

BEING RIGHT HERE

ཟབ་ཐིག་མཁའ་འགྲོའི་གསང་མཛོད་ལས།

རྫོགས་པ་ཚེན་པོ་ཉམས་སུ་གྲུབ་བའི་བྲིད་

དོན་གསལ་མེ་འོང་

བཞུགས་སོ།



BEING RIGHT HERE

A DZOGCHEN TREASURE TEXT OF

NUDEN DORJE

ENTITLED

THE MIRROR OF CLEAR MEANING

WITH COMMENTARY BY

JAMES LOW

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Transcription by Olaf Brockmann and Ruth Kürmann

Edited by Andreas Ruft

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edited by

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PREFACE

This brief commentary is offered as a gesture of welcome to the view and practice of *dzogchen*.

The root text is written by Nuden Dorje (*Nus-lDen rDo-rJe 'Gro-Phan gLing-Pa Gro-Lod rTsal*) in the mid nineteenth century. It forms part of his collection of treasure teachings. These are teachings that he first heard in his former incarnation as Khyeuchung Lotsawa (*Khye'u-Chung Lo-Tsa-Ba*), one of the twenty-five close disciples of Padmasambhava, the great tantric master who created the integrated style of Tibetan Buddhism. Nuden Dorje spent most of his life in Kham in East Tibet where he spent many years in retreat. A master of *tantra* and *dzogchen* he was known for his quick mind and penetrating understanding. The text was translated with the guidance of his forth incarnation Chhimed Rigdzin (1922-2002).

Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche and Gudrun Knausenberger worked on a first draft of the translation of the root text. Rinpoche asked me to look at it and make improvements. I did a re-translation of the text during a brief but very happy stay with them in Offenbach near Frankfurt. I was able to ask Rinpoche many questions in order to gain a precise understanding of the lineage reading.

The text provides a very clear authentic account of the view and essential meditation of *dzogchen*, the practice of non-dual experience. The presentation is in the *Men Ngag* style, a personal instruction distilling the authors own realisation, revealing the lived experience of the *terton* Nuden Dorje Drophan Lingpa in a manner both beautiful and profoundly meaningful.

The text is very fresh, radiant with the dew drops of its short lineage. Like a flower or a beautiful piece of art it will reveal itself to those who open to it with a quiet mind and a heart softened through tender attention. It consists of short verses which, with pithy clarity, show how the various aspects of *dzogchen* fit together. The text provides both an authentic account of the practice and instruction in how to apply it.

Dzogchen, often considered the highest level of Tibetan Buddhism is an ancient system of realising ones own authentic nature. The tradition of transmission is unbroken and this text provides a traditional consideration of the key points of the system. It speaks to the heart of the human condition, highlighting the need to integrate all the aspects of ones being, overcoming fear, anxiety and denial.

The commentary was made at Rinpoche's request during his retreat and teaching at Pfauenhof to students of the lineage. My comments express the mood of the time. The commentary has been only lightly edited to keep some of the flavour of the event.

It provides both an expansion of the traditional concepts embodied in the text and an examination of how they can function in modern everyday life. The commentary explains key practices and how to manage difficulties that arise in meditation. There are of course many more ways of approaching this text which is so rich and deep. I think it would help readers to also study chapters 8, 10, 11 of 'Simply Being' which address many of the problems which can arise during this kind of practice.

Giving this commentary was the last time I taught in Rinpoche's presence and rereading it brings back the facilitating warmth and spaciousness of his empowering and liberating display. The teacher is the site of integration; through the practice of the text the nature of life is revealed through integration with the living presence of the teacher. The teacher is of course not an entity but a relational field.

Many people have contributed to the production of this small book; all our efforts mingle with the efforts of others. In particular Andreas Ruft has been the guiding force of the project, diligent, calm and enthusiastic.

May all our busy work
Bring you rest and ease.

James Low, London, April 2003

Note of the editor

All Tibetan and Sanskrit terms except proper names are placed in italics. Tibetan terms are transcribed in brackets on their first appearance, using the Wylie system as modified by Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche. The root consonant of each syllable has been capitalised in order to avoid any ambiguity.

The editor would like to thank all people who have contributed to this work, especially Ruth Kürmann and Olaf Brockmann for transcribing the teaching, Leho Rubis for providing the line drawings, Wolfgang Zimmermann for his steadfast constancy and Snow Lion Publications for making this teaching available to a larger audience. Last, but not least, our thanks go to our beloved teacher Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche who entrusted us all with this deep and meaningful teaching of his heart. None of this work would be possible without his generosity.



Padmasambhava

Introductory Invocation of Padmasambhava

སྐྱུ་བས་གནས་བསྐྱེད་མེད་དཀོན་མཆོག་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
ཐུགས་རྗེ་མངའ་བའི་ཡུ་རྫོང་པདྨ་ལ།
བདག་གིས་ཇི་ལྟར་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་བཞིན།
ལྷུང་དུ་འགྲུབ་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབས་དུ་གསོལ།

*To the precious jewel who is my unfailing refuge,
Urgyen Padma who has compassion;
I pray for the blessing that whatever I request
May be quickly accomplished.*

Seven Line Prayer

ཧཱུྃ། ལྷ་རྒྱལ་ཡུལ་གྱི་རུབ་བྱང་མཚོམས།
 བརྒྱ་གོ་མར་སྤོང་པོ་ལ།
 ཡ་མཚོན་མཚོག་གི་དངོས་གྲུབ་བརྟེས།
 བརྒྱ་འབྲུང་གནས་ཞེས་སྲུ་གྲགས།
 དཔེར་དུ་མཁའ་དགོ་མང་པོས་བསྐྱོར།
 ལྷོད་གྱི་རྗེས་སྲུ་བདག་བརྒྱལ་གྱིས།
 བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབ་སྦྱིར་གཤེགས་སྲུ་གསོལ།
 ལྷུ་རུ་བརྒྱ་མི་རྩེ་ལྷོ།

*Hung. In the north-west corner of the land Urgyen,
 Upon the stem and stamen of a Lotus,
 Are you who have the most marvellous and supreme attainments
 Padmasambhava of great renown,
 With a retinue of many Dakinis around you.
 Following and relying on you I do your practice, therefore,
 In order to grant your blessings, please come here.
 GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUNG*

Refuge and Bodhicitta

ཨ། །སངས་རྒྱལ་ཚེས་དང་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཚོག་རྣམས་ལ།
 །བྱང་ལྷུབ་པར་དུ་བདག་ནི་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཚི།
 །བདག་གིས་སྤྱིན་སོགས་བགྱིས་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས།
 །འགྲོ་ལ་མན་སྤྱིར་སངས་རྒྱལ་འགྲུབ་པར་ཤོག།

To the Buddha, the Dharma & the Sangha

I go for Refuge until Enlightenment

By the merit I have created through generosity and other virtues

May I gain Buddhahood in order to help all sentient beings.





INTRODUCTION

This afternoon we were taking refuge with Rinpoche and the final refuge we said was: “I take refuge in my own mind.” Now we can say that all together and then try to work out what it means.

“I take refuge in my own mind.”

“I take refuge in my own mind.”

“I take refuge in my own mind.”

In the next four days we will have time to look into this text “The Mirror of Clear Meaning” (*Don gSal Me Long*) in order to understand more what it means to take refuge in one’s mind.

If it is raining you can take refuge in your umbrella against the rain. You have a simple desire to keep dry. You have a simple enemy – the rain. And you have a simple friend – the umbrella. This is the basic principle for buddhist refuge. We have suffering as the principal enemy, we have the teachings of the Buddha as the main protection and we have ourselves that we are trying to protect. And we protect ourselves because we want to be happy and we imagine there are things that make us unhappy. So the things that make us unhappy affect us. If we can find a way to protect ourselves from the things that affect us we will be happy. But when we look into this, it is of course always complicated. Who is the one that we are trying to protect and who is really causing trouble for us?

In all the levels of Buddhist teaching it says very clearly that it is we ourselves who cause trouble for ourselves. And what is

the bit of ourselves that causes trouble for us? It is our mind. So our mind is causing us all our problems and at the same time the highest level of refuge is to take refuge in the mind which is causing you all your problems. Mind is the cause and beginning and the site of *samsara* and it is also the site and the experience of *nirvana*. But the way that this term 'mind' is used in Buddhism is different from our ordinary sense. What is meant here by 'mind' is not our ordinary sense of me: 'I, the thinker'. It is more the felt presence of our own existence and this presence of our own existence is not something which can be identified as being an object.

So now we will go through the text. In the first verse it starts to explore the ground of the view, the basis of the view of *dzogchen* (*rDzogs Pa Chen Po*) and with this we will move into the discussion of the preliminary practice.