

The Yellow Book of Dzemé Rinpoché

Dzemé Losang Palden
Translated by Christopher Bell

Abstract In 1970 a text infamously known as the *Yellow Book* was composed by Dzemé Rinpoché. This book discusses several Tibetan Geluk masters that were harmed or killed by the wrathful deity Dorjé Shukden over the last several centuries. The reason for such violence is said to be because these masters corrupted the Geluk teachings by being initiated into the cycles of other Tibetan lineages, especially Nyingma, which goes against the strict sectarianism that this deity has represented in some Geluk circles in the early twentieth century. This is the first full and complete translation of the *Yellow Book* and its prefatory textual context discusses the justifications given for such supernatural violence through divine attribution and foundational Mahāyāna doctrines. Given his continued controversial nature, Dorjé Shukden and Dzemé Rinpoché's historic treatise concerning him provide a ready case study for exploring religion and violence in modern Tibetan Buddhism.

Introduction

In the summer of 2009, I was in the Kham town of Chatreng (Tib. phyag phreng; Ch. Xiangcheng, 乡城), in Sichuan province, observing a retreat headed by Lama Gangchen Rinpoché and his disciples. During that trip, the Brazilian-born incarnate lama that Lama Gangchen had recognized, named Michel Rinpoché, spoke to me at length about the infamous *Yellow Book* composed by Dzemé Rinpoché, Losang Palden (dze smad blo bzang dpal ldan).¹ He told me that this book had been misunderstood and that the actions of the Dharma protector at the heart of this text, Dorjé Shukden, only acted violently as a form of Buddhist skillful means. Dorjé Shukden is a controversial Tibetan Buddhist protector deity, believed by some to be a wrathful spirit and by others to be an enlightened Buddha. This deity's primary twentieth-century representation is of a strict sectarian divinity that enforces Geluk purity and hegemony, which is at odds with the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's ecumenical endeavors. The controversy that arose from this divided understanding over the last fifty years has impacted the Tibetan Buddhist community globally and continues to be relevant to observers and practitioners of Buddhism the world over.

Georges Dreyfus first teased out the history and nuances of the contemporary dispute around

1. Dze smad sprul sku o4 Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan 'dzin yar rgyas, 1927–1996.

Shukden in an article published over twenty years ago that continues to be foundational for understanding the controversy. Specifically, he contends that while tensions already existed prior to the *Yellow Book's* publication—especially due to the sectarian activities of the early twentieth-century Geluk master Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo²—the book nevertheless galvanized the contention, which escalated into a public debate among the Tibetan exile community in India and eventually spilled over into physical violence, murder, and international attention in the decades that followed.³ To understand the depth of this division, the following work offers an introduction to and complete translation of the *Yellow Book* as an addendum to Dreyfus's article.⁴ The translation is also followed by an appendix listing nearly twenty major publications that came about in response to the *Yellow Book* and to each other.

In his book *Sacred Fury: Understanding Religious Violence*, Charles Selengut uses a number of approaches to examine religious violence across the Abrahamic traditions, including scriptural, psychological, and sociological perspectives. Using a sociological lens, Selengut defines the concept of Holy War by three primary criteria: (1) Holy war is fought to defend religion against its enemies, (2) Holy war is fought to ensure religious conformity and punish deviance, and (3) Holy wars are fought under the direction of charismatic religious leaders.⁵ While Selengut's observations are limited to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and focus on concrete examples of war and their scriptural justifications, I submit that his observations can be applied to the debate over Dorjé Shukden's fierce motivations, as well as to the violence he is believed to commit.

The *Yellow Book*, as it came to be called colloquially based on its cover, was composed by Dzemed Rinpoché in 1970, but it was not published until 1973 and did not circulate widely until several years later. The full title of the text is the *Swelling Roar of Amassed Clouds of Nectar and Black Clouds Flickering with Nooses of Fearsome Lightning: The Teachings of the Capable Father Lama Conveying the Origins of the Great Protector of the Teachings, Mighty Dorjé Shukden, who is Great with Power and Strength*.⁶ The text as a whole is a record of famous Geluk masters and government officials who were supposedly warned, harmed, or even killed by the deity Dorjé Shukden for disrespecting Geluk teachings or combining them with non-Geluk practices, specifically Nyingma

2. Pha bong kha Bde chen snying po, 1878–1941.

3. See Dreyfus 1998, especially 255–259. Dreyfus's article is even available on the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's official website: <https://www.dalailama.com/messages/dolgyal-shugden/contemporary-scholars/ganden-tripa-the-shugden-affair-i>.

4. While there are several printed editions of the *Yellow Book* available (see Dze smad sprul sku 04 1983, 1997, and n.d.), I have chosen to translate the oldest edition published in 1973 in New Delhi (see Dze-smad Blo-bzan-dpal-ldan 1973). The page numbers referenced below follow this edition as well.

5. Selengut 2008, 19–20

6. Tib. *Mthu dang stobs kyis che ba'i bstan srung chen po rdo rje shugs ldan rtsal gyi byung ba brjod pa pha rgod bla ma'i zhal gyi bdud rtsi'i chu khur brtsegs shing 'jigs rung glog zhags 'gyu ba'i sprin nag 'khrugs pa'i nga ro*; see Dze-smad Blo-bzan-dpal-ldan 1973.

ones.⁷ While the *Yellow Book* receives the most attention in discussions of how the Shukden controversy escalated at the end of the twentieth century, what is often underappreciated is that this book was meant as an addendum to a slightly older work composed by Dzémé Rinpoché's teacher Trijang Rinpoché,⁸ who was also the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's junior tutor. In his introduction and conclusion, Dzémé Rinpoché states that the work was intended as a supplement to Trijang Rinpoché's extensive hagiography of Dorjé Shukden, entitled *Music Delighting the Ocean of Protectors*.⁹ The *Yellow Book* was specifically meant to elaborate on the following verse and Trijang Rinpoché's commentary for it: "Praise to you, warrior god of the Yellow Hat teachings, who smashes like dust particles those great masters, ordinary people, and high officials that allow the Geluk teachings to be mixed and corrupted!"¹⁰

Published in 1967, Trijang Rinpoché's *Music Delighting the Ocean of Protectors* contains a few accounts of Geluk masters and their incarnations who suffered Dorjé Shukden's wrath after blending teachings. The various incarnations of the eighteenth-century Geluk master Lelung Shepai Dorjé¹¹ are especially highlighted since he played with the fire of other traditions. According to Trijang Rinpoché, this Lelungpa was given Nyingma treasure texts and took on female consorts, actions that Lelung himself claimed were prophesied by *dākinīs*. Nevertheless, he died before his time by spraining his neck while getting out of bed. His next incarnation, the sixth Lelung Tulku, became abbot of Gyütö Tantric College, but he took on a consort without resigning his post and died without completing his practice. The seventh Lelung Tulku ruptured the crown of his head while attempting *powa* (*'pho ba*), the consciousness transference practice. He remained sick for years before finally passing away. The early twentieth century incarnation happened to be Trijang Rinpoché's own younger brother, but he died of smallpox shortly before being enthroned. As such, the misfortunes of the Lelung incarnation line over lifetimes are attributed to their corrupt practices, retaliation for which was enacted by Dorjé Shukden.¹² Even the oracle of Lelung Shepai Dorjé's main protector at Darpoling Temple suffered consequences due to guilt by association. During one trance session, Shukden is said to have possessed the oracle instead of his usual deity, made him swallow a five-pointed *vajra*, and left the medium to choke on it nearly to death. Only

7. Nyingma teachings pertaining to the Dharma protector Gesar and the tutelary deity Hayagrīva are particularly noted; see the following pages in the translation below: 26, 41, 44, 48, 49, 52–53, 60, 63, 67, 68–69.

8. Khri byang o3 Blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, 1901–1981; BDRC: P2596.

9. See Khri byang o3 199[?] and Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang 2008.

10. Khri byang o3 199[?], 134.2–3: /dga' ldan bstan la bsre lhad 'jug byed pa'i/ /bdag nyid che dang phal dang dpon chen sogs/ /thal ba'i rdul bzhin rlog par mādza pa yi/ /zhwa ser bstan pa'i dgra lha khyod la bstod/. See pages 5–7 of the translation.

11. Sle lung rje drung o3 Bzhad pa'i rdo rje, 1697–1740. For more on this important Geluk master, see Bailey 2016, 2019b, and especially 2017.

12. See Khri byang o3 199[?], 123.6–126.4.

after a supplication rite was Shukden coaxed to return and save the oracle by spitting up the *vajra*. The wrathful deity is also said to be responsible for Darpoling Temple's past destruction.¹³

Trijang Rinpoché justifies these and other claims made throughout his book by appealing to scriptural authority. For instance, in his introduction he references the *Uttaratantra Śāstra* to justify supramundane beings taking on the guise of worldly protectors; he quotes Milarepa to explain how the duality of friends and enemies is just a projection of the mind; and he cites the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra* (*Yab dang sras mjal ba'i mdo*) to explain how otherwise enlightened beings take on negative forms or traits because of skillful means.¹⁴ All of these arguments are used to support his conviction that Dorjé Shukden is an enlightened being and that such a theological position is in line with orthodox Buddhist doctrine. Trijang Rinpoché's *Music Delighting the Ocean of Protectors* is itself structured as a commentary on a series of poetic verses praising Dorjé Shukden. These verses were composed forty years earlier by Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo, who is often blamed for the excessive sectarian bent now attributed to Dorjé Shukden. This is not entirely surprising. Beyond his polemical works, Pabongkha amended the verses on which Trijang Rinpoché's work is based. These verses were in turn composed by Lhading Gyalsé,¹⁵ likely in 1896. However, the striking verse that is quoted above, which inspired Dzemé Rinpoché to compose the *Yellow Book*, drawn as it was from the *Music Delighting the Ocean of Protectors*, is not found in Lhading Gyalsé's original string of verses. This combative verse is in fact only in Pabongkha's version of the poem, as it is one of the four additional quatrains he added to the original text.

Regardless of its provenance and inspiration, the *Yellow Book* offers plenty of explanations and interpretations for the misfortunes that befell even the greatest of Geluk masters. According to Dzemé Rinpoché, most of the accounts he recorded were orally transmitted to him by Trijang Rinpoché himself, which he then elaborated upon through his own recollections or research.¹⁶ For instance, according to the *Yellow Book*, the Eighth Pañchen Lama studied the Nyingma Kama and Terma canon. He also tried to burn a *thangka* of Dorjé Shukden that was gifted to him and failed, so he buried it beneath the doorway of his apartment at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. For these many transgressions he died at a young age. The next incarnation, the Ninth Pañchen Lama, supposedly died because of the previous incarnation's misdeeds. The Shukden *thangka* defiled by the Eighth Pañchen Lama was apparently retrieved by Pabongkha, which was considered very auspicious.¹⁷ The more recent Tenth Pañchen Lama likewise had his share of bad luck, repeating a

13. See Khri byang o3 199[?], 131.3–133.1.

14. See Khri byang o3 199[?], 9.3–14.3.

15. Lha sdings rgyal sras Bskal bzang bstan 'dzin mkhas grub, b.19th cent.

16. For accounts ascribed to Trijang Rinpoché, see the following pages of the translation: 25, 43, 47, 48, 53–54, 67, 69. For Dzemé Rinpoché's own recollections, see 44–45, 64–65.

17. Like Trijang Rinpoché, Pabongkha's presence looms over the *Yellow Book*; see the following pages in the translation: 13, 25, 32–33, 40–41, 47–52.

theme first illustrated in Trijang Rinpoché's account of Lelungpa: that Shukden's wrath can follow one over lifetimes.

Such misfortunes and bad omens followed other high Geluk lamas, as well as government officials and aristocrats. In many of these accounts, a mysterious monk would appear and evince magical illusions; there would be bad weather, buildings would be damaged, livestock would die, someone would be thrown from their horse. All such occurrences were attributed to the wrathful activities of Dorjé Shukden. A common formula is that the individual practiced Nyingma teachings, or suffered because a past incarnation did, and they are blamed for not properly upholding the Geluk teachings. This then brings about an early or mysterious death caused by Shukden, who is intent on cutting their life and activities short to protect the teachings. Pabongkha himself was not immune from this; in a narrative that reads like a ghost story by M.R. James, one night Pabongkha hears women screaming in the distance and then closer to his sleeping quarters. He then hears cymbals crashing and a chain dragging against the stone of the courtyard outside, before a red hand lashes out from his door curtain. After frantic confessions, the hand and sounds eventually disappear (49–51). Pabongkha is one of the lucky ones since his repentance staves off anymore of Shukden's wrath.

In many cases, the deity also warns the offending party through oracular pronouncements.¹⁸ Shukden made his motivations quite explicit when his oracle was entreated by the Council Secretary (*bka' drung*) Surkhang Pema Wangchen,¹⁹ who had been suffering the deity's wrath. Pema Wangchen was a government official, and as such his continued existence as someone who mixes teachings was believed to ultimately harm both the Geluk school and the Tibetan Ganden Phodrang government. The account of Pema Wangchen's life and fate is the second longest section in the book, beat only by the account of the infamous Regent, the Fifth Reting Rinpoché,²⁰ whose mid-century scandals, misfortunes, and conflicts are attributed to Shukden in retaliation for his having received Nyingma teachings. By contrast, Reting Rinpoché's earlier success was also attributed to having once held Shukden's favor (27). While much discussion of the *Yellow Book* has focused on the religious figures it details, important political figures such as these take up nearly half of the text.

An anonymous translation of the *Yellow Book* was first produced by DorjeShukden.com,²¹ however, it is highly bowdlerized and paraphrases many sections rather than provide an accurate or full translation. It also fails to include entire accounts, such as those of Sera Jé Tsenya Tulku, the Sixth Nakchu Drupkhang Tulku, and Drakri Rinpoché. Perhaps its most egregious error is in excising significant cultural details, such as the verse poems throughout the book, Shukden's interactions

18. See the following pages of the translation: 13, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 43, 44–45, 47, 52, 56, 58, 59–60, 63, 64.

19. Zur khang Pad ma dbang chen, 1894–1916.

20. Rwa sgreng hu thog thu o5 Thub bstan 'jam dpal ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, 1912/1919–1947.

21. See <https://www.dorjeshugden.com/all-articles/features/the-yellow-book/>.

with other spirits and deities, and even some of the more controversial or vulgar material within the text. For instance, the opening verses criticize hypocritical Geluk masters who seek praise and are famous for smiling, possibly referring to the Dalai Lama himself, before offering verses of praise for the Geluk tradition, its founder Tsongkhapa, Trijang Rinpoché, and Dorjé Shukden (3–4). The concluding verses bookend this well by praising Shukden, the Geluk teachings, and Tsongkhapa again, while using vivid language that reflects the book's title (73–75). In terms of other spirits, a local mountain deity supports Shukden's wrath (13–14) and his oracle becomes possessed by other gods. In one case, the protector deity Pari Toktsen threatens to give a "flesh tax" (*sha kbral*) to "old man Samyé" (*rgad po bsam yas*), referring to the Dharma protector Tsiu Marpo (17). In another case, the wild martial spirit Yumar Gyalchen speaks through a Shukden oracle, agreeing to help Tatsak Rinpoché at Trijang Rinpoché's request, and he spits tea on the former's chest as a sign of assent (44–45). The book is also explicit about some of the gruesome consequences that Shukden rains down on the figures discussed. A broken bicycle piece permanently damages the Tenth Pakpa Lha's penis (24–25), painful pustules and sores cover Surkhang Pema Wangchen's body (63), and Lungshar Dorjé Tsegyal has his eyeballs gouged out and boiling oil poured into the empty sockets (71). Dzemé Rinpoché also does not mince words when he quotes and repeats Geshé Sherap Rinpoché's advice to Surkhang Pema Wangchen that practicing "false" teachings alongside pure Geluk teachings is akin to treating dirt like nuggets of gold (62, 72). It is not surprising that such bluntness inspired a strong backlash.

At its core, the *Yellow Book* is really a laundry list of inauspicious biographies that provide a cohesive narrative of Dorjé Shukden's gatekeeping activities in response to Geluk masters engaging in the practices of other traditions, especially Nyingma. What might be deemed by outsiders as impersonal disease, interpersonal conflict, or random mischance, is interpreted here as the intentional doings of a wrathful guardian of proper Buddhist conduct. The vagaries of personal misfortune are in fact violence perpetrated by invisible forces, and for Shukden's devotees it is a force that ultimately emanates from an enlightened state. Understandably, plenty of other authorities disagreed with this assessment, and the *Yellow Book* kickstarted a rhetorical debate that spanned decades, continuing even up to the present day. A dizzying array of responses and counter-responses followed Dzemé Rinpoché's book. Matthew Kapstein called the *Yellow Book* the "first cannonade"²² in a series of verbal volleys that would be shared between pro- and anti-Shukden voices starting in the mid-1970s. The first response came from a Sakya master named Dhongtog Tenpai Gyaltzen, who would prove to be the most persistent objector to Shukden apologetics. Responding to him would be an equally persistent pro-Shukden Gelukpa named Yönten Gyatso. Together, these two would be the most vocal interlocutors, replying to one another and others, and using Buddhist scriptural justification in the process.

22. See Kapstein 2000, 254 n.43.

Notably, and more impactfully, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama himself would interject in these debates with his own erudite comments and observations. He began talking openly about the Shukden affair in 1978, and his initial talks on the matter were first published in 1996.²³ The Dalai Lama continued to speak against propitiating Shukden and these talks now fill three published volumes available at his temple complex in Dharamsala, including as they do content from the original 1996 publication and continuing through to 2013.²⁴ As illustrated in the appendix, seven texts were published in quick succession in the decade following the *Yellow Book's* 1973 publication, with the Dalai Lama's consistent input spread between them. At least seven more diatribes would follow over the next 25 years, with the Dalai Lama having a growing impact on this expanding dialectic of violence. The escalation of these debates would reach a crescendo in February of 1997, when Lobsang Gyatso, Principal of the Buddhist School of Dialectics, along with two of his students were murdered in Dharamsala, presumably by Shukden devotees.

I have only been able to peruse a handful of these colorfully named texts. Some are no longer available or easily accessible; others are preserved by the Buddhist Digital Resource Center but are not allowed to be viewed. Nevertheless, even a glimpse at these works reveals an intense conversation made up of sophisticated and decades-long arguments and rebuttals. Beyond the disagreements over Dorjé Shukden's ontological status and the epistemological boundaries between the different schools of Tibetan Buddhist thought and practice, there are the various justifications for violence. While it will take years to pour over these works with the nuance they deserve, we can get a glimpse of the same strategies being used by anti-Shukden figures. The 16th text listed in the appendix is the *Earth Shaking Thunder of True Word*, composed by the prolific Sakya master Dhongthog Rinpoché, Tenpai Gyaltsen, and one of the few in this debate to have been translated into English.²⁵ This work is actually a response to a letter written by Geshé Kalsang Gyatso, the founder of the New Kadampa Tradition, who had entered the fray at this point. However, at this book's core is a continuing discussion of Dorjé Shukden's nature and the legitimacy—or rather illegitimacy—of his violent deeds. Dhongthog Rinpoché states that past Geluk practitioners of the deity suffered misfortune precisely because they worshipped this “evil spirit” as an enlightened being.²⁶ He says further that Pabongkha and his next incarnation both suffered unfortunate deaths because of his promotion of Shukden.²⁷ Dhongthog Rinpoché goes so far as to claim that the Reting Rinpoché scandal, and even the invasion of Tibet by China and the current misfortunes Tibetans are suffering in exile, are due to Geluk masters revering Dorjé Shukden.²⁸ As with

23. See Tā la'i bla ma 14 1996.

24. See Tā la'i bla ma 14 2010a, 2010b, and 2013.

25. See Kilty 2019.

26. See Dhongthog 2000, 16.

27. See Dhongthog 2000, 18–21.

28. See Dhongthog 2000, 23.

Trijang Rinpoché's book, Dhongthog Rinpoché cites authoritative scripture and the works of past masters throughout his text to buttress his claims. For instance, he quotes a Hevajra *torma* offering rite to assert the hierarchical inferiority of worldly spirits to enlightened beings. He also cites a Palden Lhamo ritual text written by the nineteenth-century Rimé founder Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo to explain how devotion to Shukden upsets the goddess herself.²⁹

Dhongthog Rinpoché further says that Dzemé Rinpoché suffered a stroke in 1987 right before performing the consecration rite for a new Shukden statue. He was vocally and physically impaired until his death in 1996, and such misfortune was punishment for his support of Shukden, meted out by the protector deity Rāhula.³⁰ Dhongthog Rinpoché states that Rāhula caused Pabongkha's death as well.³¹ So regardless of one's position, there is a deity that protects the tradition through legitimate violence and another either acting illegitimately or not acknowledged to be acting at all, depending on the position of the authority figure. In either case, through the language of divine retribution and attribution—interpreted through divinations,³² oracular prophecies, or dreams and visions—the seemingly random misfortunes of past Tibetan masters are reoriented to reflect the intentional violence enacted through the spiritual agency of an enlightened protector deity. In the *Yellow Book*, this violence is legitimized through a number of doctrinal perspectives in order to provide an interpretation that reinforces Dorjé Shukden's enlightened actions and intentions. Other masters in turn argue against this characterization, drawing on the same mechanisms of scriptural legitimation. This debate results in a holy war of words that coats the vagaries of oral history and biography in a patina of cosmic motivation, enlightened activity, and compassionate violence.

To return to Selengut's criteria, we see that they apply well to both the cosmic vision being propounded by the *Yellow Book* and to the evolution of the commentarial battles that it instigated. The text speaks to a desire to defend pure Geluk teachings from enemies within and without the tradition; Dorjé Shukden, in particular, is believed to punish deviant activities in order to ensure textual fidelity and conformity of praxis; and charismatic masters like Dzemé Rinpoché, and Pabongkha and Trijang Rinpoché before him, as well as his opponents and supporters, use their authoritative writings to enforce this narrative and direct their followers to promote similar views.³³ In the *Yellow Book*, Dorjé Shukden is portrayed as an enlightened warrior monk fighting a holy war against heretics who would muddy the sacred stream of transmission. This work and the polemical writings that followed are rife with doctrinal justifications to support or attack such a portrayal.

29. See Dhongthog 2000, 36–37.

30. For more on the protector deity Rāhula, see Bailey 2012, 2015, and 2019a.

31. See Dhongthog 2000, 9, 19–20, respectively.

32. See the following pages in the translation: 35–36, 68–69.

33. For an overt anti-Shukden contrast, see Kilty 2019, 153, 212–213.

By way of my own critique, while Selengut's framework maps well onto the Shukden debate as a dialectical metaphor, the typology in and of itself is not very precise. The language of "Holy War" is still too Eurocentric and full of Western cultural baggage. It also elides the indigenous understanding of concepts like violence and conflict, and their relationships to religion. Finally, Selengut's criteria are so broad that with a simple shift in terminology it could equally apply to secular, political, or nationalistic contexts. This would bring the theory more in line with discussions of civil religion, which could be fruitful, but would likely stray too far from the semiotic value of "Holy War" for it to continue to be useful.

Nevertheless, this exercise spurs valuable observations on how the violence associated with Dorjé Shukden is justified through Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine. There appears to be a tiering of motivations behind these wrathful activities. First, Dorjé Shukden acts as a force of karmic retribution by harming with disease and misfortune, or shortening the lifespan of, Geluk masters and government officials who mix teachings. Lamas are haunted across incarnations, aristocrats suffer retaliation, and even sacred sites and government institutions are destroyed due to this divine retribution. Second, when believed to be an enlightened being, Shukden is using skillful means to teach these individuals and others the value of keeping their lineage pure in hopes of bringing them closer to enlightenment. The deity is ultimately acting out of compassion as an emanation of the Buddha's inconceivable activities. Finally, there is the sense that whether one is the harmer, like Dorjé Shukden, or the harmed, like the heretical masters, both are empty of inherent existence and these violent interactions are ultimately part of the divine play of enlightened beings. In the *Yellow Book* and other relevant works, authoritative scriptures are cited, and common doctrinal language is used to support these narrative paradigms. Given his continued controversial nature, and the steady escalation of the conflict surrounding Dorjé Shukden, he offers a ready case study for exploring religion and violence in Tibetan Buddhism. As Dreyfus describes in a more recent article:

The deity is in charge of protecting its followers from evil but in doing so, it mimics and reproduces the very evil that it is supposed to protect from. This is why the deity is thought to be effective, but this is also why its actions are at times particularly troubling. For when Shukden enacts its violence to protect the Geluk tradition, it becomes unclear on which side this violence is. Is it a force for the good, or is it a force that is out of control, killing several virtuous religious figures?³⁴

34. Dreyfus 2008, 65–66.

Beyond the above observations, the following translation is intended to advance the conversation on this important issue in contemporary Tibetan Buddhism. Moreover, it provides valuable orally transmitted insight into Tibetan attitudes on politics and religion over the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries.

Commentary

When I first began studying literary Tibetan twenty years ago with Bryan Cuevas at Florida State University, he told me about his experiences as a graduate student studying Tibetan at the University of Virginia with Georges Dreyfus, my grandprofessor, as it were. When his students would complain about the Tibetan not making sense, Dreyfus would retort with, “The Tibetan makes perfect sense; you don’t make sense!” And so continued a longstanding lineage of scholars struggling to translate Tibetan in a way that was both true to the original language and yet still accessible in another. This is a perennial problem in all translation efforts, and I am understandably influenced by Cuevas for the “middle way” approach I draw from him in the endeavor. In terms of English translation, being too accurate to the Tibetan can often make the meaning obscure and the syntax stilted. Moreover, Tibetan sentences often come off as run-on by English grammatical standards, so putting in sometimes artificial, but helpful, sentence breaks is necessary. By contrast, being too focused on English clarity can sacrifice the accuracy and specificity conveyed in the Tibetan. Given the often poetic and layered structuring of even prose Tibetan texts, translating such subtlety into English can be challenging to say the least.

Beyond the practical obstacles, the sensitivity of the text cannot be ignored. Given Dreyfus’s own work on this book, I spoke with him via personal correspondence on the feasibility of making an English translation of the *Yellow Book* available. Understandably, he had misgivings, since the controversy the book sparked has died down some over the last decade and he felt it unnecessary to stir it further, and to let sleeping dogs lie—a fitting English idiom given a foreboding circumstance experienced below by Tsenya Tulku. Nevertheless, given the book’s infamous importance to contemporary Tibetan history, religion, and politics, it seemed to me a disservice not to make it available for examination and rhetorical excavation, especially given the incendiary dialectic that exploded after its publication. Furthermore, the text is of genuine significance to Tibetan Buddhist practitioners; whether they propitiate Dorjé Shukden as an enlightened being or curse him as a pernicious ghost, this text is an important resource in their rhetorical arsenal. Ultimately, the *Yellow Book* should be made available to more audiences, scholars, and devotees as the debate on Shukden’s ontological, epistemological, and narrative identity continues.

The Yellow Book

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Translation

Swelling Roar of Amassed Clouds of Nectar and Black Clouds Flickering with Nooses of Fearsome Lightning: The Teachings of the Capable Father Lama Conveying the Origins of the Great Protector of the Teachings, Mighty Dorjé Shukden, who is Great with Power and Strength

[3] The Lama is inseparable from Mañjuśrī, Master of the Enemy of Time. At his feet I pay homage to his body, speech, and mind with great devotion!

If the master whose words are mistaken for the *maṇḍala* of wisdom—the great perception of unshakeable awareness before and after meditation—reads this golden letter in order to be praised, may it make his speech and mind what one desires of the treasure of awareness!³⁵

The area that dissolves the orange DHĪḤ—the essence syllable for the wisdom of awareness, the mind (*blo*) treasure—into the illuminating sun is the top of the head, yet a crown with a nice (*bzang*) golden hue [was placed] deceptively above it by the one said to have a famous (*grags*) smile. Elegant teachings that clear away such errors will expel the wicked words in the expressions of the summer-born one. These [teachings] were uncovered in the manner of a pure and complete (*pa'i*) state, and firmly apprehended by a deep and vast mind in the presence of all the Victorious Ones long ago. Their splendor (*dpal*) is praiseworthy. (*Blo bzang grags pa'i dpal* = Tsongkhapa, 1357–1419)³⁶

Even the sense of the mind (*blo*) obscured by ignorance will instantly grasp the excellent (*bzang*) path, yet the great perception of supreme wisdom (*ye shes*) will quickly demonstrate (*bstan*) the point of awareness, apprehend (*'dzin*) images that are illusory, and string together the jeweled garland of primordial unity. Its glorious supremacy, [4] together with the treasure of monastic discipline, will spread widely (*rgya*) and be unwavering. Nevertheless, sexual union is a mistaken way to establish what one desires of the authentic supreme union of bliss and emptiness. Tsokyé (*mtsho*) Dorjé [Padmasambhava], who was prideful in essence, enjoyed it in his heart until his enlightenment. May he protect us with playful dances! (*Blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho* = Trijang Rinpoché, 1901–1981)³⁷

In the middle of a mass of terrifying and wrathful flames—as fierce as weapons against the hearts of evil doers and the life forces of the demon horde—the vajra (*rdo rje*) body of the sky realm, indestructible space and awareness, increased with the nourishment of the perfectly pure wisdom nectar of immortality. Even

35. Each line in this quatrain is 9 syllables long.

36. Each line in this quatrain is 19 syllables long.

37. Each line in this quatrain is 23 syllables long.

though he blackened the sacred moon, [Rahula] was defeated by the stains of wanton behavior and defilements. This very Rahula, who wields strength (*shugs*) and was angry at those who destroy the life force of living beings, praised the warrior god of the Geluk (*ldan*) teachings. (*Rdo rje shugs ldan* = Dorjé Shukden)³⁸

The marvelous tidings of fierce anger toward the enemy who hates the most excellent of beings are a treasury of the capable father lama's words. The *Symphony of Music Delighting the Ocean of Oath-Bound Ones* is a conch shell of discussion that clearly instilled wonder in all sentient beings. Although [the book] was thoroughly encouraged with the breath of discernment to expel the infectious harm of improper behavior toward the life essence of the unimpaired and immaculate Dharma, I am certain that this companion [piece] will delight the guardian of the teachings with a careful duty toward separating the 1000-petalled lotus of genuine understanding.³⁹

In this regard here, [5] the play of wisdom of all the Victorious Ones is wrathful Mañjuśrī, who appears as lord of all the haughty spirits of phenomenal existence. The watchman who protects those who uphold the tradition that bears the crown of the Yellow Hats, as if they were his own child, brings violent punishments down like thunderbolts on the enemies that practice immoral views and tenets, as well as the ten objects of destruction. He annihilates the evil doers that roam the ten directions. This lord of all blood-drinking wrathful deities moves like a storm of pestilence and poison and black apocalyptic winds in the middle of a garland of dark red flames. He is the doctor who cures the chronic disease of the three poisons. He is the warrior god who protects oath-bound yogins. He is the warlord of the life forces of a thousand *vidyādharas* and *mantric* adepts, as well as all the demon-taming butchers. This supreme god, emanating Dharma protector, and great King Spirit (*rgyal po*) is Mighty Dorjé Shukden. The extensive form of his entire hagiography of three secrets was referenced and mentioned by the hero who accomplished the state of unity, the incomparably kind and capable father lama, the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang, in order to benefit [others]. This should be known from the *Music Delighting the Ocean of Oath-Bound Ones: An Account of the Marvelous Biography of the Three Secrets of the Supreme God who Protects the Geluk Teachings, the Great Emanating Dharma Protector Mighty Dorjé Shukden*, which was composed by the Venerable [Trijang] Losang Yeshé Tenzin Gyatso Palsangpo. [6] [My book] should expound on the unclear aspects in that [text] in the manner of a respectful supplement.

38. Each line in this quatrain is 19 syllables long.

39. Each line in this quatrain is 23 syllables long.

Moreover, regarding the praise toward Mighty Dorjé Shukden spoken countless eons ago:

Praise to you, warrior god of the Yellow Hat teachings who smashes like dust particles those great masters, ordinary people, and high officials who allow the Geluk teachings to be mixed and corrupted!⁴⁰

Within *Music Delighting the Ocean of Oath-Bound Ones*, in the commentary concerning this praise, it says:

Furthermore, while individuals like great lamas who ruled on the throne that protected society as lords of Tibet, great and small incarnate lamas with wonderfully arranged garlands of marvelous successive lives, holy men rich with the qualities of scriptural learning and realization, high officials exalted by great lands and labor, and prominent chiefs arrogant with family lineage, dominion, power, and wealth are [all] undeniably adherents of the Gentle Protector Tsongkhapa's teachings, their mouths need not water for other [teachings that are different] in all respects from the view, meditation, and conduct of Jé Lama's precious Sūtra and Tantra teachings. Various undesirable misfortunes—such as the King Spirit's punishments, lawsuits and court cases, and untimely deaths—have fallen upon numerous high and low laity and monastics who, dissatisfied with these very [teachings], [7] created all kinds of confused mixtures and corruptions with other views and tenets. Signs of these suitable wrathful punishments manifest acutely, swiftly, and directly; it is laudable how they have come about through the great warrior god who raises the status of the Geluk teachings to the sky. Although a discussion of these extraordinary accounts is worthwhile, and there are many of them, I am afraid to grow weary of writing. Not only that, but at this time, because I suspect that criticisms will become greater than the need, like the analogy of a slingshot stone in a temple, I did not take the trouble to write them down.⁴¹

These well-known extraordinary accounts that were not written down were told to me in whatever casual manner they were transmitted by the great compassion of the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang himself. Being [too] valuable to forget, I took this collection as the basis on the one hand, and have additional information on the other, since I found a few [other] reliable

40. Each line in this quatrain is 9 syllables long.

41. See Khri byang 03, 199[?], 137.1–138.1; Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang, n.d., 121–122.

accounts. [8] I set about preparing these wondrous accounts in the form of a supplement to *Music Delighting the Ocean of Oath-Bound Ones*, [being as it is] a commentary on praises and a biography.

The jeweled treasury of the secret words of the capable father lama, the treasure that grants all the supreme awareness one desires, clears away the poverty of ignorance and serves as a companion. If the thief of forgetfulness carries away my subject, it is my fault.

The multicolored rainbow light of hypocrisy always shines, and the body grows stout with the dark stacking of the three poisons. But, together with the elaborate display of the peacock of mental cognition, I will transform these manifestations of demented noise.⁴²

The Pañchen Lamas

The Eighth Pañchen Lama

The play of the magical emanations of Amitabha, lord of the Land of Bliss, was the great and supreme all-seeing Pañchen Losang Palden Chökyi Drakpa Tenpai Wangchuk (Eighth Pañchen Lama). From a young age the expanse of his intelligence in all fields of knowledge overflowed. This great and holy being of transcendent learning and accomplishment was especially noble. While it is true that he manifested the power to act widely for the benefit of the Dharma and all beings, he [nonetheless] did not make as his principal practice of pure views and tenets the Geluk tradition of the absolutely perfect path—complete and without errors since it is elegantly understood with the threefold analysis of the Gentle Protector, the great Dharma King Tsongkhapa. [9] Rather, he studied in great number the contents of the Kama and Terma Dharma cycles of the Nyingma Secret Mantra. This is clearly described in the Pañchen [Lama]’s hagiography and commentary on praises for the Great King Spirit [Dorjé Shukden]. Because he was acting in this manner, the great King Spirit who protects the Dharma, Mighty Dorjé Shukden himself, admonished him again and again not to act like this. Yet, because his mind was inharmonious, he visualized the great Dharma protector and undertook the perverse [ritual] action of wrathfully burning him. At that time, it so happened that a monk had given him a *thangka* of the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden. So, by way of a proper symbolic representation of actually forcing the Dharma protector into the sacrificial fire, he burned that very *thangka* in the hearth of a fire *pūjā* together with other fire offerings. Aside from becoming permeated with ghee oil, for example, that [*thangka*] was not

42. Each line in these two quatrains is 9 syllables long.

in fact burned by the fire, but it was removed from the hearth and defiled by many bad substances. He also pressed [the *thangka*] beneath the doorstep of his apartment at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. Because he performed such destructive rites, this Pañchen Rinpoché, having reached the age of thirty, took ill in the Water-Sheep year of the fifteenth sexagenarian cycle [1883] and passed away. On top of this, a terrifying well-dressed monk with a beard [10] appeared in his apartment and displayed many magical illusions. In this way, Pañchen Rinpoché Tenpai Wangchuk's goals were not accomplished.

The Ninth Pañchen Lama

His next incarnation, the supreme Pañchen Losang Thupten Chökyi Nyima Gelek Namgyal Pal-sangpo (Ninth Pañchen Lama) did not study any [material] reputed to be Nyingma teachings or treasure texts. While this was indeed the case, hostility arose between god and man in the time of his previous incarnation. Sudden difficulties subsequently arose, like obstinance entering the hearts of the servants of both the lama and the government. Due to the actions of some, the misfortune of conflicting intentions occurred more and more between the government and the lama. Because of this, he needed to secretly journey to the countries of China and Mongolia. Later, although he desired to return to the Ütsang region, he could not carry out his wishes because of various internal and external difficulties. In the end, having reached the age of 55, he passed away in the Fire-Ox year [1937] in the Kham [town] of Jyekundo.

The year before, in the Fire-Mouse year [1936], Jé Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo visited Jyekundo to have an audience with Pañchen Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché. At that time, Pañchen Rinpoché entrusted Jé Pabongkha with the following, [11] “Since you are a reincarnation of Dülzin Lodrö Bepa (1400–1475), through that auspicious karmic connection, those of Tashi Lhunpo naturally developed love and respect for you. Thus, you should definitely go to Tashi Lhunpo and give an extensive Dharma talk. Also, you should retrieve the *thangka* of the Dharma protector [Shukden] that the last Pañchen had previously pressed [beneath his doorstep].” In accordance with such orders, Jé Pabongkha later visited the great and glorious community of Tashi Lhunpo in the Iron-Dragon year of the sixteenth sexagenarian cycle [1940]. Because of this, he gave extensive Dharma talks to laity and monastics, high and low, which were incalculably illustrated by the stages of the path to enlightenment. He also retrieved the Dharma protector's *thangka* that was defiled by bad substances. Then, in the Tashi Lhunpo protector chapel, he practiced the mending and restoring liturgy and an activity entrustment rite for [Dorjé] Shukden, along with a petition offering. He also placed body, speech, and mind supports for the Dharma protector Shukden there. Such acts cultivated a *samaya* arrangement akin to a mutual reconciliation between god and human, between the “Exalted Victory Banner” residence⁴³ and the Dharma protector.

43. Tib. *Bla brang rgyal mtshan mthon po*. Built by the First Dalai Lama, this is the residence of the Pañchen Lama at Tashi Lhunpo.

The Tenth Paṅchen Lama

After that, the next supreme all-seeing Paṅchen Rinpoché, [12] Losang Trinlé Lhundrup Chökyi Gyaltzen Palsangpo (Tenth Paṅchen Lama), was born in the Earth-Tiger year [1938], in a chief's house within Podo [town], Shangho county, in the Qinghai Province of Amdo. Holy signs clearly appeared, and a variety of his deeds arose throughout the region of Amdo. Nevertheless, his going to Ütsang and being installed on the throne of the last Paṅchen [Lama] was delayed by various difficulties. From the beginning, as soon as the supreme Paṅchen Rinpoché went to Tashi Lhunpo, he immediately desired to compose the *Spontaneous Melody of the Four Activities*,⁴⁴ a rite within the mending and restoring liturgy for the fivefold family of the great King Spirit Dorjé Shukden. When he was encouraged to do so by others, he accordingly composed this new [text]. Such activities as these created a state of mutual acceptance between god and man.

Later, however, since there was a statue of the great King Spirit [Dorjé Shukden] in the “Wholly Shining Sunbeams of Great Bliss” apartment of the “Exalted Victory Banner” residence, the Paṅchen [Lama's] tutor, Kachen Ang Nyima-la, requested of the apartment's caretaker, “this statue of a malicious demon needs to be removed!” The caretaker consulted the current all-seeing [Paṅchen] Rinpoché, who told him, “Do not remove it, place it in a corner where the tutor will not see it.” [13] That Kachen persistently obstructed [the Paṅchen Lama], saying over and over again, “Since the great King Spirit is displeasing, because we are heart protectors of the pure Kadam tradition, if we rely on many gods, it will yield disaster.” He forbade the practice of the great King Spirit's mending and restoring liturgy in the protector chapel of the “Great Bliss” mansion at Tashi Lhunpo. Among those in Tashi Lhunpo's main protector chapel, he also prevented the medium of the great King Spirit, named Karma—whose channels were opened by Jé Pabongkha—from becoming possessed, saying that the Dharma protector was not allowed to descend. On top of this, although there was a custom of performing an extensive possession ritual annually on the third day of the first Tibetan month, he allowed it to be halted. The very same day that he first stopped [the practice], there were inauspicious omens such as a great fight breaking out [between] Shigatsé police and the Amdo assistants to the Tashi Lhunpo resident lamas. Not only that, but Ang Nyima-la himself, in a great procession that was visiting the Paṅchen [Lama], was thrown off by his horse at least twice. After a new mansion was built for the “Great Bliss” mansion, during the door opening ceremony, [14] the Dharma lord [protector] of the mountain peak behind Tashi Lhunpo caused the prayer flag[-covered] soul tree to break and fall with hailstones and struck the “Great Bliss” mansion with lightning. Because of such occurrences, the mending and restoring liturgy for the great King Spirit [Dorjé Shukden] needed to be reestablished according to earlier tradition.

Later, in the Wood-Horse year [1954], Paṅchen Rinpoché was invited to China by the

44. See Paṅ chen 10 1983.

Communists as a representative of [the first session of] the National People's Congress, and he went accordingly. Immediately after he departed from Tsang, great unprecedented flood waters burst forth from the place called Nyingro, uphill from Gyantsé in the Tsang region. Kunkyopling Monastery, the chief abode for Pañchen Rinpoché's incarnation line, along with its sacred items, were completely washed away in a torrent of water. When that rush of water came from far away, it reportedly became distinctly red like flickering flames. The Pañchen [Lama's] tutor Ang Nyima-la was also not able to return from China and he passed between the fangs of the Lord of Death [passed away]. Like the saying goes, "If you err on the first of the month, [it will continue] until the last of the month."⁴⁵ Because he did not practice pure views and tenets during the incarnation of [the Eighth] Pañchen [Lama] Tenpai Wangchuk Rinpoché, a stream of disasters flowed like the river Ganges without interruption.

Sigyap Rinpoché

The previous incarnation of Trehor Sigyap, [15] named Losang Palden Chökyi Wangchuk was a holy man rich with the qualities of scriptural learning and realization. From an early age he was utterly drawn to the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden and treated him like he was the chief of protectors. Sigyap Rinpoché trained in the immense scriptural tradition at the great monastery of Tashi Lhunpo. He became a great lord of learning and went to Kham after achieving the Kachen degree. When he left, as he was bowing farewell at the feet of Shé Ngulchu Rinpoché Losang Chöpel, also known as Yangchen Drupé Dorjé (1809–1887), Ngülchu Rinpoché gave him a prayer scarf and a protective knot and placed his two hands on Sigyap Rinpoché's head. With great affection he advised him, "If you do not protect the Geluk teachings, Shukden's power and strength are very great." Then Sigyap Rinpoché went toward Kham and acted extensively for the benefit of the Dharma and sentient beings.

Later [Sigyap Rinpoché] went in the direction of Ütsang and, when he met with the great all-knowing, all-seeing [Ninth] Pañchen [Lama] Losang Thupten Chökyi Nyima Gelek Namgyal Palsangpo at Tashi Lhunpo, [16] Pañchen Rinpoché was greatly pleased and told Sigyap that he should come into his presence often. One day Pañchen Rinpoché instructed Sigyap as such, "We should be an inseparable pair. Toward that end, you must act as the abbot of Kunkyopling Monastery." Accordingly, he was made the abbot at Kunkyopling and resided there inseparably from Pañchen Rinpoché. At that time, the items of the previous [Eighth] incarnation of the Pañchen [Lama], Tenpai Wangchuk—such as his Nyingma textual manuscripts for practicing, offering utensils, and seat cushion—were gifted to Sigyap Rinpoché, and he was told, "May you be the owner of these [now]!" As such, Sigyap Rinpoché also practiced according to his instruction, and because of that he needed to study and practice all kinds of Nyingma textual cycles. Later, a

45. A proverb equivalent to, "When it rains, it pours."

tantric Nyingma lama named Kyungtrul came to Tibet and into Sigyap Rinpoché's presence. He often urged him as such, "If you bestow the Nyingma textual cycles, your activities will become equal to that of the supreme conqueror, the Great Fifth [Dalai Lama], and it will be very good. On top of that, if you also study the entire Nyingma *Treasury of Precious Treasure Texts* (*Rin chen gter mdzod*), [17] you will become a lord of the entire cycle of Nyingma texts. If you definitively listen to them, you will receive them in an excellent manner. Not only that, if you affix to the end of the *Treasury of Precious Treasure Texts* the teaching of the holy one's own vision of the Lion-Faced One, good will come about." Because of this, Sigyap Rinpoché decided to listen to the entire *Treasury of Precious Treasure Texts* in the presence of Kyungtrul.

On many of these occasions, time and time again, the great King Spirit Dorjé Shukden would descend into a medium and say [to Sigyap Rinpoché], "You should not study the Nyingma teachings. If you bestow them as such, your lifespan and activities will be cut short. Although I have made quite a few strong prophecies of such misfortune, you have not listened." Meanwhile, a god named Pari Toktsen also descended [into the medium and said], "If indeed I, a malevolent demon, need to offer a flesh tax to old man Samyé [Monastery], you must gift flesh to me!" Sigyap Rinpoché said, "Like play, the separateness [of the Nyingma teachings] does not exist. If I need to, I am allowed to bestow them." Toktsen replied, "As I have been saying, you do not need to concern yourself with me, you need [to concern yourself] with the great King Spirit Dorjé Shukden." [18] Nevertheless, he acted indifferently and did not listen. One time, the great King Spirit Dorjé Shukden possessed [a medium] and was very angry. He said, "I will not strike you with the claws of Death [now], but if I do strike, I will not be able to release you!" With such peaceful and wrathful [speeches], he repeatedly exhorted that [Sigyap Rinpoché] must uphold the pure Geluk views and tenets. Nevertheless, Sigyap Rinpoché did not heed this at all, saying, "Although this or that holy man is the same in hindering past and future lifetimes, since I have consented to the lama's teachings there is no way around it." Ignoring [Shukden], he studied the *Treasury of Precious Treasure Texts*.

[Later, Sigyap Rinpoché] rented a summer house in Norgyé Nangpa or Trongsar Shika just east of Lhasa, and from the beginning he listened to quite a few other instructions on Nyingma teachings in Kyungtrul's presence. Then more and more miraculous displays appeared from the Dharma protector, the great King Spirit [Dorjé] Shukden. Kyungtrul requested, "The two of us, lama and disciple, should abide in a very pure meditational retreat," and they did so. At that time the Prime Minister in Lhasa, Shedra Paljor Dorjé, became suddenly sick. [19] He urgently requested, "Sigyap Rinpoché must come to perform a longevity empowerment!" Thus, since he had no choice but to abruptly emerge from retreat, [Sigyap Rinpoché] had to go. After he finished performing the longevity empowerment for the Prime Minister, he went to the home of Lokhé-la, the keyholder for Tengyeling Monastery, and duly handed whatever possessions he had over to the treasurer, saying, "Thank you for acting like such a good servant. You will not be disappointed

from this day forth, and I will not forget this.” He repeatedly consoled him [as such]. Then, he immediately returned to the summer house in Trongsar Shika and suddenly became gravely ill. He passed away a day later near dawn. About mid-morning of that day, the great King Spirit [Dorjé] Shukden took possession of the resident head cook, a respectable monk. [At the same time,] Kyungtrul, wearing Padmasambhava’s scholarly cap on his head and holding a nine-pronged *vajra* in his hand, said “HŪṀ HŪṀ!” while performing the scorpion *mudrā*. When that happened, the Dharma protector, the great King Spirit [Dorjé] Shukden, laughed through the mouth of that medium, “HĀ HĀ!” and clapped his hands, then [the cook] woke up. Immediately, the stomach of Khyungtrul’s best horse became distended. [20] The King Spirit’s affliction intensified and [the horse] died.

If Sigyap Rinpoché had not studied the Nyingma teachings and was content with the [Geluk] tradition that bears completely pure views and practices [like] a crown of refined gold, he could have had an unrivaled lifespan and enlightened activities. However, because of [these] obstacles, this did not happen as such. [Regarding] these accounts of Sigyap Rinpoché: the one named Gyümé Trehor Ngakrampa Losang Gyatso remained close with this previous incarnation of Sigyap Rinpoché for a long time up until the latter died—like he was equal to the Rinpoché’s attendants. Later, a resident lama of Yakdekhyam Monastery listened to his words in detail and said he was a reliable source; I heard them from Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang. Not only that but the very next incarnation, the Sigyap Rinpoché that is currently alive and well, also has about half of his face covered with a dirty blemish [birthmark]. As such, embracing a way of life that displeases this severe Dharma protector is a great transgression.

Sera Jé Tsenya Tulku

The former incarnation of Sera Jé Tsenya Tulku also abandoned the genuine, complete, errorless, and learned precepts of the Victorious One. [21] After he relied on such [teachers] as Kyungtrul, he called them profound and elegant and was deceived onto superficial paths. Because he practiced immoral views and tenets, the great Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden] was displeased and displayed many miraculous illusions. A little while after Tsenya Rinpoché studied the Nyingma teachings, at a house in Lhasa near Shedra called Ragamé, he read and received transmissions in the collected works of Jé Tsongkhapa and his two chief disciples. At that time, his nose bled a lot and interruptions and difficulties repeatedly arose. Tsenya Rinpoché additionally told Jé Pabongkha that even the letters of the collected works looked completely red, like they had been written in blood.

One time [Tsenya Tulku] went to the north of Lhasa, and in that northern region he became violently ill. Because of this, he sent a special courier from the north to offer a confession to the Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden]. The 90th Trichen of Ganden Monastery, Trehor Jampa Chödrak Rinpoché (1876–1937/1947), and Kyabjé Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo, both said,

“Please intercede with the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden and offer him a confession.” Then Jé Pabongkha said, “These [Nyingma] teachings are unacceptable. [22] The Dharma protector himself took on the aspiration to guard the extraordinary Geluk teachings and received the *samaya* vow in the presence of the great Gentle Protector Tsongkhapa. The Ganden Trichen Rinpoché is the representative of the great Jé Tsongkhapa. Therefore, regarding the present intercession, it would be good if you requested it of Trichen Rinpoché.” He promised to request the Ganden Trichen Rinpoché accordingly and [the latter] went to Trodé Khangsar Temple in Lhasa. When the Dharma protector possessed the medium, he was offered a confession pertaining to Tsenya Rinpoché. The great King Spirit [Dorjé] Shukden said [through his oracle], “Ask my minister to bestow whatever other prophecies [you want].” Accordingly, [Trichen Rinpoché] offered a petition libation and a confession to [Shukden’s] speech minister, the wild Martial Spirit (*btsan*) Khaché Marpo, at Mönkyi Khangsar. When he did so, the wild Martial Spirit evinced many harsh expressions so that even Trichen Rinpoché himself became fearful. The Martial Spirit said in prophecy, “First, the activities of he, the noble one, are many; second, the ferocity of me, the demon, is great. Whatever [warnings] came about, he said he did not understand; his death is imminent. Regarding this, Trichen Rinpoché himself will be the one who goes to Tritok Goshipa in the future, living as a common Geshé while [the abbotship] passes to Sera Jé Tsangpa Lhundrup Tsöndrü Rinpoché (the 94th Trichen; d. 1949). [23] So it is said.”

Trichen Goshipa told [Tsenya Tulku] as such, and when Tsenya went north he was pursued by a gloomy red stray dog, like an aimless mastiff wandering wherever. Although there were many leopards at the Tsenya hermitage of Reting Monastery, they were not at all able to harm the dog. Then, after he went to Tsenya [hermitage, the dog] pursued him and arrived there. When Tsenya Rinpoché went to a village in the north called Chökhorgang, he said, “A roaming King Spirit will arrive after me.” He repeatedly threw a wrathful *torma* as a magical weapon by means of the Innermost Secret Hayagrīva. Although he performed such activities, they did not benefit him at all, and he died not long after. After Tsenya died, that dog from earlier also vanished. Not only that, his next incarnation, Tsenya Tulku, was also the same age as him [when] he studied the traditional scripture at Sera Jé College; there his reasoning and intellect quickly became the best. However, when [the monasteries of] Reting and Khardo were damaged, he was among the ringleaders who shot at the government in protest [24] and was arrested by the government military. A Sera Mé monk named Trongdöpa who protested with him was killed by the military and [Tsenya Tulku was forced to] wear his head and hands around his neck in public disgrace. He was guided through the main street of Lhasa, from the Potala Palace to Shöl village, and imprisoned with iron shackles on his feet. His discipline became defective in prison. The many appearances of such unfortunate omens were directly perceived and became reality.

The Tenth Pakpa Lha

The great illuminator of the doctrine in Barkham, Chamdo Pakpa Lha Hotoktu Losang Thupten Mipam Tsultrim Gyaltzen (the 10th Pakpa Lha) also did not take appropriate care to protect the pure Geluk views and tenets. Because he performed various senseless views and practices, his discipline became defective in the end. Therefore, he was punished by the Victorious Lord Thupten Gyatso (the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, 1876–1933) and did not become the religious and political authority of the central monastery in the Chamdo region. He had to live with the smallest of enlightened activities and such deeds were not successful. Later, he was at the summer house of the Pakchen [Pakpa Lha incarnation] line in Chamdo, called Sitoktang. There, in an outhouse, he did not see an abandoned bicycle piece when he was peeing. His feet slipped and [25] he fell, and a broken wheel fragment pierced the base of his penis. It created a great wound and regardless of whatever medical treatments were done, they were of no benefit. Urine would not even issue from the urethra but from the wound hole. Such bad ailments lasted a long time before he died.

These misfortunes also singularly authenticate the miraculous displays of the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden's displeasure. When the supreme Jé Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo journeyed through Kham and went to Chamdo, he stayed at the summer house of Pakchen Rinpoché for a day and a night. While Jé Pabongkha was sleeping one night, a vulture was perched on the roof. In his sleep, [he saw] on one side of the curtain two extremely large ruthless protectors [Dorjé Shukden and Khaché Marpo], and on the other side of the curtain stood the Pakchen Rinpoché himself looking very miserable. This holy man [Pakpa Lha] corrupted his views and tenets with impure mixing; thus, signs of such misfortune arose at the end of his [life's] activities. Jé Pabongkha told [all this] to his secretary Denma Losang Dorjé-la and others. The circumstances surrounding the illness responsible for the aforementioned death [26] were related by a fully ordained venerable monk named Khyenrap Jampa at Meru Kyikhar Monastery in the Khyungpo area of the Chamdo territory; he served among the personal attendants of Pakchen Rinpoché. Gyara Rinpoché of Chamdo reliably heard it from him and reported it to the great Kyabjé Kadrin Lamé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang.

The Sixth Nakchu Drupkhang Tulku

The Sixth Nakchu Drupkhang Tulku, Thupten Kalsang Tenzin (d. circa 1950) also did not claim ownership over the immaculate [teachings], [as discussed in] his hagiography and in those of his former incarnations, such as [the first] Jé Drupkhangpa Gelek Gyatso (1641–1713). He requested cycles from the Nyingma teachings, such as Gesar and Kīlaya, and practiced various approach and application rites. He mixed and corrupted the Geluk views and tenets with such practices. Because of this, the great King Spirit Dorjé Shukden was displeased and [Drupkhang Tulku] became severely ill. A lot of blood even issued from his nose continuously for a few days. In addition to this he said, "In a vision [I saw that] many different kinds of people were in my apartment.

In particular, many monks, although hindered, were not prevented from slipping inside. When that happens, great sorrow will come about.” In the end, [27] he passed away at the age of 37 while performing a rite for the Nyingma tutelary deity Vajrakumāra in the northern region of upper Amdo.

Regent Reting Rinpoché

Now I will explain how the King Spirit’s punishment befell the Regent Reting Rinpoché, who was enthroned as the governing lord of Tibet, through the miraculous illusions of the Great Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden. Namely, the fourth incarnation of Reting Rinpoché, Ngawang Yeshé Tenpai Gyaltzen Palsangpo, requested of the [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso, “When I pass away, you do not need to search for the Reting Rinpoché reincarnation from now on.” Along with this, he essentially gave complete ownership of the Reting estate to the supreme government before passing on. Nevertheless, the Supreme Dalai Lama returned ownership to the [Reting] estate and diligently completed extensive ritual services, like 100,000 *tsok* offerings, with the resident monks. On top of this, he granted whatever proclamations were needed to definitively search for and invite [Reting Rinpoché’s] supreme reincarnation. Accordingly, Reting Rinpoché’s reincarnation was born into a poor household in the region of Dakpo. At a young age, he had footprints that could trample hard rocks like they were reeds. [28] Later, he went before a row of religious supports at Reting Monastery and said, “I will see this again.” One day, while his mother was absent, the noodle soup inside the clay soup pot was overflowing, but before it could be ruined, he cunningly bound the lip of the soup pot with a shoelace like the pleated mouth of a leather bag. On the day [the government] was going to arrive in search of the reincarnation, he said with foreknowledge, “Newcomers will visit us today!” Then he threw a stake for tethering horses down on top of a firm boulder. There were many such extraordinary signs that definitively showed he was the genuine reincarnation. Also, by the edict of the Victorious Omniscient [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso, the Fifth Reting Rinpoché was given the name Thupten Jampal Yeshé Gyaltzen (1912/1919–1947) and he was installed on the throne of the Reting forefathers.

[Reting Rinpoché] studied at the Jépa Kenyen College of the great Dharma Center Sera Tekchenling. After he completed his education—such as making the monastic rounds during the Great Prayer Festival of Lhasa, receiving his [monastic] name, and taking his religious oaths—the [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso came in the Water-Monkey year [1932] to visit Reting Monastery especially, [29] and he seems to have given Reting Rinpoché confidential advice on governance and [other] such matters. Moreover, he also outwardly expressed great delight in Reting Rinpoché. In the Water-Bird year [1933], the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama passed away. For about two months after, the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers convened and took on the responsibility of governance. Nevertheless, in the presence of the General Assembly of Tibet, they then extensively debated who would be suitable to act as head of the administration.

In the end, they decided to appoint a lama as the Regent. The Supreme Reting Rinpoché, the incumbent [93rd] Ganden Tripa Yeshé Wangden (d. 1943)—otherwise known as Minyak Aming of Drepung Loseling College—and the tutor Purjok Jamgön Tulku Rinpoché were elected [as possible candidates]. As such, the former [90th] Ganden Tripa Trehor Jampa Chödrak Rinpoché (1876–1937/1947) was invited in front of the Noble Avalokiteśvara [statue] at the Potala Palace. Dough balls were rolled and according to this lottery divination the name of the Supreme Incarnation Reting Rinpoché emerged, so it was settled. On the tenth day of the first month of the Wood-Dog year in the sixteenth sexagenarian cycle [1934], [30] he was enthroned as the Regent, Protector of the Government, and accepted the responsibility of suitably maintaining the religious and secular administration of the great Ganden Podrang government. Specifically, he constructed a great golden reliquary [called] “Auspiciousness that Grants All Desires,” in which were placed the precious relics of the Supreme [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso, as well as *dhāraṇīs*, along with accompanying sacred objects.

Reting Rinpoché also searched for the precious reincarnation of the Dalai Lama. To this end, he performed dough ball divination in front of the precious Noble Avalokiteśvara [statue] to determine whether or not it was a karmically opportune time to go and carefully observe Lhamo Latso Lake; it was [indeed] revealed to be a karmically fortunate [time]. Accordingly, he went to observe Lhamo Lake and saw prophetic signs appear on the lake’s [surface]. As such, he searched for and invited the genuine reincarnation of the divine fortunate one on whom flowers of ours, the snow mountain folk [Tibetans], are strewn—the Universal Jewel, His Holiness the Great Dalai Lama. He installed [the Fourteenth Dalai Lama (b.1935)] on the exalted golden throne. Such activities [as these] were enormously effective and marvelous. In the Earth-Rabbit year [1939], his aims and those of the former Prime Minister Langdunpa Kunga Wangchuk (b. 19th c.) were mismatched, and because of this he almost resigned. [However,] he was given complete administrative responsibility by the Tibetan General Assembly and [31] was entreated to remain the Regent, Protector of the Government. On the fourth day of tenth month of the Earth-Rabbit year, he performed the tonsure ceremony for His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama in front of the Precious Jowo [Buddha statue] at the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, and [then] bestowed on him the layman vow to keep the five precepts. In the twelfth month of the Earth-Rabbit year, the Regent Reting Rinpoché again abruptly requested to resign from governing the administration. The Council of Ministers and the General Assembly summarized how capable he was. Like before, they urged him to remain [in office] by necessity, saying that the Dalai Lama was presently at a young age, but that he would succeed [to his majority] before long so there was no need to appoint another new regent at that time. Nevertheless, he unequivocally did not accept their entreaties. For his parting advice, he said it would be good if they requested the tutor Takdrak Rinpoché (1874–1952) to be the new Regent. After seven years of taking on the responsibility of the Regency, he left office on the tenth day of the twelfth month.

During that time, with regard to the particular monastic seat of Reting Rinpoché—since it was the monastic seat of Dromtön Gyalwai Jungné (1004/1005–1064), the source of the Kadampa teachings—[32] he should have embodied the exemplary biographies of the immaculate Kadampas. Moreover, the first Reting [Rinpoché], the great [54th] Ganden Tripa Ngawang Chokden (1677–1751), acted as the tutor of the [Seventh] Dalai Lama Kalsang Gyatso (1708–1757), and from then on subsequent reincarnations appropriately trained in accordance with the practices of the pure Geluk views and tenets. Accordingly, many genuine holy ones who uphold the excellent [Geluk] tradition that bears the yellow hat also urged [the current Reting Rinpoché] by necessity to uphold, preserve, and propagate, without blemish, the [Geluk] tradition of the incomparable Mount Ganden. Similarly, Jé Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo urged him also to make offerings, as well as to generally keep his precious commission. Accordingly, he wrote [Reting Rinpoché] a memorandum to continue to look at the practice manuals often. Generally, [the memorandum] said that he needed to enter [his practice] in the same way there are “table of contents notations”⁴⁶ at the beginning of the *Twenty-One Notes*, pith instructions for the *Guhyasamāja*, the system for engaging in listening, contemplating, and meditating on the great Gentle Protector Tsongkhapa’s teachings. If at the start he looks at the hagiographical cycles, things will become easier to understand. It is important that, along with this, he takes to heart the particulars of the holy forefathers’ writings. [33] Therefore, he [should] abide [according] to the hagiographical cycles, such as the *Great Hagiography of Lord [Tsongkhapa]*⁴⁷ and the two-volume *Hagiographies of the Lineage Masters of [Tsongkhapa’s] Graduated Path Teachings* within the collected works of Tse[chok]ling Yongzin Pandita [Yeshé Gyaltzen] (1713–1793).⁴⁸ In the end, he will abide in such bliss as that [which comes from] bearing the boundless teachings of the great learned and accomplished Geluk forefathers, one yet more luminous than the other and as vast as they are profound. With such words, [Pabongkha] again and again urged [Reting Rinpoché] that he should take as his own the successive immaculate hagiographies, a jewel garland of the indivisible forefathers of the Geluk doctrine.

Yet, [Reting Rinpoché] did not listen or understand at all, and his tenets became those of the one named Tsenyi Tulku [Jampal Norbu] of Chambo (1892–1960), rather than the long-standing tradition of the Lord Father Tsongkhapa.⁴⁹ He made [Tsenyi Tulku] equal to his chief lama from whom he received empowerments, transmissions, and oral instructions, and at that time [Reting

46. Tib. *dkar chag tho'i yig chung*. As an expression, this seems to suggest using the aid of the notations often written in small font between the lines of formal texts that add context, assist memory, and improve understanding.

47. Tib. *rje'i rnam thar chen mo*. Given the context, this likely refers to the *rje tsong kha pa'i rnam thar chen mo* (BDRC: W2DB4600) by Blo bzang tshul khriims (1740–1810).

48. Tib. *lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*. This important collection of master hagiographies (BDRC: W986) was composed by the first *Tshe mchog gling yongs 'dzin* incarnate lama, *Ye shes rgyal mtshan*, preceptor to the Eighth Dalai Lama (1758–1804).

49. Tib. *'Jam dpal snying po*; this refers specifically to Tsongkhapa’s epithet when he abided in the Tuṣita heavenly realm.

Rinpoché] continually relied on and met with him. Because of this, in [Tsenyi Tulku's] presence he studied innumerable cycles of Nyingma teachings, such as treasure texts for the tutelary deity Heruka Vajrakīla and [those rediscovered by] the treasure revealer Chöjé Lingpa (1682–1720). He was even entrusted by Tsenyi Tulku to compose a “stability of life” supplication prayer for His Eminence the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama, [34] which had a lot of coded language from the Nyingma teachings. Furthermore, he studied with Shingdrup Tulku, as well as many famous treasure revealers. He also received guidance on Dzokchen in the presence of Sangyé Dorjé, the disciple of the Dergé abbot Ngaklo.⁵⁰ In short, through such [activities] he turned away from faultlessly maintaining the approach and expositions of the holy forefathers.

Because of this, the extraordinary guardian of the Geluk teachings— king of the warrior gods— the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden himself was displeased. Ultimately, due to [Reting Rinpoché's] ceaseless offenses, the crucial situation happened where his plan failed, and he and his followers were gravely ruined. In this regard, when Reting [Monastery] was being repaired, the construction supervisor was Shesur Shenkawa Gyurmé Sönam Topgyé (1896–1967). At that time, he was appointed by the supreme Reting Rinpoché to paint images of the host of deities for the tutelary deity Vajrakumāra, the great glorious [Vajra]kīla, on the assembly hall murals. Not only that, the supreme Reting Rinpoché conducted a strict approaching retreat for the tutelary deity [Vajra]kīla. When he slept during that period, he had a portentous dream of a monk placing a red heart onto a plate and [35] offering it to him. Reting Rinpoché considered it an auspicious circumstance that was akin to the Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden] being employed as his servant, and he told the construction supervisor Shenkawa, who replied, “I wonder if the portentous dream was actually good?” Then Shenkawa told the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang about it.

Not only that but later, when Reting's estate and followers were defeated, the Khardo estate and its properties were completely confiscated by the government. As such, the Regent Takdrak Rinpoché told both the great and supreme Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang and Tsenshap Gyatsoling Tulku, “You should search for texts that have the prophecies of [the Third] Khardo Rikzin Chökyi Dorjé (d.1820) among Khardo's manuscripts.” Accordingly, when the two investigated [the manuscripts], among the various folios that were together with the Khardo forefather's prophecies, Khardo Tulku had a note that said, “Regarding Reting Rinpoché's health and religious activities, I did my best to put in place these prognostications for another lama.” Although now I cannot recollect the prognostic texts just as they were, [36] the great Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang said to me, “The way the omen was written down was that there was a *vajra* cross without a core, and behind it a monk wearing a lacquered hat appeared and sat down.” The *vajra* cross was a symbol for [Reting Rinpoché's] lifespan and religious activities, and the lack of a core therein was a sign of great calamities and misfortunes. The monk wearing a lacquered hat is an emanation of the great

50. Tib. *Sangs rgyas rdo rje*. The identity of this figure is unclear, though the Dergé abbot Ngaklo (*Sde dge mkhan po Ngag blo*) may refer to *Sde dge mkhan po Ngag dbang bsam gtan blo gros* (1868–1931).

Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden. This omen, which was ascertained [in this way], was able to clearly reveal the future.

As such, in the end both Reting Rinpoché and the Regent Takdrak Rinpoché had discordant aspirations in the Fire-Pig Year [1947]. Reting Rinpoché's faction was exposed as the ones at fault for [attempting to] harm the Regent Takdrak Rinpoché's life force. Because of this, a few high government officials discussed [the matter] and surreptitiously sent both Cabinet Minister Surkhang Wangchen Gelek (b. 1910) and Cabinet Minister Lhalu Gyurmé Tsewang Dorjé (1914–2011), along with military troops, to arrest Reting Rinpoché. Accordingly, they journeyed on the night of the thirteenth day of the second month and marched to Reting [Monastery]. Then Reting Rinpoché was arrested on the way while crossing the Penpo gate pass. [37] At that time, Reting Rinpoché's supporters among the young fighting monks of Sera Jé College, headed by Tsenyi Tulku,⁵¹ beat and killed [Sera] Jé's incumbent abbot Sokpo Losang Tendar and his servants, four [in all], because he had defected to Takdrak Rinpoché's side. They even rebelled against the government, firing guns at them and the like. To be sure, the government arrested the people at such estates as Reting and Khardo on the fourteenth day. As explained below, other than officers and soldiers who kept guard, the ex-regent Reting Rinpoché had to remain under arrest at Sharchen Jok along the east of the Potala Palace completely alone without even a single servant. Reting Rinpoché's great and constant companion, Khardo Tulku Kalsang Thupten Nyendrak (1908–1951) and Reting Rinpoché's relative Reting Dzasak were both also apprehended.

Shidé Nyungné Lama Losang Yeshé Namgyal upheld the hagiographies of his former incarnations and greatly accorded with sustaining the immaculate [Geluk] doctrine. However, because of Reting Rinpoché's charismatic words, for example, he mixed [the Geluk doctrine] with Nyingma teachings and tainted it. Because of this, the Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden] himself, with a displeased expression, [38] [caused] malicious thoughts to arise [in him] that extinguished his merit. Thus, he was apprehended because he went [to perform] an evil act that would physically harm Takdrak Rinpoché. Then he shot himself and died.

After the assembly's inquest, the ex-regent Reting Rinpoché was summoned before the assembly and placed in a seat. They questioned him about whatever evil deeds he committed. First the crimes were revealed by Khardo Tulku's [own] words. Finally, Reting Rinpoché also confessed to whatever crimes he did and urgently requested, "Although a few mistakes marred my career because I did not rejoice in Regent Takdrak Rinpoché's actions, the Dharmic *samaya* vow of master and disciple is [still] connected. Because of this, allow me to report before the Regent Takdrak Rinpoché and ask for forgiveness, pay homage, and confess! Henceforth, I will offer my binding promise to repent, together with various written agreements."⁵² Accordingly, although the assembly submitted his appeal through the Council of Ministers, along with the above-mentioned

51. Tib. *Rtsed nya sprul sku*; while context implies who this refers to, the name is misspelled as such.

52. See Shakabpa 2010, 901.

support, it was not successful. Because riots by many Sera Jé monks also grew larger and larger, government troops confronted and fired on the religious center day after day until the end of this. The Commander-in-Chief Kalsang Tsultrim [39] and the Northern Governor Shakabpa⁵³ also specifically sent officers and soldiers to the Reting monastic seat and damaged terribly all of Reting Monastery's structure and contents, signified by its sacred objects of body, speech, and mind. Gyelten Rinpoché, who [tried to] dispel and quell such destruction, was injured and perished, a sign that the age of degeneration had come.

Khardo Tulku, Nyungné Lama, Reting Dzasak, and others successively reminded Reting Rinpoché of the problem of these evil acts many times. Reting Rinpoché himself acted to suppress [them] as much as he could at first. However, because he requested [their help] with great insistence, as discussed above, ultimately their wishes were to immediately approve. There is clear proof [of this] from various original handwritten letters proclaiming such. Reting Rinpoché's report having been decided, he remained at Sharchen Jok under the custody of the leader of the guard office, Lungshar Orgyen Namdröl, the four ranges regiment commander for the Drapchi military encampment, Kalsang Dradul, and a government official named Belwo, along with quite a few soldiers. While there, whatever terrible mishap happened to his life force at around 2:00 a.m. on the night of the seventeenth day of the third month, no one outside knows. The heart of the matter is that he suddenly passed away that night.⁵⁴ [40]

Khardo Tulku

Khardo Tulku Kalsang Thupten Nyendrak also initially followed in the footsteps of Lord Pabongkha. In the Fire-Ox year of the sixteenth sexagenarian cycle [1937], he did things like exhort [Pabongkha] to compose a practice manual for the generation and completion stages of *Cintāmaṇi Tārā*. However, he did not practice [in a manner] consistent with his exhortation and came to mix and corrupt the [Geluk] doctrine. Furthermore, Lord Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo composed the practice manual for generation and completion, called *Cintāmaṇi's Necklace*,⁵⁵ and admonished him. [Pabongkha] said, "Thus, as for your seeking religious systems, it is apparently little different from your seeking comfort in the three—food, clothing, and pleasant conversation. You sought, in essence, to cling to your goal of everlasting life by any means, and you sought the path to the supreme state of liberation and omniscience by any means. Because of this, across the land you proclaimed Adharma as Dharma, strayed onto the path of counterfeit and faulty speech, thunderously blustered rough empty talks that were biased and ephemeral, and so on. For the

53. This was the older brother of Tsepon Wangchuk Deden Shakabpa 1907–1989; see Shakabpa 2010, 902–903.

54. For an extensive exploration and discussion of these infamous events in modern Tibetan history, see Goldstein 1989, 464–521.

55. See Bde chen snying po 199?, 561–717. Pabongkha explicitly names Khardo Tulku as one of the individuals who encouraged him to compose this text; see *ibid.*, 716.5–6.

most part, you engaged in religious speech merely with deception, and in bias took sides out of loyalty to family relations. You did not go astray simply by following what others said. [41] The upright mind considers the right path as much as possible, the path of superficiality and confusion as much as possible, the biased path as much as possible, the fully perfected path as much as possible, the path enjoyed by the victorious ones as much as possible, and the path reviled by scholars as much as possible. Having opened their eye of wisdom wide, one carefully examines [them]. If you seek the flawless path but do not enter it, although you boast that you have practiced the Dharma your entire life, like practicing heretical asceticism, you [will have] come to the means of achieving the lower realms. For the most part, you should be exceedingly careful in this situation!” I myself said [to Pabongkha], “Indeed, you intentionally admonished [Khardo Tulku] with unbearable sympathy and intense compassion!” Accordingly, even the kind [of person] who [would] enter into the approach and expositions on the complete and unerring path enjoyed by the victorious ones will not [necessarily] do so.

[Khardo Tulku] received the cycle of teachings on [the deity] Gesar Sengchen, and the like, in the presence of Lhatsun Rinpoché. Together with Reting Rinpoché, he also received and practiced many cycles of Nyingma teachings in the presence of [figures] like Tsenyi Tulku. He even continuously took the *samaya* vow from him. Along with this, he performed the prognostication called the arrow divination for Gesar Kyebu Döndrup, which analyzes the shaking appearance of the god arrow and demon arrow.⁵⁶ As such, because he haphazardly practiced the Geluk doctrine, [42] it became evident that, together with Reting Rinpoché, he committed the crime of harming Regent Takdrak Rinpoché and his attendants. His estate, which had been stable in the lifetimes of many previous incarnations, was confiscated by the government. For his criminal sentence, while his body was tormented by unbearable *duḥkha*, such as being struck with a whip, he was in the custody of the Norbulingka military guard regiment from the Fire-Pig year [1947] to the Iron-Tiger year [1950], the length of almost four whole years. With iron leg shackles on his feet, he had to live in a fathom-square prison cell without windows. Finally, the great Fourteenth Dalai Lama took over responsibility for the administration of the two traditions [of temporal and spiritual rule], and prisoners from all over Tibet were completely freed. When that happened [Khardo Tulku] was freed from prison, and although he was allowed to live as he liked in the north, he passed away not long after.

When [Khardo Tulku] was about to die, the former incarnate lama of the Upper House, Drakpa Gyaltzen, manifested in the form of Mighty Dorjé Shukden and said [Khardo Tulku’s] death was imminent, just like Lelung Jedrung Shepai Dorjé (1697–1740) when [Dorjé Shukden] manifested as his doctrine protector Drakshul Wangpo.⁵⁷ Because of this similar desire to manifest in a wrath-

56. For more on Tibetan arrow divination, especially as it pertains to this practice, see Martin 2020, 77–78. I appreciate Bill McGrath’s help in understanding this passage.

57. See Khri byang 03 199[?], 131.3–5; see also Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang n.d., 117.

ful form that annihilates deceitful evil doers, [43] [Dorjé Shukden] allowed [Khardo Tulku] to compose a new amending and restoring rite for the guardian deity named the wild Martial Spirit Dönyö Dorjé and create a statue for the guardian just before he died. Although in the end, when he did die, his eyes were wide open, his tongue was lolling out, and his hands were [making] the threatening *tarjanī mudrā*, and he died in such a manner. There were not any obvious omens that this lucid display of a wrathful appearance would occur after his death; such things [indicated] that his religious activities were unsuccessful. Certainly, this alone was the miraculous manifestation of the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden himself. Indeed, the kind and unrivalled lord of refuge, the great Trijang Dorjé Chang said, “I heard the circumstances of the wild Imperial Spirit Dönyö Dorjé and the occasion of [Khardo Tulku’s] death from the words of Khardo [Tulku]’s friend Nagchu Samten Tulku.”

Tatsak Rinpoché

The supreme Kundeling Tatsak Jedrung Tongshan Hutuktu Rinpoché Losang Thupten Jikmé Gyaltzen likewise, through the prophecies of many gods and lamas, was installed on the throne of the Tatsak forefathers. He studied the vast and encompassing scriptural tradition at the great Dharma center Drepung Gomang College. He took his monastic circuit examination during the Great Prayer Festival of Lhasa. Moreover, he was renowned as the incarnation of Baso Chökyi Gyaltzen (1402–1473),⁵⁸ the secret steward for the oral lineage of the great Gentle Protector Tsongkhapa. [44] Because of this, he was a person worthy of faultlessly upholding, preserving, and disseminating the long-standing tradition of the pure Geluk doctrine. Nevertheless, in the presence of figures like Lhatsun Rinpoché, he received various nonsensical teaching cycles of transmission lineages from Mongolia, such as those known to be treasure teachings and the *Lord of the Ten Dharma Practices*, which were [about as useful] as when father says he had a vision or mother says she had a dream.⁵⁹ Moreover, he received the cycle of empowerments, transmissions, and oral instructions for the *Supreme Being Gesar, the Jewel that Conquers Enemies*, and assiduously performed the approach and accomplishment [stages] for Gesar. As such, he extensively abandoned the excellent tradition of the [Geluk] teachings of Mount Ganden, which are complete, errorless, and free from illusion.

Because of this, Dorjé Shukden—the Dharma protector who guards the Yellow Hat teachings, the King of the Warrior Gods—overwhelmed him with punishments for the transgressions that displeased [the deity]. [Tatsak Rinpoché] was struck with chest pains and suffered unbearable illnesses. When he constantly entreated many gods and lamas [about his suffering], they ascertained that it was the miraculous act of the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden. He specifically invited the Dharma protector’s medium from Panglung hermitage and beseeched him. On top of this, he

58. This was the first of the Tatsak incarnation line.

59. I appreciate Nida Chenagtsang and Ben Joffe for their insights in clarifying this scathing expression.

requested a reprieve for Lhatsun Rinpoché and apologized. However, the great Dharma protector, with a displeased expression, replied about Lhatsun Rinpoché, “If the holy one himself does not even confer the excellent, pure, and correct doctrine, [45] his conduct is improper!” Because of this, even Lhatsun Rinpoché became frightened and accordingly said, “Now my requesting the Dharma protector for a reprieve will be impossible!” and since then no reprieve was granted.

After that, Tatsak Rinpoché requested the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang to intercede. One day he once again invited the Panglung medium. On top of that, along with requesting the Kundeling manager Öser Gyaltzen to go invite Kyabjé [Trijang] Dorjé Chang, he dispersed invitations to the aristocratic residences of Lhasa. I myself directly [saw this] happen as well. Then, inside the Tro[dé] Khangsar Chapel west of Kundeling Monastery,⁶⁰ while Tatsak Rinpoché was ill, the great Dharma protector was entreated there and Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang requested [the deity] to intercede [on Tatsak Rinpoché’s behalf]. Shukden [gave] quite a few prophecies, and after that the wild Martial Spirit Yumar Gyalchen said, “Since the meaning of Shukden’s prophecies are clear, and because we Haughty Spirits made a vow promising to protect the teachings of the Gentle Protector, Lama [Tsongkhapa], the fact is it is really difficult to do much [of anything] about this. However, in light of this great holy elder – who grasps the teachings of the Gelukpa—now requesting a reprieve, [46] we will do as much as we can.” The chief deity [Dorjé Shukden] then asked Tatsak Rinpoché, “Because [this suffering] is solely dependent on your own actions and behavior, in what way will you act from now on?” Tatsak Rinpoché shed tears in earnest, and he promised to henceforth repent of his past [mistakes], truly practice the [Geluk] precepts in the future, and completely give up such practices of the Nyingma teachings. Then the wild Martial Spirit performed [activities], such as spitting the first sip of tea straight onto the center of [Tatsak Rinpoché’s] chest. His health brightened a little bit after that, but because the point of his promises did not actually come about later on, he did not recover from the root illness.

Since he intended to go to India simultaneously for medical treatment and pilgrimage, he went to India via Pagri [in 1956], at the same time as when the great [Fourteenth] Dalai Lama’s teacher [the Tenth Pañchen Lama] and his retinue went to India for the ceremony of the large Dharma gathering that commemorated the 2,500-year anniversary of when [Siddhartha], the teacher of the *sthāvira* tradition, achieved nirvāṇa. Since they [all] left Lhasa together at the same time, an expert in offering medicine was also there—Ngawang Yeshé-la, a teacher from the Chakpori Medical College in Lhasa. On the night when Tatsak Rinpoché, [as well as] the teacher [the Tenth Pañchen Lama] and his retinue, arrived at Pagri, Tatsak Rinpoché [47] was suffering severely from the overwhelming illness. It was like he was experiencing the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden physically possess him at the same time. Even though he was trembling, he had great physical strength that his two or three attendants could not handle, and along with guttural choking

60. Tib. *kun bde gling gi nub ngos spro khang gsar ba*; this wording seems incorrect, since the famed Dorjé Shukden temple of Trodé Khangsar referred to here is near the south of the Barkhor circuit east of Kundeling Monastery.

sounds, he was close to spouting prophecies. The attendants, headed by Ngawang Yeshé, had to urgently request forgiveness at that time, and as soon as they did [his paroxysm] finally cleared up a little. However, after [Tatsak Rinpoché] went to India, he was admitted to the best hospital in Kolkata and received medicine, but it did not benefit him, and he passed away. The medical teacher Ngawang Yeshé told Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang the aforementioned circumstances of when [Tatsak Rinpoché] went to Pagri, and he said, “If one does not consistently act for the Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden], he will not watch over or hear you.” He also fearfully said, “It was very troublesome! He was absolutely physically possessed at that time.” Thus [this is from] a reliable source.

Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo

Our glorious holy lama, the supreme Kyabdak Dorjé Chang Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo likewise, early in his life, [48] received the Innermost Secret Hayagrīva cycles and the Fifth Dalai Lama’s *Sealed Secret Visions* [autobiography]⁶¹ in the presence of the former masters of Drakri Rinpoché’s previous incarnation, such as one named Trinlé Pema Kunsang Chögyal Palsangpo, who died of smallpox, as well as Kongpo Jakdrong Drupchen Ösal Tekchok Dorjé, Gungtrul Rinpoché Kyenrap Palden Tenpai Nyima, and Minyak Rikü Rinpoché Losang Chödrak Gyatso. Moreover, in the presence of Gungtrul Rinpoché he received the permissions and such for the *Excellent Wish-fulfilling Vase sādhana* practices composed by Minling Terchen [Terdak Lingpa Gyurmé Dorjé] (1646–1714). Later, when he received many cycle permissions that were like supplemental practices, he constructed a dough *torma* offering with a triangular blazing mountain on the upper part and a wrathful face on the lower part. The great Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang said he remembers when he was young that there was an exquisite *torma* offering as such, and that he took it from the shrine assistant and played with it. For clothes, Minyak Rikü Rinpoché wore a blue cloth jacket over his red wool robes, and for a rosary he carried a garland of skulls. He [also] kept a large horn of snuff inside a [deity] mask. He had a small beard for a large body, and he had nothing whatsoever to be physically boastful about. He was one to casually stay in such places as the servant’s quarters and [49] remain while having completely meandering conversations. In summary, Lord Pabongkha received many kinds of empowerments, transmissions, and oral instructions for the cycles of Nyingma teachings, and he performed the approach practice for Innermost Secret Hayagrīva, along with its supplements.

During the times he performed such practices, he had many different dreams, such as of a bearded monk and sometimes of a well-dressed monk. Because of this, again and again he had dreams that exhibited unpleasant manifestations. In those times the great Lord Pabongkha was always staying at a summer cottage that was on the western side of the original residence of the

61. See Karmay 1988.

Trijang estate at Chusang Hermitage. One night, while sleeping in his bedroom, he slept on the eastern-side bed. When he woke the next day, he had moved onto the western-side bed. Moreover, when he received the *Excellent Wish-fulfilling Vase sādhana* practices in the presence of Gungtrul Rinpoché, he stayed at Gungtrul Rinpoché's summer cottage. When Lord Pabongkha changed his abode to the balcony room above the inner portico of the original residence of the Trijang estate, although he went to bed, he could not fall asleep. Then, at about midnight, high and low shouts rising from about the direction of Sera [Monastery's] management office came to Lord Pabongkha's attention, far away at the southern foot of Chusang mountain, [50] and chief among them were loud screams like the cry of a woman. He considered that the Dagchen Rinpoché of Sakya had dwelled at that summer cottage, and as such, since Dagchen Rinpoché stayed there, he thought that it was the Sakya Witches.⁶² He said, "Those woman's screams rose from the base of Gampala pass for their 'share of meat,'"⁶³ and he listened. At the base of Gampala pass there are villagers of what is called the Gampa border, nothing more than a village. He sympathetically thought, "It's a pity that someone has probably died from among those villagers." Then two screams were by turns getting closer; they were coming up from the foot of Chusang mountain and arrived at the main gate of the hermitage residence. The screaming stopped, and as soon as it did, he heard the sound of cymbals rising while a metal chain dragged over the stone pavement in front of the residence. Then, by way of the stone staircase of the portico, it reached the servant's quarters of the bedroom where the Lord dwelled. Between the lintel of the room's entrance and the door curtain, a red hand appeared with bright red claws like the very essence of fire. Lord Pabongkha understood it as a manifestation of the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden and made confessions. [51] After quite a long time the hand withdrew and went out, and along with the screaming, it went back out through the main gate the same way it had previously come. At that time, one named Sera Mé Gyalrongpa Geshé Tsangyang, who was skilled at preparing food, was staying in the servant's quarters sleeping, and [the Lord] wondered if he had suffered injury or not. When [Pabongkha] put on his lower garment and got up to go look, he was still sleeping; it had been a wondrous magical manifestation.

Later, a little after Chinese troops had come in the Water-Mouse year [1912], the Tibetan government established a reading, transmission, exposition, and study of the precious Kangyur canon of the victorious ones as a religious service for the stability of the religious and secular [administration]. Ganden Shartsé Geshé Nyakré Lodrö Chöpel in the Upper Tantric College at Ganden Monastery, Ganden Joné Sharpa Tulku at Drak Yerpa, and Lord Pabongkha in the assembly hall of Meru [Nyingpa] in Lhasa had to read and confer the transmission of the Kangyur, acting in accordance with the victorious [Dalai Lama's] sealed intention. Just as he finished, [Pabongkha]

62. Tib. *sa skya'i 'bal mo*. This is an alternative spelling for *sa skya 'bag mo*, see Conrad 2012.

63. Tib. *sha skal*. Melvyn Goldstein's second definition of the term is more fitting here: "a person's soul taken by a witch when it is her turn to supply the other witches with flesh;" see Goldstein 2001, 1089.

developed a severe illness, similar to the symptoms of poison, and he was on the verge of death. When that [illness] ended, even his skin became completely blue.

Furthermore, [52] the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden, along with his monk attendant, occasionally possessed Shidé Tā Lama Gelong Jampa Jikmé Namdröl through very secret means. Accordingly, they reminded Lord Pabongkha again and again that he must uphold, preserve, and disseminate the pure Geluk doctrine, free from intermixing and corruption. Because of such [experiences], he ultimately stopped studying the cycles of Nyingma teachings, and those who listened [to him] also promised not to disseminate [the Nyingma teachings] to others. Because he accepted the hagiographies of the pure long-standing Geluk tradition as his own, in the later part of his life, it so happened that the play of his magnificent activities for upholding, preserving, and disseminating the victorious one's teachings spread extensively all over China, Mongolia, and Tibet.

Drakri Rinpoché

Our incomparably kind and glorious holy lama Drakri Dorjé Chang Losang Lungrik Gyatso Wangyal Palsangpo also studied several scriptures belonging to the early translations of the secret mantra, such as the *Sealed Secret Visions* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, in the presence of Lhatsun Rinpoché. At that time, when he went to Drakri Hermitage, he was thrown off by his horse on the path. Later, after performing the approach practice for Innermost Secret Hayagrīva, in accordance with performing [the rite for] the Innermost Secret Mighty [Hayagrīva], [53] he read, transmitted, and bestowed it—along with the Innermost Secret [Hayagrīva] scriptural collection compiled by Khalka Damtsik Dorjé (1781–1855)—onto many disciples, including myself. However, because Dorjé Shukden was displeased, a few signs arose, such as a large bird like a rooster, that [Drakri Rinpoché] had never seen before, alighting close to his apartment at Drakri Hermitage around evening time.

Since Drakri Rinpoché was a nephew of the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang, Trijang Rinpoché [said] to the supreme Drakri Rinpoché, “Because our Lama Dorjé Chang [Pabongkha] has passed away, I should not blame [you for your actions]. Nevertheless, since the guardian Dorjé Shukden has abided, it would be good if those who studied the Nyingma teachings did not teach or propagate them. By this order, do not perform even that empowerment for Innermost Secret Hayagrīva for anyone other than just a few patrons and such since it is extremely secret. As such, it was not suitable for me to also receive them, and from that moment on I did not propagate other Nyingma teaching cycles as well.” He concluded by reciting these incidental verses:

By journeying toward droplets of immortal nectar, one achieves supreme happiness at heart [54] and lifts up bulging hopeful eyes. The glory of the happiness and well-being of sentient beings who desire liberation is accomplished in

a timely manner. Our own Geluk tradition is a garland of clouds in the sky that drift languidly and, with dancing displays, rains down the coolness of the Abhirati realm, dispelling suffering.⁶⁴

While they may boast of moving about under the peaceful, cool, and pleasant shade, and are resplendent with their jeweled cobra's hood of scripture and realization, a devious person who shakes up a lot of poisonous dust with their forked tongue of distorted perspectives deceitfully obstructs even holy gatherings. They gather together bits of talk, combining them [like] cooking the choicest, juiciest parts of the hearts after acting to fling the magical wheel of flying swords [that killed their enemies].

Even those who become lords of exalted birth, proud to be great with [all] kinds of power, strength, and wealth, as well as fame and renown—the goddess Rati's elegant ornament of exquisite pearl necklaces—are deceived by names of artificial depth. Whoever possesses the HŪM of loose faith in the Geluk teachings, whatever enlightened activities [they attempt to do] will be smashed to dust by weapons that blaze with a thousand lights. Spread these words!⁶⁵

With regard to the marvelous appearances discussed, [in] the springtime that satisfies everyone's appetite, why is it that the lute never changes and Sarasvatī plays it by heart?⁶⁶ [55]

Surkhang Pema Wangchen

Now I shall elucidate how wrathful punishments befell exalted leaders and nobles through their scriptural transmissions and activities. The first in this regard is the great fourth rank Council Secretary from the Surkhang [family] named Pema Wangchen.⁶⁷ I will explain how he died of unnatural causes because of the wanton behavior of his impure views and tenets. In general, the ancestors of the Surkhang aristocratic family were related to the Sormo Drawa, descendants of the kings of Ngari Gugé who came from Ngadak Ösung (843–905) long ago, and they arrived in Lhasa in the central region during the time of the Seventh Dalai Lama Kalsang Gyatso. They were awarded a patrilineal estate and land and were called Surkhang. Regarding the meaning of the name 'Surkhang' (*zur khang*), although it has been explained as "being named after the home

64. Each line in this quatrain is 15 syllables long.

65. Each line in these two quatrains is 19 syllables long.

66. Each line in this quatrain is 7 syllables long.

67. Petech (1973, 151) provides the birth year but gives 1917 for the death year.

(*gzim khang*) that descended indirectly (*zur du*) from the lineage of the Dharma Kings,” the residence might have been accordingly named because it is near the corner (*zur*) of the Jokhang Temple (*gtsug lag khang*). Regardless, a few monk-officials from that family line were punished for not fulfilling their duties.

They turned adverse circumstances into boons, [however]. Perfecting their religious practices, [56] they became known as Örgyen Surjé Lingpa⁶⁸ and successively transmitted that very [textual] lineage. On a later occasion, two sons came about as descendants of Surkhang Taiji Tseten Dorjé (d.1844), and the younger was named Dorjé Gyalpo. It was indirectly revealed that he embraced ascetic practices that were like confused and crazy actions, and he was given the Dechen Kharap Shenkha estate by the Surkhang [family] for his allotment. Because the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden possessed his son, he was renowned as the Dharma lord of Kharap Shenkha. Later, [Dorjé] Shukden also continually possessed the son of [Dorjé Gyalpo’s brother] the lay officer Nampön Dorjé Dradul, who is the younger cousin of [Dorjé Gyalpo’s] son, the fourth rank monk-official Jampa Chöwang. Although the older son was expected to abide as the person concerned with upholding the Surkhang family line itself, he was forcibly made a son-in-law of the Shedra aristocratic family by the abbot-official Palden Döndrup, and he became known as the Shedra’s finance secretary. Regarding the ancient family line for the Surkhang at that time, since it could not [continue] except through the daughter, a descendent of the Gyantsé Janglopa [family] named Wangchen Norbu was accepted as her bridegroom. Their son was Sönam Wangchen and his son was Pema Wangchen.⁶⁹

This very person [Surkhang Pema Wangchen] was extremely erudite, even as he evinced great skill in discernment and intelligence, such as reading, writing, and calculating [astrology] in Chinese and Tibetan, [57] and [could] demonstrate such conventional sciences as poetry and grammar. By way of example, he composed such lines [as the following] that illustrate the terminative particle in grammar:

In groves where lotuses are arrayed, bees wordlessly sing with their wings.

Wherever the stench of evil deeds spreads, I and my kind will be encouraged.

Restless chatter is no good; one part of glory and good qualities is relying completely on one’s lama.

68. This name appears to be associated with the famous Nyingma master and treasure revealer Jikmé Lingpa (1730–1798); see Jigs med gling pa 1975. The Surkhang family in general had past ties to Jikmé Lingpa as well; see Ricard 1994, 483, n.70.

69. The activities of Surkhang Taiji Tseten Dorjé’s two sons seem to be switched in this account. Also, some of the lineal connections differ and the names do not entirely match; see Petech 1973, 148–149. For more on this family line and its convoluted history, see *ibid.*, 144–153.

In the four continents it is said, “Tea and beer are not the way to liberation;” this behavior is due to the full moon.⁷⁰

Even when tested, it appears that he was able to evaluate the blooming thousand-petalled lotus of knowledge with reasoning that had correct results. Accordingly, Wangchuk Geshé Sherap Gyatso Jampal Gyepai Lodrö Rinpoché (1884–1968), who expounded the five sciences with the great learning of the religious and secular government, even hailed [Surkhang Pema Wangchen] as the “Lay Paṇḍita.” When he was fourteen years old, the government put him in charge of the Dalai Lama’s palanquin, and later he was the Cabinet Secretary for the Council of Ministers. Due to his meritorious achievements, the great all-knowing all-seeing Thirteenth Dalai Lama [58] also promoted him; on top of granting him the position entitled “Fourth Rank Grand Secretary,” he gave him authority equal to the Cabinet Ministers. Because of this, he was prosperous even within the worldly government system.

However, he did not rely on the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden and maintain the immaculate Geluk doctrine in accordance with the excellent tradition of his forefather’s ancient customs. Namely, as mentioned above, indirect relatives of Dorjé Gyalpo, [from] the original Surkhang family line, resided at Kharap Shenkha. Each person from among this family line was successively possessed by the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden, the Dharma protector Setrap, as well as the guardian of the teachings, Khaché Marpo. As for what was also important at the Surkhang abode in Lhasa, petition offerings [to these deities would be made]. Moreover, like the annual offerings, customarily every year the [Shukden] medium of Kharap Shenkha would specifically be invited on the eighth day of the first Tibetan month—the month of miracles. Because of this, the Great King [Dorjé] Shukden offering was called the “Eighth Day God Offering” and it needed to be performed at the Lhasa Surkhang [residence]. On this occasion, whatever close relatives were nearby would dress up and gather to perform the God Offering, moving to and fro among the households of other family members from the Surkhang line. Afterward they would throw a party. [59] Such [family] customs were continuous, and so they should have respected, upheld, and preserved the [Geluk] teachings of Mount Ganden and the guardian of those teachings by relying on and honoring them.

Yet, in the time of Pema Wangchen’s forefathers they practiced the [Geluk] doctrine in a confused [manner], and they were devoted to and actively sought the Nyingma tradition. As such, because [Pema Wangchen’s] father, the council minister Sönam Wangchen, also relied on and met with such [figures] as the treasure revealer Sögyal from Nyarong, he suddenly died at the age of 37 due to something similar to hypertension. Later, a new residence was built for the Surkhang [family] after the battle with Chinese troops in Lhasa during the Water-Mouse year [1912]. At that

70. Each line in these four verses is 9 syllables long.

time, the Dharma protector [through an oracle] first exhorted that statues of Tsongkhapa and his two chief disciples should be raised above the veranda. However, the council minister Surkhang Sönam Wangchen had passed away by that time and his children were not sufficiently grown. In the interim, the person responsible for the affairs of the Surkhang [household], named Jetsunma Kalsang Chödrön, was devoted to the Nyingma teachings, and she postponed and delayed putting up [the statues]. Afterward, the Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden through an oracle] once again inquired about the statue constructed above the veranda, and the response was, “[A statue] of Guru Nangsi Silnön was built [instead].” In that moment, [60] the belongings of the Dharma protector arranged and displayed within the newly constructed protector chapel were thrown down to the ground as an omen. Regarding the Dharma protector’s prophetic injunctions since then, even within the general religious rites of the Surkhang family, they only performed rites concerning Nyingma rituals, such as the feast service for Guru [Nangsi Silnön] and its supplements. The Dharma protector who guards the pure Geluk teachings thus also said in his discussion, “It is evident this is a sign that such prophetic injunctions that I proclaim are not taken to heart.”

From when Pema Wangchen himself was young, he consulted Lama Pawo Rinpoché of Gyaling Tsokpa [Monastery] in Dranang and requested many Nyingma empowerments and precepts in the presence of this Nyingma lama. At that time, he gave a flower to the [tutelary] deity of the Lotus Family [Hayagrīva], and so was given the name Pema Wangchen. Later, he listened to many Dzokchen cycles in the presence of various Nyingma lamas, chiefly the Dzokchen lama Tenzin Drakpa. He also engraved new block prints for the *Treasury of Precious Qualities*, [Jikmé Lingpa’s commentary on] the teachings of the Omniscient Longchenpa (1308-1364). On that occasion, [Surkhang Pema Wangchen] requested Geshé Sherap Rinpoché for supplicatory verses [to go] on the colophon of the print. Together with those supplicatory verses, Geshé [Sherap] Rinpoché [61] gave [the following] advice that he should maintain not mixing the pure doctrine with dirt:

If there is discernment it is gold, and it is never equal to clumps of dirt.⁷¹

Geshé Sherap Gyatso Rinpoché is said to have refuted texts written by Dzokchen lama Tenzin Drakpa. He also objected to the supplication prayer for subjugating the host of obstructing *māra* demons performed by Tenzin Drakpa with such [verses as the following:]

I pay homage to the might of [the Buddha’s] ten powers that subdues the four *māras*, the Dharma of the holy ones that defeats the host of *māras*, the Sangha unshaken by *māras*, and the ones victorious over *Māra*!

71. Each line in this verse is 7 syllables long.

Whoever actively seeks the words of the *māras* from the throats opened by *māras*, although they may marvel greatly over [the evils of] “the horde of *māras*,” they themselves are established through reasoning to be [of] the host of *māras*.⁷²

Moreover, his intelligent commentary on whatever Tenzin Drakpa wrote was called the *Auspicious Golden Fish*. In this commentary by Geshé Sherap Gyatso Rinpoché, although the refutations were arranged in the manner of essential points that clarified concise issues called “gentle investigations,” Pema Wangchen persistently requested him not to refute him in that way. Because he prevented this, the composition of both treatises of refutation had been abandoned. Later, Geshé Sherap Rinpoché [62] also composed this letter of advice that he gave to Pema Wangchen:

Sometimes the adamant heart grows free from reason. Sometimes the signs of one’s experiences and the shackles of boasting are mostly useless, [like] spring rainbows and driftwood. Alas! Thinking and thinking it [over] is gloomy each time.

Although it [seems] similar to not carefully investigating other texts in the presence of the omniscient [Tsongkhapa] Losang [Drakpa], when you examine them subtly, I am eased because these [texts] will perish like the chain of transmigrations.

The herd of adamant students that are the joy of the gods gather in front of Lama Jikmé Dorjé.⁷³ Their exposition and listening is [like] the building of a child’s sandcastle. They will scatter when the truth appears and one day it will cause them to cry out.

Therefore, remember the victorious [Tsongkhapa] Losang [Drakpa] and his spiritual sons; remember the lotus paradise of the pure doctrine; remember the Buddha’s [divine] Brahmā-like voice of unrivalled elegant exposition; and remember the many erudite *śrāvakas*, [as numerous as] the multitude of stars in the sky.⁷⁴

These words that Geshé [Sherap] Rinpoché bestowed were called the “incense pool that wafts the sweet fragrance of praise for and faith in Lord Tsongkhapa.”

72. Each line in these two quatrains is 7 syllables long.

73. (BDRC: P7914?, 1879–1940/1941)

74. Each line in these four quatrains is 9 syllables long.

With this praise, divine prince, I have no expectation that it might instill delight in your heart. However, I truly offer this request with blood, and I ask that you please not be angry at my doubting thoughts.

[63] Because of the various dispositions, capacities, and convictions of all sentient beings, if one relies on the reasoning in one's mind it is exquisite, [while] one's foolish faults of attachment and aversion are pointless. I beseech you to also think and act likewise!⁷⁵

[Thus, Geshé Sherap Rinpoché] offered pure advice through such topics as the distinctive qualities of the teachings of the Dharma King [Tsongkhapa] Losang Drakpa and the admonition [above] that followed it on how not [to succumb to] attachment and aversion.

Nevertheless, because [Surkhang Pema Wangchen] did not properly do what he ought to and avoid what he ought not to, he did not turn away [from the Nyingma practices] and became sick. Initially, through prophetic instruction, the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden said, “On top of erecting statues of Tsongkhapa and his [two] spiritual sons and performing an extensive offering entitled ‘the Ritual of the Sixty(/Sixty-Four) *Torma* Offerings,’⁷⁶ you must act ethically, cultivating [proper practices] and avoiding [improper ones].” Yet he [still] did not act in a manner that accorded with the prophecy's aim, and ultimately, sores broke out over his body; this illness of rupturing sores was unbearable. When the [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama's junior physician, named Shelchö Jabukpa Damchö Palden, attended to him, if he smeared black medicine onto a burst lesion, it would become overwhelmingly painful. Then the sore would dry out and a pustule would break out elsewhere. This protracted illness lasted for about a year. A son born to him also had an illness like these rupturing sores and died because of it.

When Pema Wangchen was sick, [64] he sought lamas and the like to intercede, then he beseeched the oracle of the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden [to come] to his house. Although he requested predictions and apologized many times, in the end, the Dharma protector [Dorjé] Shukden's prediction came down as such: “The kind of intellectual who does not practice the

75. Each line in these two quatrains is 9 syllables long.

76. Tib. *drug cu ma*. This refers to a *torma* ritual dedicated to the fifteen directional gods as well as Vajrabhairava's attendant Yamarāja; see Zhang 1985, 1332. Though given a different nominalizer (*drug cu pa*), Cuevas (2017, 12–14) attributes this text to Shalupa Lekpa Gyaltzen (1375–1450), the Fourth Ganden Tripa and Tsongkhapa's disciple. He likewise describes it as important root verses tied to a larger cycle of rites dedicated to Vajrabhairava. Joona Repo (2015, 127) further describes this rite as the “Sixty-Four Part Offerings to the protector Kālarūpa,” the latter being a form of Yamarāja. Moreover, Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo composed a short yet popular manual for this ritual entitled *Drug bcu pa'i 'don bsgrigs 'khyer bde nag 'gro su bkod pa las bzhi'i 'phrin las myur 'grub*, a translation for which is available in Sharpa Tulku and Guard 2000, 97–113. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for clarification on this rite and these deity associations, as well as the latter reference.

immaculate Geluk doctrine, since they reside in the Council of Ministers—the highest government office—they are the kind that harms the [Geluk] teachings of Mount Ganden, as well as the administration of the sovereign Ganden Podrang government that makes offerings to the teachings, if they [are allowed to] live long. There is nothing to be done.” Along with this, there were many troubling omens at that time, such as the servants seeing what looked like someone wearing monk’s robes actually go into [Pema Wangchen’s] bedroom. At the age of twenty-two, in the Fire-Dragon year [1916], even with whatever methods, medicine, and rites [he employed], he was unable to reverse [his fate] and the punishment that the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden commanded fell upon him. It came about that his experience of this world dissolved and by necessity he departed on the journey to his next life. Regarding the above-mentioned Surkhang family line and Pema Wangchen, his younger brother later became a son-in-law for the Kunsangtsé [family]. I indeed heard this directly from [Kunsangtsé] Kemé Sönam Wangdü (1901-1972) in person. [65]

Lhalu Jikmé Namgyal

Because the Lhalu Gatsal residence was the family estate of the [Eighth] Dalai Lama Jampal Gyatso (1758-1804), previous generations were intently devoted to the long-standing Geluk tradition and upheld the pure doctrine. However, along with such figures as Tenzin Wangpo, Secretary General of the Kunsangtsé family, the Lhalu Duke Jikmé Namgyal (d.1912)⁷⁷ was first taught about the sciences, like poetry and grammar, in the presence of a Nyingma lama from Dergé named Tashi Tsé-la, who did not have the pure discipline but wore elegant monastic robes. Later, he was gradually initiated into the Nyingma tradition and even practiced it as best as he could. There was a long-haired realized lama, the lama that the Lhalu Duke relied upon, who resided at the Parikuk Hermitage near Lhalu. Duke Jikmé Namgyal reverently served [the lama], and he along with his mother requested many cycles of Nyingma teachings in his presence. One day, an elder Lhalu servant named Jewa Chimé saw the long-haired realized master committing adultery with the Duke’s mother and deceptively departing in tattered clothing, exposing the offense. [66] [The servant] then travelled to the hermitage and beat the lama greatly with a club, and he even tore out much of the hair from his head. Because of such things, Lhalu Duke himself had to specifically ride out to the Pari[kuk] Hermitage and apologize and ask for forgiveness [from the lama].

For his wife Lhalu Duke married Yangzom Tsering, daughter of the Shedra family, and this lady of rank was devoted to the Geluk teachings. For her guardian deity she also relied on the Great King Dorjé Shukden. [Because of] such things, the married couple were in a constant state of disagreement over views and tenets. In the end, the Duke did not reach a great age, and from the time of his youth he was plagued by lice on his body. While directly experiencing the manifestations of the Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden’s] many miracles through unbearable maladies, he came

77. See Petech 1973, 48.

to wander onto the path difficult to travel, the long journey to his next life. Then, the family line of the master of the estate from the [Eighth] Dalai Lama's paternal lineage at Lhalu also became extinguished. At that time, the great mighty siddha, Ganden Serkong Dorjé Chang Ngawang Tsultrim Döndan Palsangpo (1856-1918), told Lady Yangzom Tsering that the clear prophetic admonition, as well as the many omens and miracles that occurred on those occasions, were "the wrath of the great deity [Dorjé Shukden], and thus the power behind [Jikmé Namgyal's suffering and death]." [67] [I had said that I was] "overpowered by forgetfulness now," [so] I listened to what the great Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang said and later acquired reliable [sources] to apply as augmentation for that period. Duke Jikmé Namgyal – the spouse of the Lady of Lhalu mentioned above – as well as their son Duke Phuntsok Rapgyé both passed away in succession.

Lungshar Dorjé Tsegyal

Afterward, because there was no one at Lhalu other than Lady [Yangzom Tsering], all the servants [of the estate] sent an appeal to the government. Accordingly, the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama ultimately appointed the finance minister Lungshar (1880/1881–1939) as the manager for the Lhalu [estate]. Lungshar's son Gyurmé Tsewang Dorjé, or the Council Minister of Lhalu as he is presently known, was also commanded out of necessity to keep after the Lhalu [estate] as their adopted child. As such, finance minister Lungshar received many empowerments and oral transmissions from the cycles of Nyingma teachings in the presence of various Nyingma lamas and did not uphold the pure [Geluk] doctrine. He relied on King Gesar Sengchen as his principal deity above all others, and having arrived as the manager of Lhalu, he seized [the estate]. Lady Yangzom Tsering of Lhalu, as accordingly explained above, relied on and venerated the pure Geluk doctrine as well as the Dharma protector Dorjé Shukden. There was a statue of the Great King [Dorjé] Shukden among the images in the [estate's] protector chapel. However, she was not allowed to keep it at the estate and had to move it to Tashi Chöling Hermitage. [68] The customary monthly offering rites were also sent to be performed up at Tashi Chöling, and there could be no *torma* empowerments at [Lhalu] estate. In such ways the finance minister Lungshar firmly adhered to the Nyingma teachings.

[Lungshar] became sick a long time later because of this. At that time a vulture landed on the roof of Lungshar's house, which was at Tseshöl,⁷⁸ and he had superstitious doubts [about it]. He went to the [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso in order to request a divination and get a response. [The Dalai Lama] offered the following reply: "In preparing a divination, [The First Dalai Lama] Lord Gendun Drup (1391–1474) would say,

Even if I am unable to carry kindness just like [you], I am not under the influence

78. Tib. *rtse zhol*; this refers to the area of Lhasa that includes the Potala Palace and the village of Shöl at its base.

of attachment or hatred, and I aspire to strive whenever [I can] to uphold your teachings, Protector [Tsongkhapa].⁷⁹

“Accordingly, this Ganden Podrang government is a patron that governs through the power of nonsectarian teachings in general, as well as the unblemished [Geluk] doctrine of Mount Ganden in particular, like when the [Seventh] Dalai Lama Kalsang Gyatso raised a statue of the Great Lord Tsongkhapa in the Council of Ministers. All lay and monastic government officials must not be confused about their moral choices and so, presently, [if] the first bird [vulture] stomped on by Vajrabhairava’s left foot lands on a roof, it is an omen that someone will die. Because of this, you should complete whatever feast offering is tied to the lama offering ritual and [69] diligently perform very many offerings to the *Sixty Stanza* deities [in order] to be effective.”

Regarding the conclusion of this divinatory response [and the Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso’s death, the Regent Reting Rinpoché ordered Kyabjé Lingtul Dorjé Chang (1903–1983), along with Trijang Rinpoché and [the Dalai Lama’s] tutor Sera Mé Gyalwang Chöjé Tulku, to by necessity search for potential manuscripts for compiling the Dalai Lama’s biography. Accordingly, while they were searching the rooms of the [Ganden] Podrang high and low, in the library on top of the Fortunate Palace at the Norbulingka, there were several books of various collections successively giving important divinatory replies for many high- and low-status laity and monastics. Because Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang directly saw [the above divination] within these books, this is a trustworthy account. Then, in any case, not much time passed before the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama passed away.

Afterward, by heading a faction of a great many government officials [at] Tseshöl, the finance minister Lungshar made accusations against Council Minister Trimön (1874–1945). In connection with this, he also sent signed written petitions to the Regent and Council of Ministers that said, “There needs to be appropriate reform with regards to governance.” [70] As such, his thinking of ways to control the power of the government [brought about] discordant and adverse circumstances. Regarding some [other] lines of reasoning, Lungsharwa [examined] the contents of plans for Tibetan society in reference to [supplying] the wages for the troops that protected the Tibetan religious and secular [government] in the past. Accordingly, there was nothing whatsoever of the specifics for the various government estates representing the different salary estates for council ministers and generals, the individuals who fulfilled the replacement tax⁸⁰ for aristocratic families, as well as the servants and replacement taxes [themselves], that was not [already] clarified in the great *Iron-Tiger Year Land Settlement*.⁸¹ [Therefore], both Secretary General Losang Tenkyong

79. Each line in this quatrain is 8 syllables long.

80. Tib. *ngo dod*; this refers to specific taxes levied against families who cannot provide a family member to work for the government.

81. Of 1830, <http://purl.bdrc.io/resource/WA20170>.

and finance minister Lungshar were the ones who undertook to determine the appropriate levying of government income from the hereditary taxable lands that were awarded for accomplishments and the completed terms of offices, along with the internal agreements for estates given to lay officials. Although their undertaking was efficient, when they completed the enterprise, it was judged to have had quite a lot of biases and shortcomings; Secretary General Losang Tenkyong had died by then [too]. Later, the responsibility fell to the one left behind—his associate the finance minister Lungshar—and indeed it is said that he was maliciously gripped by the land spirits, causing enmity. In any case, when the finance minister Lungshar was arrested and taken into custody along with his retinue, both of his eyeballs were gouged out and boiling oil was poured into his empty eye sockets. [71] He was oppressed by such unbearable, overwhelming *dubkha* and imprisoned at Tsheshöl. He was pitiful for several years, and he passed away while experiencing many terrors.⁸²

Trimön Norbu Wangyal

The Council Minister Trimön Norbu Wangyal (1874–1945?)⁸³ likewise gradually rose through the ranks of government appointments in the time of the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, [attaining] the title of Taiji on top of finance minister. Then he obtained meritorious accomplishments, such as being appointed Governor-General of the entire Tibetan army when the Chinese troops were expelled in the Water-Mouse year [1912]. Later, he replaced Jampa Tenkyong as the Governor-General and Council Minister of the Domé region when the latter passed away. In connection with being successively appointed to such positions, he was marvelously knowledgeable about political affairs. The great [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso was also gripped by the hook of affection for him. Although this was so, he was [nonetheless] devoted to Nyingma teachings and received many empowerments, oral transmissions, and instructions in the presence of several Nyingma lamas.

Since [Trimön] upheld [Nyingma teachings] as the foundation of his practice, mighty Dorjé Shukden, the warrior god who protects the Geluk teachings, became displeased, and due to this, [Trimön's] cognitive abilities spontaneously became unstable, and he went insane in the end. While he carried the title of Council Minister, [72] he left his house and walked around the market in the upper harvest fields of Lhasa, where he took out and played all of the musical instruments, like large cymbals, set among the items for sale. Sometimes he would wear a white lower garment and walk around the market. One day, while wearing a white lower garment and a red shawl above that, he went before the Regent Reting Rinpoché residing at Shidé. The Regent Rinpoché jokingly asked, "If the great Council Minister is wearing the clothes of a treasure revealer today, I ask, what is the treasure you revealed?" Since he had many sons, [Trimön] replied, "I am the one called the

82. The details of this account, from Jikmé Lingpa's Nyingma interests to Lungshar's gory fate, are recounted in Repo 2015, 124–127.

83. See Petech 1973, 96–97.

Treasure Revealer Miter Lingpa.”⁸⁴ In such ways he understood right and wrong—gold and dirt—as equal. Because spontaneously arising crazy behavior extensively permeated his experience and understanding of self-liberation, it appears that his ascetic practices, which draw one onto the reckless path, embraced the stainless abode of complete unhappiness.

At that time, when Lord Shukupa became ill because of his wife—daughter of the Trimön [family]—a servant there told the great and supreme Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang, “This important aristocrat [Trimön] went mad and it was not pleasant. Even when struck, [73] he was not the slightest bit okay. Although we would entreat him, he would not listen. If there were others, we were permitted to do actions like binding and beating him.” While Trimön was tormented with illness, the great Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang was again exhorted and invited.

Trimön’s next spouse was the one called the Taiji Lady of Dergé. Whatever valuables there were of the Trimön ancestors, he would indiscriminately damage them. Because of this, it was foolish for even his sons to remain in the house, so they took their own portion. Incidentally, because the main Trimön was bereft of wealth, he accumulated a lot of debt from everywhere. He failed at any kind of undertaking, and he even had to mortgage his patrilineal estate, called “the Western Sanctuary of the Tsang Region,” to the Kundeling estate. He came to the end, drained by having to take on debt and the like, and passed in death to his next life. Even these few accounts that were presently related are only just some of what exists.

Conclusion

One acts to be tamed by the path of the vinaya dharma according to the sūtras and tantras and arranges the supreme nectar of immortality in their heart through the Vajrayāna. If the wish-fulfilling jewel of one’s own doctrinal tradition—the flowing locks of genuine refined gold bound on top of the head—[74] upholds the splendor close to one’s heart, weapons of thunderbolts will strike down those enemies whose hearts carelessly mix [the teachings], even though whatever enlightened activities of theirs may spread [in abundance] like rain. The powerful lord with the strength of the thunderbolt (*rdo rje’i shugs ldan*), a dear friend, draws close and deteriorating experiences fade away.⁸⁵

Amassed like illusions in the space of the *dharmadhātu*, the swelling ocean waves

84. Tib. *mi gter gling pa*; lit. “Sanctuary for the Treasure of People.” Trimön has assigned himself a name like a treasure revealer, which usually includes *gling pa*, while noting that his treasure is people (his sons).

85. Each line in this quatrain is 23 syllables long.

of the profound wisdom of the lama, who is the great singular father in the splendor of the heart center, is [akin to] the elephant of the sky [from the Buddha's] *jātaka* tales. As such, [Dorjé Shukden's] various rosaries of marvelous words, thundering melodies of radiant manifestations, resound here from his gut, over which hangs a long flashing garland of the fierce lightning of fear and courage.⁸⁶

The virtuous actions that are obtained from this are glittering white, like the moon that is whole and free of defilements appearing hundreds of thousands of times [in water]. Because of this, through the excellent tradition of the cleansing Ganges that guides the golden sands [of] scripture and reasoning onto the proper and true path, free from illusion, in order to get rid of the stench of delusion, doubt, and erroneous [views], may the pure river that flows from afar to the realm of the immortality nectar be filled by the auspicious ocean that eliminates the suffering on the horizon with this stream of [Tsongkhapa] Losang [Drakpa]'s supreme oral transmission!⁸⁷ [75]

This is the *Swelling Roar of Amassed Clouds of Nectar and Black Clouds Flickering with Nooses of Fearsome Lightning: The Teachings of the Capable Father Lama Conveying the Origins of the Great Protector of the Teachings, Mighty Dorjé Shukden, who is Great with Power and Strength*. The father lama of incomparable kindness, the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang commanded me on multiple occasions to [compose] as an addendum wondrous accounts not lucidly described in his *Music Delighting the Ocean of Oath-Bound Ones: An Account of the Marvelous Biography of the Three Secrets of Mighty Dorjé Shukden*, yet I regret that I forgot. So, I took as my foundation [accounts] recorded in manuscripts, acquired [material] from other reliable sources, and enhanced facts with events I directly saw happen. The great Dharma protector [Dorjé Shukden] was a name that was known in the life of [my previous incarnation, the Third] Dzemé [Tulku] Losang Trinlé Namgyal (b. 19th. c.), even when we were so young in age. Scattered flowers and a sharp blazing sword would be invoked in the form of the capped letters of the headed script. Ever since I opened the door of the good merit of offerings [to Dorjé Shukden] because of our *samaya* vow, [76] it is [as if] my body has been automatically accompanied by a second shadow at all times and I have been protected by his four enlightened activities. Because I experienced these various signs, I was captivated by the great delight of aspiring to write this [text]. In the presence of the Lord of Vajradhara's *maṇḍala*, the great Kyabjé Yongzin Trijang Dorjé Chang, I received the profound and extraordinary life-force empowerment for [Dorjé Shukden's] direct lineage and properly performed the activities for approaching [this deity]. I am a *samaya*-endowed yogin who

86. Each line in this quatrain is 19 syllables long.

87. Each line in this quatrain is 23 syllables long.

received in full the profound and essential points of the [deity's] reading transmissions and oral instructions. Apprehending the [Geluk] teachings of Mount Ganden, I became devoted to them.

This lazy one known as Dzemé Tulku Losang Palden Tenzin Yargyé, a Buddhist Monk of Shartsé College at Ganden Monastery, composed [this text] on the thirtieth day⁸⁸ of the seventh lunar month in the Iron-Male-Dog year, called *tunmong*,⁸⁹ of the sixteenth sexagenary cycle [1970], in a cheerful town where my house is and where I spent the latter part of my life performing monthly amending rituals, at a place called Pachmarhi—a sacred site famous for Mahādevaḥ [Śiva] revealing many miraculous manifestations—in the state of Madhya Pradesh, India. [77]

May the [Geluk] teachings of Mount Ganden spread and flourish in all directions! May virtue increase!

Appendix

Chronological List of Polemics

1. The Melodious Drum that Overwhelms the Three Realms with Splendor

Sprul pa'i chos skyong rgyal chen rdo rje shugs ldan rtsal chen po'i bskang 'phrin sbyor dngos cha tshang dge ldan bstan pa'i dbu 'phangs bstod byed kham s gsum gzil gyis gnon pa'i dbyangs rnga

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Lha sdings rgyal sras Bskal bzang bstan 'dzin mkhas grub (19th c.)

Composed: Fire-Monkey Year [likely 1896]; 19 9-syllable quatrains

2. The Melodious Drum that is Victorious in All Directions

Dge ldan bstan srung dgra lha'i rgyal po srid gsum skye dgu'i srog bdag dam ldan bu bzhin skyong ba'i lha mchog sprul pa'i rgyal chen rdo rje shugs ldan rigs lnga rtsal gyi sger bskang rgyas pa phyogs las rnam par rgyal ba'i rnga dbyangs

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Pha bong kha pa bde chen snying po (1878–1941)

Composed: Started 1925, finished 1926; 23 9-syllable quatrains, expanded on text no. 1

3. Music Delighting the Ocean of Protectors

Dge ldan bstan pa bsrung ba'i lha mchog sprul pa'i chos rgyal chen po rdo rje shugs ldan rtsal gyi gsang gsum rmad du byung ba'i rtogs pa brjod pa'i gtam du bya ba dam can rgya mtsho dgyes pa'i rol mo

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

88. Tib. *dmar phyogs rdzogs pa gsum pa*; lit. “the fifteenth day of the waning (latter) half of the lunar month.”

89. Tib. *thun mong*; lit. “ordinary.” Tibetan years often have names or terms associated with them. In this case, *thun mong* refers specifically to the Iron-Male-Dog (*lcags pho khyi*) year.

Author: Khri byang 03 Blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho (1901–1981)

Composed: 1967 in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, India; prose explication on text no. 2

4. The Yellow Book

Mthu dang stobs kyis che ba'i bstan srung chen po rdo rje shugs ldan rtsal gyi byung ba brjod pa pha rgod bla ma'i zhal gyi bdud rtsi'i chu khur brtsegs shing 'jigs rung glog zhags 'gyu ba'i sprin nag 'khrugs pa'i nga ro

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Dze smad sprul sku 04 Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan 'dzin yar rgyas (1927–1996)

Composed: 1970 in Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh, India and published in 1973 in New Delhi; elaboration on text no. 3

5. The Timely Shower

Ma bcos dngos 'brel brjod pa dus kyis sbrang char

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015), Librarian at Tibet House

Composed: 1974 in New Delhi; first response to text no. 4

6. Lightning Arrow of Scriptures and Reason

Gyi na pa zbig gi blo'i sprin rum las 'ongs pa'i gdong lan lung dang rigs pa'i thog mda'

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Mdo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1933–2002)

Composed: 1977, published in 1979 in New Delhi; response to text no. 5

7. The Rain of Adamantine Fire

Dga' ldan shar rtse dze smad sprul sku blo bzang dpal ldan gyi smra ngan dug gi sa bon gzhom pa'i 'bel gtam/ lung rigs rdo rje'i me char

Anti-Shukden—Nyingma

Author: Bya bral Sangs rgyas rdo rje (b.1913)

Composed: 1978, published in 1979 in Gangtok, Sikkim; second response to text no. 4

8. The Timely Flame

Ma bcos dngos 'brel brjod pa dus kyis me lce

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015)

Composed: 1979, published in New Delhi by Paljor Publications; response to text no. 6

9. Universal Pleasant Thunder

Yon tan rgya mtsho'i rnam dpyod sprin gyi ba gam las legs par 'ongs pa'i brgal lan kun khyab snyan pa'i 'brug sgra zhes bya ba gdong thog sprul sku ngag dbang theg mchog bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan la gdams pa

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Mdo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1933–2002)

Composed: 1979, published in New Delhi, 1980; response to text no. 8

10. The Fearless Lion's Roar

Smra ngan phas rgol glang po stong gi klad pa 'gems byed brgal lan 'jigs med gdong lnga'i sgra dbyangs zhes bya ba bya bral sangs rgyas rdo rje la gdams pa

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Mdo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1933–2002)

Composed: September 1980, published in 1981 in New Delhi; response to text no. 7

11. The Peacock's Joyful Dance

'Thad par sma ba'i gtam mdongs mtha' sim pa'i zlos gar

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015)

Composed: 1982, published in 1983 in New Delhi by Sherab Gyaltzen; response to text no. 9

12. The Crystal Mirror

Bod gzhung chos don drung chen khams sprul 'jam dbyangs don grub la springs yig bden rdzun rnam dbye mngon par gsal ba'i dwangs shel me long

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Spel zur ba Rdo rje nor bu (20th c., dates unknown)

Composed: 1983/1984; written in response to 14th Dalai Lama destroying a Shukden statue at Ganden Monastery (India) in March 1983. The Tibetan Youth Congress responds with a declaration of opposition in August 1985.

13. A Burning Thunderbolt of Scriptures and Reason

Brgal lan lung rigs gnam lcags 'bar ba

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Mdo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1933–2002)

Composed: 1984, published in New Delhi by Lama Guru Deva; response to text no. 11⁹⁰

90. See King 2019 for more on Lama Guru Deva and the consolidation of the Shukden literary corpus in the early twentieth century.

14. Cleansing Water Drops

Bstan la 'khrul pa smra ba'i rdul sel lung rigs kyi byi dor dag byed zags ma

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015)

Composed: 1986; response to text no. 13

15. The Uprooting Sword

Byes 'byor bod mi'i sdug bsngal myu gu rtsad nas gcod pa'i ral gri

Pro-Shukden—Geluk

Author: Geshe Kalsang Gyatso of the New Kadampa Tradition

Composed: 1996; pamphlet and letter critical of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Government, written in response to letters of rebuke

16. The Earth Shaking Thunder of True Word

Gong sa skyabs mgon rgyal ba'i dbang po mchog gi lha srung bsten phyogs bka' slob la rgol ba'i rtsod zlog bden gtam sa gzhi 'dar ba'i 'brug sgra

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015)

Composed: 1996, published in 1997, translated and published in English in 2000 and 2006 by Sapan Institute, Shoreline; response to text no. 15

17. The Thunderbolt and Lightning Arrow of Scriptures and Reason

'Jam mgon rgyal ba'i bstan dgra rdul du rlag byed lung rigs gnam lcags thog mda'

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015)

Composed: 2006, published by Sapan Institute, Shoreline; more rejoinders

18. The Sharp Swift Swords of Reasoning

Rgyal ba'i bstan las phyir phyogs rmongs dad chos su smra ba'i dgag lan rno myur rigs pa'i ral gri'i 'phrul 'khor

Anti-Shukden—Sakya

Author: Gdong thog Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1934–2015)

Composed: 2008, published by Sapan Institute, Shoreline; more rejoinders

19. A Golden Key of Scripture and Reasoning

Dol rgyal gyi dngos yod gnas tshul rab gsal legs nyes bden rdzun rnam 'byed lung rigs gser gyi lde mig

Anti-Shukden—Geluk

Author: The Association of Geluk Masters, the Geluk International Foundation, and the Association for the Preservation of Geluk Monasticism

Composed: 2013, published in Karnataka, translated and published in English in 2019 by Gavin Kilty, see Association of Geluk Masters, et al 2013, and Kilty 2019; compilation of Geluk rejoinders

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