

MURA PEMA
DECHEN ZANGPO
THE THIRD INCARNATION



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Mura Pema Dechen Zangpo
In Dzogchen Buddhist History of the Early Translations
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Translated by Tib Shelf



MURA PEMA DECHEN ZANGPO

THE THIRD INCARNATION

The great spiritual friend¹ widely known as The Third Mura Pema Dechen Zangpo (b. 19th cent)² an actual emanation of Avalokiteshvara, was a direct disciple of both Khenchen Pema Vajra (1807–1884)³ and Patrul Jigme Chokyi Wangpo (1808–1887).⁴ The basis for his emanation is as follows:

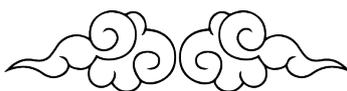
In the presence of our Teacher [Buddha Shakyamuni] there were the bodhisattva mahasattva, the supremely noble, Avalokiteshvara, and Mahakalika⁵ of the [sixteen] elder arhats. Here in the Land of Snow, from the twenty-five disciples,⁶ the king and subjects, the great adepts and heart heirs of the Second Buddha Orgyen were Kyeuchung Lotsawa (b. 8th cent.)⁷ and Nyak Jnanakumara.⁸ Having appeared as sequential [incarnations] such as the magical display of the great treasure revealer Taksham Nuden Dorje (b.1665)⁹ as well as [at times] unexpectedly,¹⁰ [the stream of

incarnations] greatly increased the benefit and welfare of beings as well as the teachings.

THE FIRST INCARNATION RITRO RIGDZIN GYATSO

The first incarnation Ritro Rigdzin Gyatso (b. 18th cent)¹¹ was born in the land of Nag Sho.¹² He completed his studies [relying upon] many spiritual friends such as the great treasure revealer Nyidrak Tulku. Thereafter, due to the ripening of his aspirations to acquire students at the appropriate time in Upper Dza in Do Kham, he was greatly inspired to firmly plant the victory banner of practice at Kilung Godam Hermitage,¹³ where he stayed for a long while.

During this period Getse Lama Jigme Ngotsar (18th cent.)¹⁴ and [Ritro Rigdzin Gyatso] mutually taught one another as guru and student. With a single intention they built a



monastery together and established the single monastic seat [of Kilung Hermitage, which later became known as Kilung Monastery].

Furthermore, he newly built the famous great stone edifice known as the Mura Mani Wall for the common splendour and merit of the beings in the Snowy Land of Tibet—which can [still] be seen to this day.

After Getse Lama Jigme Ngotsar passed into the pure lands, the First Lord Mura maintained the seat [of Kilung Monastery] by himself.

Innumerable students congregated there as he turned the wheel of the doctrine. [During his life] he extensively spread the teachings of the theory and practice, [eventually] passing away in peace.

THE SECOND INCARNATION PONPO GYURME CHODAR

The second lineage incarnation Ponpo Gyurme Chodar (18th cent.)¹⁵ was born in the Gotsa Dragon home,¹⁶ which was part of the Getse settlement. The Fourth Dzogchen Drubwang [Mingyur Namkhai Dorje] (1793–1870)¹⁷ recognised and installed him on the dharma throne of the monastic seat. As he reached a respectable age, he had an extreme dislike of watching over the monastic preparations, which were fraught with distractions. [Rather], he would single-pointedly practice [meditation].

Since he had completely enveloped his mind with bodhicitta, even habitually sinful and pernicious people would instinctually adopt beneficial and altruistic conduct simply by meeting this lord or hearing his voice. [Furthermore] wherever he resided, the vicious animals living around that region would not

engage in anything harmful to [any] sentient being. In these ways, he attained mastery, living the liberative life of a conqueror's heir.

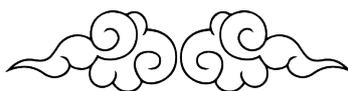
At the end of his life and the completion of his practice, he actually passed into the primordially pure inner space, the royal capital of the dharmakaya.

THE THIRD INCARNATION PEMA DECHEN ZANGPO

In concordance with what was mentioned earlier [regarding] emanations appearing as one or many, simultaneously or instantaneously¹⁸ in accordance with the specific dispositions and inclinations of sentient beings, the third incarnation the kind and glorious Mura Pema Dechen was the last to arrive. Once again, he intentionally took birth as a spiritual friend of all vajra holders possessing the three [vows], as in the latter half of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle (18th cent.) in a Getse settlement situated in Dzachuka, Do Kham, he took birth into a divine house where many sublime beings had been born.

As soon as he spoke, he recited the six syllable [Mani] mantra. He possessed the nature [of someone] totally beyond that of an ordinary person as his heart was filled with immeasurable love, compassion, and various other [qualities]. Drubwang Dzogchenpa Mingyur Namkhai Dorje [recognised] and decided that he was the unmistakable incarnation of the previous [Mura] and installed him on the monastic seat.

Having arrived at Rudam Orgyen Samten Choling (Dzogchen monastery),¹⁹ the source of scholars and accomplished ones, he received teachings from many virtuous friends such as



Dzogchen Yishin Norbu, Gyalse Shenpen Taye (1800–1855),²⁰ Patrul Jigme Chokyi Wangpo, Khenchen Pema Vajra, etc. He received pratimoksha, bodhisattva, and tantric vows,²¹ instructions and guidance on the great scriptures of sutra and tantra, the maturation and liberation instructions of the oral traditions and treasure traditions of the old and new schools, and the instructions and advice on the Dzogchen Heart Essence (Nyingtik) cycles. He became a lord of scholars and adepts through completing his studies.

He particularly served Khenchen Pema Vajra as his special lord of the [tantric] family. Even after the Lord [Pema Vajra] passed into the pure land, [Pema Vajra's] wisdom body protected and blessed Pema Dechen. He made a profound, powerful, and truthful aspiration to never be separated from [Pema Vajra] for many lives to come. This apparent aspiration can be inferred as it is contained in his supreme secret biography.

The signs of Mura's attainment include squeezing stones with his bare hand, possessing unobstructed clairvoyance, and other such marvels for which all sentient beings bowed down at his feet. At his monastic seats of Kilung Monastery and Rudam [Dzogchen monastery's] Shri Simha College, he turned the wheel of the doctrine of the limitless ripening instructions of both the oral and treasure teachings. In particular and from time to time [he taught]: *Yeshe Lama*, or *The Unexcelled Wisdom*, the instructional guide of the secret Dzogchen Heart Essence teachings, and *Purifying the Six Intermediate States* of the completion stages.

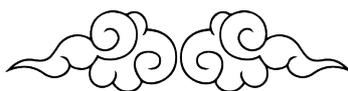
His direct disciples and holders of his lineage included: The Fifth Drubwang Tubten Chokyi

Dorje (1872–1935),²² Khentrul Dega,²³ Jadral Kunga Pelden (1878–1944),²⁴ Jamgon Mipam Rinpoche (1846–1912),²⁵ Abu Lhagyal or Pema Tekchok Loden (1879–1955),²⁶ Khen Secho, Jigme Yonten Gonpo (1899–1959),²⁷ Khen Chime (19th cent.–20th cent.),²⁸ and many great beings who hold the Dzogchen teachings. Many spiritual friends came including Shechen Gyaltsab Pema Namgyal (1871–1926),²⁹ Khenchen Yonten Gyatso,³⁰ Takla Konchok Gyaltzen (1859–1943),³¹ Khenchen Kunzang Palden (1862–1943),³² Khenchen Tubga Rinpoche, Ngawang Palzang or Ngakchung (1879–1940),³³ Mewa Khenchen Tsewang Rigdzin (1883–1958),³⁴ and Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse (1910–1991).³⁵

In the present age, [as for] all the lineage of the six bardo transmissions, it appears that there is nothing that is not connected with this lord. He is featured in various supplications for the lineage gurus of our own Heart Essence tradition. He came to be an unrivalled tradition holder of the greatly secret Heart Essence.

He encouraged all the men and women from higher and lower Dzachuka up to north Golok to give up sin and engage in virtuosity, and he turned the wheel of the doctrine for Mani [recitation] and practice. Thus, he transformed the entire area into a land of complete virtue. [Furthermore] he extensively renovated the Mani Stone Wall that his previous incarnation had built becoming one hundred-fold more extensive. [Lastly] he built many [virtuous structures] including stupas in the surrounding area.

The continuation of his activity for the spontaneous accomplishment of the two-fold benefit will never diminish [and instead] will



continue throughout his future lives. [Finally] he temporarily displayed the manner of peacefully passing away into the primordial inner space, the expansive wisdom mind of Samantabhadra.

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¹ dge ba'i bshes gnyen, kalyāṇamitra

² pad+ma bde chen bzang po, BDRC P8693

³ mkhan chen pad+ma badz+ra, BDRC P6744

⁴ dpal sprul 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po, BDRC P270

⁵ dus ldan chen po

⁶ This is referring to the 25 disciples (rje 'bangs nyer lnga) of Padmasambhava.

⁷ khye'u chung lo tsA ba, BDRC P3AG56

⁸ gnyags dznyA ku mA ra, BDRC P6525

⁹ stag sham nus ldan rdo rje, BDRC P633

¹⁰ The meaning here is that the emanations of the mind-stream of Mura Pema Dechen arose sequentially, but in some cases emanations would appear at any point in time devoid of and sequence.

¹¹ ri khrod rig 'dzin rgya mtsho, BDRC P2JM457

¹² yul nag shod

¹³ kiH lung mgos zlam, BDRC G3955

¹⁴ dge rtse bla ma 'jigs med ngo mtshar, BDRC P2881

¹⁵ mu ra sprul sku o2 dpon po 'gyur med chos dar,

BDRC P8LS13175

¹⁶ mgo tshwa sba rgan

¹⁷ rdzog chen gru dbang o4 mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje, BDRC P1710

¹⁸ See point 10

¹⁹ rdzogs chen ru dam o rgyan bsam gtan chos gling, BDRC G16

²⁰ gzhan phan mtha' yas 'od zer, BDRC P697

²¹ These corresponds to the vows of the three vehicles.

²² rdzogs chen grub dbang o5 thub bstan chos kyi rdo rje, BDRC P701

²³ bde dga', BDRC P6960

²⁴ mkhan chen kun dga' dpal, BDRC P4996

²⁵ mi pham 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal rgya mtsho, BDRC P252

²⁶ a bu lha sgang pad+ma theg mchog blo ldan, BDRC P6955

²⁷ 'jigs med yon tan mgon po, BDRC P6600

²⁸ mkhan chen 'chi med ye shes, BDRC P6959

²⁹ zhe chen rgyal tshab o4 'gyur med pad+ma rnam rgyal, BDRC P235

³⁰ dge mang mkhan chen yon tan rgya mtsho, BDRC P6961

³¹ stag bla dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, BDRC PooKG03790

³² mkhan chen kun bzang ldan, BDRC P6962

³³ ngag dbang dpal bzang, BDRC P724

³⁴ mkhan chen tshe dbang rig 'dzin o1, BDRC P6306

³⁵ dil mgo mkhyen brtse bkra shis dpal 'byor, BDRC P625





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