhere,’ and disappeared without a trace.

“I (Raltri) couldn’t move, let alone go to the frightening cliff’s edge of this red rock, so I diligently focused solely on my prayers. During this period, the sun was settling upon the mountain tops, and dusk was approaching.

“Meanwhile Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] arrived back at the encampment and had a drink. When he finished, he inquired, ‘Hasn’t Raltri come back?’ The monks answered, ‘He has not returned, sir.’

“I thought, ‘I suppose the Refuge Protector isn’t coming back. Now, I will definitely die by

freezing, hunger, or by falling down this cliff!’ Thus I sadly decided to stay there.

“Then I heard the Lord Father’s call, ‘Raltri, come here!’ Before me, a blue rainbow appeared like a stretched-out piece of woolen cloth. Feeling happy, I sat on the rainbow and came to the Refuge Lord without any trouble at all.

“The Lord Father asked, ‘Why did you stay and not come until now?’ I told the story in detail and the Lord Father responded, ‘Oh, it is great that you were able to stay in that place.’”

*The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: A Compilation Describing the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the fifth sign of attainment:

“One day when the Refuge Protector, the Vajra-Holder [Yeshe Dorje] was staying again at La’utang Monastery he said, ‘Raltri, let’s go take in the scenery.’ When we arrived at the foot of the monastery there appeared a splendid crystal house that was beautiful to behold. Arriving at its door, a beautiful goddess appeared and invited the pair inside.

“The precious Refuge Protector [Yeshe Dorje] sat upon a throne where four goddesses offered him a drink. They offered me (Raltri) some white cheese-like food with an excellent and strong taste that was greater than any human food. While Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] was eating he said, ‘Go to the roof and look around but don’t bring back whatever you see.’

“I immediately went to the top of the house and saw all kinds of things, which were like visual illusions. There were objects representational of the enlightened body, speech, and mind that were beyond comprehension. It took a little bit of time for me to look at them all. Then I came



back downstairs and Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] was sitting there about to leave, so I accompanied him, and we began to set off. The four goddesses escorted us to the door. [While] they turned to go back, one goddess gave me an iron kila. When she returned to the crystal house everything vanished and we were [back] at the foot of the plain.

“Do Khyentse Rinpoche said, ‘Don’t tell anyone about the gifts or food, about what you saw or heard, or about things like that. This kila is for your own allotment, so keep it at your side.’

“Later when I felt hungry, I remembered the food I had before [in the crystal house]. I went out to the plain at the foot of the monastery, but there was nothing to be seen.”

*The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: The Compilation of the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the eighth sign of attainment:

“Again when Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] was staying at La’utang Monastery with his entourage, his sister (Losal Drölma) was teaching Dzogchen to the students at the Garnang hermitage. One time as soon as the sun arose, the Refuge Protector said, ‘Raltri, go get two horses and a white mule. The time has come for us to go.’ Thus he did accordingly, and they rode the horses out to the foot of the plain.

“Do Khyentse [Yeshe Dorje] said, ‘Raltri, close your eyes!’ It was as if a wind had come about and lifted us away. After a while, Do Khyentse said, ‘Open your eyes!’

“When he opened his eyes, he realized that they had appeared at the Garnang Karza Hermitage as [Yeshe Dorje’s] sister (Losal Drölma) had just finished the teaching.<sup>47</sup> They

met the students as they were being dismissed and moving about, but nobody could see the pair. However, [Yeshe Dorje’s] sister saw them. Then all of the students could see them, and they came to prostrate on the ground.

“When [Raltri] looked at the sun, it was similar to when they departed La’utang Monastery. Everyone was struck by the wonder of this.”

*The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: The Compilation of the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the ninth sign of attainment:

“While [Yeshe Dorje’s] sister was staying at La’utang Monastery, Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] was staying in Palri Monastery,<sup>48</sup> both accompanied by their entourages. One day when the sun had reached an arm’s length past midday, Do Khyentse said, ‘Raltri, go right now and get a white mule [and two horses].’ He did as he was told, and they rode out to the foot of the plain.

“Do Khyentse [Yeshe Dorje] said, ‘Raltri, close your eyes,’ and I did accordingly. It was like a wind lifted me up. A moment later Do Khyentse said, ‘Open your eyes and don’t make a sound.’ I realized that we had arrived at the lower plain by La’utang Monastery. When we had arrived at the monastery, the people who were wandering about such as the monks did not see us. I took the saddles and packs off our two horses and mule, then went to an empty building.

“Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] went and sat on his throne. At that moment, his sister saw him. ‘Oh, the Refuge Protector has arrived!’ She announced and all the monks came to greet him. When I looked at the sun, it was around



the same place as when we left Palri Monastery. Everyone was astonished.”

*The Secret Biography of Khyentse Heruka: The Compilation of the Displays of the Signs of Accomplishment*, the tenth sign of accomplishment:

“Again Drubwang [Yeshe Dorje] arrived at Zhagtra Karmo Mountain [in Minyak] with his entourage and set up a camp in front of the mountain.

“One day, when the Lord Father was alone in his tent, I was sneaking about. I raised up a side of the tent to peek in, and in front of the Lord Father was a majestic and handsome white man dressed in a white robe with a white turban. I saw him offer the Lord Father silks of the five colors. I heard their many conversations and eventually I went back down [to my area].

“A short time later I brought some tea for the Lord Father and asked, ‘Sir, just then, there was a white man with you. Who was that?’

“‘Oh, Raltri, those eyes of yours are mischievous. You look at everything that you shouldn’t, and you see everything that you shouldn’t. But now it is alright. This is good.’ Do Khyentse pulled out a meteoric kīla from front pocket of his robe and said, ‘This was offered to me by the deity of Zhagtra. It is for your allotment, so keep it at your side.’ He then gave it to me. It was a miraculous liberating event.”

When Raltri was thirty-seven years old in the Fire Tiger year of 1866, the precious Refuge Protector [Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje] died in Dartsedo in Minyak. Then Do Drimé Drakpa (1846–1886), the assistant Özer Taye, Abu

Yeshe Dorje, Gyalse Raltri, and others extensively conducted the funeral rites.<sup>49</sup> Most of the remaining items and tiny pearl relics (*ringtsel*) were offered to the major monasteries from all directions to use as objects to support people’s faith. They proceeded to construct [memorials] including the Lord Father’s reliquary stūpa.

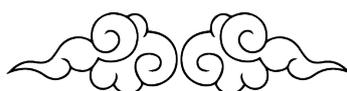
After the passing of the Refuge Protector Yeshe Dorje, Raltri was the head of Do Gar. In the same manner of his father’s tradition, he stayed and performed the duties at the monastic seats such as Mahā Kyilung Monastery, La’utang Monastery, Garnang Karza Hermitage, and the supreme Gyalrong Kachok monastery to benefit the teachings and beings.<sup>50</sup>

Some people said that after the Refuge Protector’s death, Raltri usually remained at the monastic seat of Minyak Kyernang Monastery.<sup>51</sup> It does appear that he lived at Kyernang Monastery, but it seems that his principal monastic seats were Garnang Karza Hermitage and La’utang Monastery. [This is supported] because the 139<sup>th</sup> folio of the Gansu Nationalities Publishing House’s 1974 publication of *The Biography of the Past and Future Lives of Gurong* states:<sup>52</sup>

“From the great monastery of Derge, he arrived at Rudam Orgyen Samten Chöling (Dzogchen Monastery). From there he traveled along with the supreme Khenpo Kalden (b. 1837(?)) to Karza Hermitage and then Gyalrong.”<sup>53</sup>

Also the 140<sup>th</sup> folio:

“Gyalse Raltri, along with everyone else, received many sacred teachings from the supreme Khenpo Kalden. Like a teacher and



disciple who cannot bear to be apart, they went together to his homeland. The king of Gyarong Dzong Gak invited [Khenpo Kalden] to his place and in this way, where he bestowed a longevity empowerment to the king and his entourage.”<sup>54</sup>

Thus, it clearly states at that time Raltri was living and maintaining the monastic seat of Karza Hermitage.

After the death of the Refuge Protector, it is certain that Raltri stayed for a long time at La’utang Monastery. Raltri told many prophecies to the tulkus and gurus of La’utang that this monastery needed to be moved to a new place. However, they were not able to move the monastery in a timely manner. Subsequently, once Raltri set up a tent nearby the monastery and he brought the monastery’s three main supports [of the enlightened body, speech, and mind] to that tent. A couple of days after that, there was an earthquake, and the monastery was destroyed. Then in accordance with Raltri’s orders, they moved the monastery to a place with a large plain on the right side of the monastery.

The remains of the destroyed ramparts and the rubble of the monastery even exist in these present times. Additionally, the gurus and monks of the monastery reported that Raltri [later] passed away in that monastery. A stūpa made from earth and stone remains there, which is said to be the reliquary stūpa of Raltri.

At the age of thirty-eight in the Fire Rabbit year of 1867, Raltri had acquired the various necessary provisions to build the Lord Father’s silver stūpa. That silver stūpa was constructed at Rigzin Jigme Lingpa’s monastic seat of

Tseringjong. Furthermore, the Refuge Protector’s great disciple Abu Yeshe Dorje built an extremely high reliquary at Kyernang Monastery in Minyak. It is said that the stūpa was built so large to appear the size of a mountain. These days, the main temple of Kyernang Monastery was constructed at the [site] of the reliquary remains. Raltri, Abu [Yeshe Dorje], and others then stayed in one common camp. Needless to say, Raltri took to heart the great responsibility for constructing the stūpa.

After the Refuge Protector’s passing, Abu stayed at Kyernang Monastery and maintained that monastic seat in particular. Even today, remnants remain of Abu’s house at Kyernang Monastery.

At the age of forty-five in the Wood Dog year of 1874, Trozur Dharma Vajra became severely ill,<sup>55</sup> and the supreme Gyalse Raltri was invited to Minyak Senge Monastery.<sup>56</sup> There he performed the healing rites of such practices as *Assembly of the Wrathful and Great Glorious One*, *The Thread-Crossing Ritual of Maḡön’s Army*, and *The Dākinī Who Invites or Dispels*.<sup>57</sup>

In that year, Trozur Dharma Vajra passed away. Hundreds of gurus and tulkus were invited including: Gyalse Raltri; Do Drimé Drakpa; Abu Yeshe Dorje; the throne holder of Lhagang; Awa Lama; Domlung Tulku; the throne holder of Palri; the throne holder of Kyernang; Champa Sang Ngak; Ala Dorje Gyaltzen; the throne holder of Chugmo; Kharpa Tulku; Bané Tulku; Dira Khenpo; the throne holder of Trakhar; Rashar Tulku; Garje Lama; Gyade Rabsal; Kugyab Khenpo; the throne holder of Gartar; La’utang Tulku; Chagtong Tulku; the throne holder of Chiluk;



the throne holder of Kazhi; Gyade Ösal; A Tro Lama Lobzang; Kyernang Gyurme Lhundrub; Riku Tulku; Tongkor Tulku; Drapa Tulku; and Tsara Lama.<sup>58</sup>

Gyalse Raltri, Tulku Songtsen, Tulku Rigden Dorje, and Bané Chogtrul performed the funeral rites for the guru. When offerings were being given to the gurus and tulkus of various regions, a set of one hundred and twenty-seven offerings were given to Raltri while sets of twenty-five offerings and sets of thirteen offerings were given to the other gurus and tulkus. Therefore, Gyalse Raltri was regarded to be ranked as one of the greatest gurus in the eastern direction of Minyak at that period of time. Raltri also offered silk, a woolen hat, a fox [pelt], bolts of fabric, and a horse for Dharma Vajra's reliquary.

The front of the 286<sup>th</sup> folio of *The Excellent Wish-fulfilling Tree: The Biography of Dharmavarja, the Sovereign Dzogchen Yogin Who Appeared in the Eastern Land* composed by Dharma Vajra's doctrine holder and attendant Ga Mipam Tenpe Gyaltzen states:<sup>59</sup>

“Tulku Raltri came and engaged in the appropriate practice of *Assembly of the Wrathful and Great Glorious One*, *The Thread-Crossing Ritual of Magön's Army*, and *The Ḍākinī Who Invites or Dispels*.”

The frontside of the 340<sup>th</sup> folio states:

“The master Tulku Raltri and tens of students practiced *The Peaceful and Wrathful Deities: Purifying the Lower Realms*.<sup>60</sup> The master Tulku Songtsen and tens of students practiced *The Peaceful and Wrathful Deities: The Naturally Free Wisdom Mind*.<sup>61</sup> The master Tulku Rigden Dorje

and tens of students practiced *The Molten Kīla*.<sup>62</sup> The master Bané Tulku and tens of students individually performed *The Great Compassionate One: The Natural Release of Suffering*.<sup>63</sup> Through these [practices] they individually performed the fire offerings.”

The back of the 346<sup>th</sup> folio states:

“In total, one hundred and twenty-seven items were offered to Tulku Raltri including: silk, a statue, a text of *The Root Stanzas of the Middle Way: Wisdom (prajñā-nāma-mūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, a ritual mirror, a hand-drum, bell and vajra, a mandala, a pair of vases, a pair of peacock plumes, a set of containers [for the inner offerings of] medicine and rakta, a pair of bellows, a set of seven [water] offering bowls, a pair of tormas, an incense box, a set of seven [lamp] offering bowls, a cushion cover, a golden face,<sup>64</sup> a bronze alloy dish, a tamboura,<sup>65</sup> a pair of clarinets, a pair of red conchs, a white conch, a small topmost offering bowl,<sup>66</sup> cymbals, fabric for clothes in the colors of black, red, green, stripped rainbow, and liquid gold, thin fabric in the colors of white, yellow, red, green, and sky blue, silk in the colors of white, yellow, red, green, and dark blue, woolen cloth in the colors of green and red, bolts of cotton cloth in the colors of white yellow, red, green, blue, and red stripped, a few blue stripped cotton clothes, six ornamental fabrics for making red monastic shirts, bolts of a blue-black wool, a yellow bolt of cloth, a bronze alloy vase, a bolt of dark red cloth, a variegated rope, a bag made of brocade, a burl wood bowl decorated with silver, a porcelain cup with the eight auspicious symbols, a porcelain dish, a pitcher for alcohol,<sup>67</sup> a large bowl made of *zilung*,



spectacles, a brocade, a seat covering, a Chinese knife, a soup spoon and plate, a red knotted-string accessory for the hair,<sup>68</sup> black earrings, a circular piece of coral, a circular piece of turquoise, a zi stone, amber, brass, a silver reliquary box (ga'u), a pair of ornaments that people wear on their waist,<sup>69</sup> a pair of mala counters, bodhi [seed], a sewing needle case, a flint, a gold bracelet, Mongolian boots, a long sword, a knife for the waist, *burli*,<sup>70</sup> *zangtib*,<sup>71</sup> a bridle and [saddle] crupper, molasses, yarn with the colors of white, red, green, and dark blue, multi-colored rope for the neck [of a horse], half a bolt of blue animal hide, a woolen hat, pelts from a fox, monkey, sable, lynx, wolf, bobcat, and leopard, a brass ladle, a copper ladle, a metal flask with a cover,<sup>72</sup> a tea strainer, a skin-bellow, a hearth covering, a pouch for tea, a bowl used for roasted barely flour, a butter container, a set of seven dishes, a gun, a bag of gunpowder, a pair of primary boxes [used by nomads],<sup>73</sup> a complete saddle, a riding horse, instruments, a mule, a *dzo*, a female *dzo*, a female yak, a yak, and five ounces of silver coins, and white [scarfs offered at the end].<sup>74</sup>

At the age of sixty-five in the Wood Horse year, 1894, Rigpe Raltri conferred teachings, such as the empowerment and instructions for his father's heart essence teachings, to those who kept the tantric commitment such as his noble son Do Khamsum Zilnön Gyepa Dorje (1890–1939).<sup>75</sup> Wondrous signs of the blessings from the empowerment arose for the disciples including his son.

The back of the fifth folio of Do Rinpoche's (Zilnön Gyepa Dorje) *Autobiography: A Garland of Beautiful Flowers* states:

“In the Male Wood Horse year, the Lord Father the Dharma Lord (Raltri), opened the door to the profound maturing empowerments and liberating instructions. When the blessings had descended into my body, speech, and mind there was a transformation of perception. In the end, he physically bestowed auspicious articles and emblems to support [the blessings].”

Rigpe Raltri was sixty-six years old in the Wood Sheep year of 1895, and as mentioned earlier [in this set of texts], Gurong Orgyen Jigdral Chöying Dorje (1875–1932) had entered the monastery in the Water Snake year, 1893.<sup>76</sup> He lived there and relied upon teachers such as Dzogchen Khenpo Kalden. At the age of twenty-one in the Wood Sheep year, 1895, he went with Dzogchen Khenpo Kalden to Karza Hermitage, and he met Raltri there. Through this, it is apparent that Raltri lived at Karza Hermitage and occupied its monastic seat at that time.

When Raltri died, Do Rinpoche [Zilnön Gyepa Dorje] was very young and Raltri's wife Ragza Rigche Wangmo loved Kyernang Monastery.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, following his death, it is evident that Karza Hermitage, or Kardza Monastery, gradually became empty.

#### CONCERNING HIS DEATH

At the age of sixty-seven in the Fire Monkey year, 1896, Rigpe Raltri bestowed and entrusted to his son [Zilnön Gyepa Dorje] the empowerments, oral transmissions, and instructions for the entire cycle of his heart essence teachings accompanied with supplications. He then enthroned his son as the holder of the Heart Essence teachings. Later, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month of that



year, Raltri died and subsumed himself into the basic space of phenomena. As he passed into the state of the great noble ones, many signs occurred such as the sound of music, emanations of various light, earthquakes, and the blossoming of flowers.

On the front of the 6<sup>th</sup> folio of Do Rinpoche's *Autobiography: A Garland of Beautiful Flowers*, it states:

“When I was seven years of age in the Fire Monkey year, my Lord Father (Rigpe Raltri) relinquished his entrustment and command as a keeper of the teachings to me along with the three Enlightened Heart-Essence (*Tugtik*) teachings of his own tradition and the Heart Essence (*Nyingtik*). He told many prophecies about the future and passed away peacefully. As he attained the state of the great noble ones, there appeared many signs such as sounds, lights, earthquakes, and even the blossoming of flowers in the winter.

“Having mixed together the oral transmission of the omniscient hierarchs Marpa (1012?–1097),<sup>78</sup> Milarepa (1040–1123),<sup>79</sup> Dagpo Lhaje [Gampopa] (1079–1153),<sup>80</sup> and the pure visions of the treasure tradition into one stream, Raltri transmitted the direct lineage of his father to me, and I received it.”

Do Dasal Wangmo's work, *The Abridged Biographies: The Lineage of the Do Family* states:

“On the thirteenth day of the victorious month (the twelfth month), when he turned sixty-seven

years old, he passed into the peaceful space accompanied with the sound of “May Vairocana come.”

“When his body was being cremated, there were many miraculous sights such as a white cloud in the shape of a dragon floating above, an interlaced net of various colored rainbows in the surrounding environment of the earth and sky, and the simultaneous blossoming of azalea flowers.”

*In the beginning, you sought out study  
And became rich in the transmission of the sūtras and  
tantras.*

*In the middle, you solely endeavored in attending your  
sacred father.*

*In the end, you made a family and widely spread your  
father's teachings.*

*The hidden yogin, the supreme Dechen Raltri—I bow to  
you.*

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thub bstan chos dar. 2008. *rgyal sras rig pa'i ral gri'i rnam thar*. In *mdo mkhyen brtse ye shes rdo rje'i gdung rgyud rim byon gyi rnam thar gsal ba'i me long*, 317–339. pe cin: krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang. BDRC W1KG987

<sup>1</sup> 'bri gung gdan rabs gser phreng

<sup>2</sup> The text reads et cetera.

<sup>3</sup> Referring to Tri Songdetsen's (khri srong lde brtsan, 742–800, BDRC P7787) son mu tig btsan po (mu tig btsan po, BDRC P2MS13217).



<sup>4</sup> Kutön Tsöndru Yangdrung (khu ston brtson 'grus g.yung drung, 1011–1075, BDRC P3464) a junior disciple of Atiśa (a ti sha, 982–1054/1055, BDRC P3379)

<sup>5</sup> spyan snga ba chos kyi grags pa; There are various sources that have a slight variance in the order of the monastic seat holders of Drigung Til Monastery ('bri gung mthil dgon pa, BDRC G340).

<sup>6</sup> sgom pa rin chen rnam rgyal and kun dga' rin chen

<sup>7</sup> rin chen phun tshogs chos kyi rgyal po

<sup>8</sup> 'bri gung chung tshang 01 chos kyi grags pa

<sup>9</sup> 'bri gung chung tshang 02 don grub chos gyal

<sup>10</sup> 'bri gung chung tshang 03 chos kyi nyi ma

<sup>11</sup> This is also 'jigs med nyi byed as mentioned on the cover page. 'bri gung chung tshang 04 bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal mtshan and 'jigs med gling pa

<sup>12</sup> rig pa'i ral gri and mdo mkhyen brtse ye she rdo rje

<sup>13</sup> Around Zhagtra Mountain there is a place called Ma Khaka (rma kha ka). In that area is the place called Yu Tso (g.yu mtsho). There Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje built the Do Gar Mountain hermitage (mdo sgar ri khrod); however, it no longer exists.

<sup>14</sup> rdzong sngon 'jigs med chos kyi go cha

<sup>15</sup> thub bstan 'jigs med dga' ba, or don mchog dar rgyas

<sup>16</sup> 'be bza' and 'ba' yul/'ba' rdzong

<sup>17</sup> chab cha and mtsho sngon po

<sup>18</sup> mthu stobs and bo chog

<sup>19</sup> rme ba khan chen tshe dbang rig 'dzin

<sup>20</sup> kon mchog rin chen

<sup>21</sup> o rgyan gsang chen chos 'khor gling. He restored this in 1984 according to BDRC W20214.

<sup>22</sup> pad+ma ri mtho and mgo log

<sup>23</sup> a skyong bu mo 'dzom pa skyid

<sup>24</sup> rang rnam mkha' 'gro'i zhal lung, BDRC W21847

<sup>25</sup> shes rab me 'bar, 1829–1842, BDRC P1PD76603

<sup>26</sup> mdo tshang gi brgyud pa'i rnam thar mdo bsdus, BDRC W1GS60403, translated on Tib Shelf here: "Abridged Biographies: The Lineage of the Do Family"

<sup>27</sup> bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal mtshan

<sup>28</sup> Yul shar phyogs su byung ba'i rdzogs chen rnal 'byor pa mnga' bdag d+harma badz+ra gyi rnam thar dpag bsam yongs 'du'i ljon bzang

<sup>29</sup> blo gsal sqrol ma, BDRC P1GS138134

<sup>30</sup> ma hA skyid lung dgon, BDRC G353

<sup>31</sup> g.yi khog and lcags rkyang sde cha rgyal sras

<sup>32</sup> mi nyag bzhag bra and la'u thang dgon pa, BDRC G4110

<sup>33</sup> rdzogs chen grub dbang 04 mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje, 1793–1870, BDRC P1710

<sup>34</sup> rdza dpal sprul o rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po, 1808–1887, BDRC P270

<sup>35</sup> rgyal sras gzhan phan mtha' yas 'od zer, 1800–1855/1869, BDRC P697

<sup>36</sup> pad+ma badz+ra, 1807–1884, BDRC P6744

<sup>37</sup> gsang ba snying po

<sup>38</sup> snying thig

<sup>39</sup> 'gu thang rgyal po and lha ldan

<sup>40</sup> rten gsum

<sup>41</sup> yu thang, BDRC G1PD76606

<sup>42</sup> bzhag bra, BDRC G3500

<sup>43</sup> rgyal mo tsha ba rong

<sup>44</sup> rgyal mo rong gi sgang

<sup>45</sup> dpal chen po and rgyal mo dmu do

<sup>46</sup> g.yu sgra phug and g.yu sgra snying po

<sup>47</sup> gar nang kar mdza' ri khrod

<sup>48</sup> dpal ri'i dgon

<sup>49</sup> mdo dri med grags pa, 1846–1886, BDRC P8006; 'od zer mtha' yas, BDRC P5052; a bu ye shes rdo rje

<sup>50</sup> rgyal rong khaH mchog dgon

<sup>51</sup> mi nyag sker nang dgon

<sup>52</sup> dgu rong gsku phreng snga phyi'i rnam thar

<sup>53</sup> skal ldan rgya mtsho

<sup>54</sup> rgya rong rdzong 'gag

<sup>55</sup> khro zur d+harma badz+ra

<sup>56</sup> mi nyak seng ge dgon



<sup>57</sup> drag po dpal chen 'dus pa, ma mgon gyul mdos, and mkha' 'gro'i bsu zlog

<sup>58</sup> /lo der khro zur d+harma badz+ra sku gshegs rgyal sras  
ral gri dang /\_mdo dri med grags pa/\_a bu ye shes rdo rje  
sogs gdan drangs/\_lha sgang khri pa/\_a ba bla ma/\_dom  
lung sprul sku/\_dpal ri'i khri pa/\_skyer nang khri  
pa/\_lcam pa gsang sngags/\_a bla rdo rje rgyal  
mtshan/\_phyug mo'i khri pa/\_mkhar pa sprul sku/\_ba  
gnas sprul sku/\_rdi ra mkhan po/\_brag mkhar khri  
pa/\_ra shar sprul sku/\_sgar rje bla ma/\_rgya sde rab  
gsal/\_sku rgyab mkhan po/\_mgar thar khri pa/\_la'u  
thang sprul sku/\_cag stong sprul sku/\_spyi lug khri  
pa/\_ka bzhi khri pa/\_rgya sde 'od gsal/\_a khro bla ma  
blo bzang /\_skyer nang 'gyur med lhun grub/\_ri khud  
sprul sku/\_stong skor sprul sku/\_'dra pa sprul sku/\_rtsa  
ra bla ma sogs bla sprul rgya phrag mang po gdan  
drangs/

<sup>59</sup> nye gnas sga mi pham bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan

<sup>60</sup> zhi khro ngan song sbyong ba

<sup>61</sup> zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol

<sup>62</sup> khro chu'i phur pa

<sup>63</sup> thugs rje chen po sdug bsngal rang grol

<sup>64</sup> gser zhel

<sup>65</sup> gsol tam

<sup>66</sup> phud skong

<sup>67</sup> tam bhe

<sup>68</sup> tong skud phon dmar

<sup>69</sup> glo zungs cha

<sup>70</sup> bur li

<sup>71</sup> zangs rtib

<sup>72</sup> lcags 'gu khebs lden

<sup>73</sup> tso sgam

<sup>74</sup> mtha' dkar

<sup>75</sup> mdo khams gsum zil gnon dgyas pa rdo rje, Dates from BDRRC W1KG987, translated on Tib Self here: "A Chronological Timetable: Lives of Do Khyentse's Familial Line"

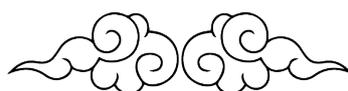
<sup>76</sup> o rgyan 'jigs bral chos dbyings rdo rje

<sup>77</sup> ra bza' rig byed dbang mo was one of Rigpe Raltri's wives and mother of Do Khamsum Zilnön Gyepa Dorje.

<sup>78</sup> mar pa chos kyj blo gros, 1002/1012–1097/1100, BDRRC P2636

<sup>79</sup> mi la ras pa, 1040–1123, BDRRC P1853

<sup>80</sup> sgam po pa bsod nams rin che, 1079–1153, BDRRC P1844





# TIB SHELF

TRANSLATE | PRESENT | PRESERVE