



Great Lord Drikungpa, Jigten Sumgön. Limitless kalpas ago, Jigten Sumgön was born as the Chakravartin Tsib-Kyi Mu-Khyu. He was the father of a thousand princes, but renounced the kingdom and attained enlightenment and was called the Tathagata Lurik Dronma. Although he had already attained Enlightenment, he appeared later as the Bodhisattva Kunsar Wangkur Gyalpo. At the time of the Buddha Kashyapa, he appeared as the potter Gakyong. At the time of the Buddha Shakyamuni, he appeared as the stainless Licchavi, who was inseparable from the Buddha himself. Later, he was born as the Acharya Nagarjuna. Through these births, he benefited the Buddha's teachings and countless sentient beings.

Then, so that the essence of the Buddha's teachings might flourish, he was born to a noble family of the Kyura clan in Tibet. His father was Naljorpa Dorje, a great practitioner of Yamantaka, and his mother was Rakyisa Tsunma. Many marvelous signs accompanied the birth. He learned the teachings of Yamantaka from his father, and became expert in reading and writing by the age of four. From his uncle, the Abbot Dharma, the great Ra-Dreng Gom-Chen, the Reverend Khorwa Lung-Khyer, and others, he learned many sutras and tantras.

Jigten Sumgön's coming was predicted in many sutras and tantras. For example, In the Gongdu Sutra it is said: "At a place called Dri, the Source of the Dharma, Ratna Shri will appear in the Year of the Pig. He will gather a hundred thousand fully ordained monks. Gonda Pandita, who came from Central Tibet, told him about Phagmodrupa. Just by hearing the name of Phagmodrupa, Jigten Sumgön's mind was moved. With great hardship, he traveled from Kham to Central Tibet. A rainbow stretched the entire length of his journey, and the Protector, Dorje Lekpa, took the forms of a rabbit and a child, thus attending him and looking after his needs. Coming to the dangerous, rocky path of Kyere, he found a natural formation of the six-syllable mantra transformed itself into a vision of the face of Phagmodrupa. When he met Phagmodrupa, the Guru said, "Now all of my disciples are present. Jigten Sumgön was recognized as Phagmodrupa's Chief Disciple. At this time, in accordance with the predictions made by Phagmodrupa, Jigten Sumgön still held only the vows of an Upasaka. One day, Phagmodrupa asked him to remain behind after the assembly and instructed him in the seven-point posture of Vairochana. Touching him on his head, throat, and heart centers, he said, "OM, AH HUNG" three times and told him, "You will be a great meditator, and for this I rejoice." Jigten Sumgön attended Phagmodrupa for two years and six months. During that time, he received all of his guru's teachings and was told that he would be his successor. At the time of Phagmodrupa's parinirvana, a radiant five-pronged golden vajra emanated from his heart-center and dissolved into the heart-center of Jigten Sumgön, this being seen by all the other disciples. Jigten Sumgön then gave all his belongings to benefit the monastery and to help build a large memorial stupa for his guru. After this, he met many other teachers. From Dakpo Gomtsul he received the Four Yogas of Mahamudra. A patroness then promised him provisions for three years and Jigten Sumgön, earnestly wishing to practice the teachings he had received, retired to the Echung cave to meditate. In those three years, he gained a rough understanding of the outer, inner, and secret aspects of interdependent origination. He then realized that the cause of wandering in samsara is the difficulty prana has in entering the avadhuti, and hence practicing on prana, saw many buddhas and bodhisattvas face-to-face, and had visions of his mind purifying the six realms. Then he went on a pilgrimage to Phagmodru and other holy places. On his return to Echung Cave, he meditated with one-pointed mind. In the same way that maras arose as obstacles to Lord Buddha at the time of his enlightenment, and Tsering Chenga and others tried to hinder Milarepa; the final fruition of Jigten Sumgön's karma arose, and he contracted leprosy. Becoming intensely depressed, he thought, "Now, I should die in this solitary place and transfer my consciousness." He prostrated to an image of Avalokiteshvara that had been blessed many times by Phagmodrupa. At the first prostration, he thought, "Among sentient beings, I am the worst. "At the second, he thought, "I have all the teachings of my guru, including the instructions of bardo and the transference of consciousness, and need have no fear of death." Then, remembering that other beings didn't have these teachings, strong compassion arose in him. In that state of mind, he sat down and generated compassionate

thoughts towards others. His sickness left him, like clouds blown away from the sun, and at that moment he attained Buddhahood. He had practiced at the Echung Cave for seven years. Shortly after this, he had a vision of the Seven Taras. Because he had a full understanding of interdependent origination, and realized the unity of discipline (shila) and Mahamudra, he took the vows of a fully-ordained monk. From this time, Jigten Sumgön did not eat meat. As he had already been named by Phagmodrupa as his successor, the chief monks of his guru's monastery invited him to return. After taking the abbot's seat at the monastery, Jigten Sumgön insisted on a strict observance of monastic discipline. One day, some monks said: "We are 'nephews' of Milarepa and should be allowed to drink chang ." Saying this, they drank. When Jigten Sumgön counseled them, they replied, "You yourself should keep the discipline of not harming others." Phagmodrupa then appeared in a vision to Jigten Sumgön and said to him, "Leave this old, silken seat and go to the north. There you will benefit many sentient beings." Jigten Sumgön went north, and on the way, at Nyenchen Thanglha, he was greeted by the protector of that place. At Namra, a spirit-king and his retinue took the Upasaka vow from him, and Jigten Sumgön left one of his foot-prints behind for them as an object of devotion. He gave meditation instruction to vultures flying overhead, and they practiced according to those teachings. Once, at a word from Jigten Sumgön, a horse returned to him that was running away. He also sent an emanation of himself to pacify a war in Bodhgaya begun by the Duruka tribesmen. On another occasion, at Dam, he gave teachings and received many offerings. At the end of a day which had seemed very long, he told the crowd, "Now go immediately to your homes," and suddenly it was just before dawn of the next day. To finish his talk Jigten Sumgön had stopped the sun. When he was at Namra Mountain, Brahma, the king of the gods, requested the vast and profound teachings. On the way to Drikung, the great god Bar-Lha received him. The children of Jenthang built a throne for him, and from which instructed the people of that town. Even the water, which has no mind, listened to his teachings and made the sound, Nagarjuna. Then he came to Drikung Thil. In his thirty-seventh year, he established Drikung Jangchubling, the largest monastery and the main seat of the Drikungpa Kagyupa in Tibet and appointed Pon Gomba Dorje Senge as supervisor for the construction of the monastery. Many monks gathered there and enjoyed the rainfall of the profound dharma.

In Tibet, there are nine great protectors of the dharma. Among them, Barlha, Sogra, Chuphen Luwang, Terdrom Menmo, and Namgyal Karpo bowed down at Jigten Sumgön's feet, took the Upasaka vow, and promised to protect the teachings and practitioners of the Drikung Kagyu Lineage. At one time, water was very scarce in Drikung, and in order to relieve the situation, Jigten Sumgön gave 108 turquoise to his attendant, Rinchen Drak, with instructions to hide them in various places. Rinchen Drak hid all but one, which he kept for himself and put in his robe. The turquoises that were hidden became sources of water, and the one he kept turned into a frog. Startled, he threw it away, and in falling it became blind in one eye. Where the frog landed, a stream arose which was called Chumik Shara. Most of these streams were dried up by fire when

Drikung Thil was destroyed during the middle of the fourteenth century, but some still remain. On the new and full moon each month, Jigten Sumgön and his monks observed a purification ceremony called Sojong. Once when some monks arrived late and Jigten Sumgön decided to discontinue the practice, but Brahma requested him to maintain that tradition, and he agreed. Jigten Sumgön continued to look after Densa Thil, his old monastery. He also visited Dakla Gampo, the monastery of Gampopa. From Gampopa's image inside the monastery, light rays streamed forth, merging inseparably with Jigten Sumgön and he attained both the ordinary and the extraordinary siddhis of the Treasure of Space. Once, the dakinis of the Tsari came bringing the Dakpar Shri, an assembly of 2,800 yidams on a net of horse-hair and presented them to him. In the memory of Phagmodrupa, he built an auspicious stupa of many doors and placed the 2,800 yidams inside, with a door for each one of them. From this there came down the tradition of building stupas in this way. In a vision, he met with Ananda and discussed the teachings. Once, Lama Shang said, "This year, the dakinis of Oddiyana will come to invite me and the great Drikungpa to join them. He is a master of interdependent origination and won't have to go there, but I should go." Soon after this, the dakinis came for him and he passed away; but when they came to invite Jigten Sumgön, he refused, and the dakinis changed their prayer of invitation into a supplication for the guru's longevity. Then all the dakas and dakinis made offerings to him and promised to guide his disciples. Jigten Sumgön had many important disciples, among them: the two Chengas, the Great Abbot Gurawa, Nyo Gyalwa Lhanangpa, Gar Choding, Palchen Choye, Drubtob Nyaske, the two Tsang-tsangs, and others. These were the leaders of the philosophers. The Vinaya-holders were Thakma Dulzin, Dakpo Duldzin, and others. The Kadampa Geshes were Kyo Dorje Nyingpo and others. The translators were Nup, Phakpa, and others. The leaders of the tantrikas were Tre, Ngok, and others. The leaders of the yogins were Dudsi, Belpo, and others. Whenever Jigten Sumgön taught, rainbows appeared and gods rained flowers from the sky. Machen Pomra and other Protectors listened to his teachings, and the kings of Tibet, India, and China were greatly devoted to him. By this time, Jigten Sumgön had 55,525 followers. To feed this ocean of disciples, Matro, the King of the Nagas and the source of all the wealth of Jambudvipa, became the patron of the monastery. Near Drikung Thil there was a rock called "Lion-Shoulder", which Jigten Sumgön saw as the mandala of Chakrasamvara. He established a monastery there and, to spread the teachings thus benefiting all sentient beings, he built another Auspicious Stupa of Many Doors, using a special method. At this time he also repaired the Samye monastery. The Chakrasamvara of Five Deities was Jigten Sumgön's main yidam practice and he manifested at times in that form in order to train the more difficult disciples. When a war began in Minyak, in eastern Tibet, he protected the people there through his miracle powers. The number of his disciples increased to 70,000. Many of the most intelligent of these attained enlightenment in one lifetime, while those of lesser intelligence attained various bhūmis, and everyone else realized, at least the nature of his or her own mind. In one of the predictions about Jigten Sumgön, it was said, "A hundred

thousand incarnate (Tulku) Great Beings will gather." Here, "Tulku" meant that they would be monks and have perfect discipline, and "Great Beings" meant that they would all be Bodhisattvas. In other life-stories, it is said that in an instant Jigten Sumgön visited all the Buddha-fields, saw Buddhas like Amitabha and Ashobya, and listened to their teachings. Jigten Sumgön himself said that whoever so much as had the chance to go to Layel, in Drikung, would be freed from birth in the lower realms, and that whoever supplicated him - whether from near or far away - would be blessed, and his or her meditation would grow more firm. He also said that all sentient beings living in the mountains of Drikung, even the ants, would not be born again in lower realms. From the essence of the instructions of sutra and tantra, Jigten Sumgön gave teachings which were compiled by his disciple Chenga Sherab Jungne (Chenga Drikung Lingpa) into a text called "Gongchig", which has 150 topics and forty appendices. At one time a naga-king named Meltro Zichen went to Drikung for teachings. Jigten Sumgön sent a message to his disciples to remain in seclusion in order that those with miracle powers would not harm the naga and those without such power would not be harmed themselves. The message was received by everyone except the Mahasiddhi Gar Dampa, who was meditating in the depths of a long cave. When the naga arrived, he made a thundering noise which was heard by all including Gar Dampa. Gar Dampa came out of the cave to see what was happening and saw a frightful, dark-blue snake whose length encircled the monastery three times and whose head was peering in the window of the palace. Without examining the situation, he thought the naga was there to harm his guru and thus manifested himself as a giant garuda and chased the naga away. At Rolpa Trang, there is a smooth, clear print left by the garuda when it landed on a rock. Near the river of Kyung-Ngar Gel, there are marks left by both the garuda and the naga. A Ceylonese Arhat, a follower of the Buddha, hearing that the Mahapandita Shakya Shri Bhadra was going to Tibet, gave to the Mahapandita's brother a white lotus requesting him to give it to the Mahapandita who in turn would give it to Nagarjuna in Tibet. When Shakya Shri Bhadra arrived in Tibet, he ordained many monks but did not know where to find Nagarjuna. When giving ordination, he would distribute robes and once an ordinary disciple of Jigten Sumgön's approached him for ordination and then asked for a robe but was told that there were none left. He insisted strongly. One of Shakya Shri Bhadra's attendants pushed him away; he fell and blood flowed from his nose. Prior to this happening, Shakya Shri Bhadra had always seen Tara in the morning when he recited the Seven-Branch Prayer, but for the six days following this incident she did not show herself. Then, on the seventh day she appeared with her back turned towards him. "What have I done wrong?" he asked her. "Your attendant beat a disciple of Nagarjuna," she replied, and brought blood from his nose." When he asked how he could purify this misdeed, Tara told him, "Make as many Dharma-robes as you have years, and offer them to fully-ordained monks who have no robes." Shakya Shri Bhadra then searched for the monk who had been turned away. When he found him and learned the name of his teacher, he realized that Jigten Sumgön was Nagarjuna's incarnation. He sent one of his attendants to offer the

white lotus to Jigten Sumgön. In return, Jigten Sumgön sent many offerings of his own and asked that Shakya Shri Bhadra visit Drikung, but the Mahapandita could not go, though he did send many verses of praise. Although Nagarjuna had knowingly taken rebirth as Jigten Sumgön in order to dispel wrong views and was teaching in Tibet, Shakya Shri Pandita saw that there was no need to go see him. At this time, many lesser Panditas were visiting Tibet. One of them named Bi Bhuti Chandra, said, "Let us talk with the Kadampas; the followers of Mahamudra tell lies." Shakya Shri Pandita said to him, "Do not say that," and recounted the above story. "Because Jigten Sumgön is a great teacher," he continued, "you should now apologize for having said these things." Bi Bhuti Chandra then went to Drikung, made full apology, and constructed an image of Chakrasamvara at Sinpori Mountain. One day, a great scholar by the name of Dru Kyamo came to Drikung from Sakya to debate with Jigten Sumgön. When he saw the guru's face he saw him as the Buddha himself, and his two chief disciples - Chenga Sherab Jungne and Chenga Drakpa Jungne - as with Shariputra and Maudgalyayana. There was no way he could debate with Jigten Sumgön after this. His devotion blossomed fully and he became one of Jigten Sumgön's principle disciples. Later, he was called Ngorje Repa and wrote a text called "Thegchen Tenpai Nyingpo" as a commentary on Jigten Sumgön's teachings. The number of Jigten Sumgön's disciples continued to increase and at one rainy season retreat, 100,000 "morality sticks" were distributed to count the number of monks attending. Not long after this, 2,700 monks were sent to Lachi and equal numbers were sent to Tsari and Mount Kailash, but by the next year 130,000 monks had once again gathered at Drikung. Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa came to Drikung after visiting Daklha Gampo. At Bam Thang in Drikung, Jigten Sumgön and his disciples received him warmly. At that time the Karmapa saw Jigten Sumgön as the Buddha, and his two chief disciples as Shariputra and Maudgalyayana surrounded by Arhats. When they returned to the assembly main hall, the Serkhang, the Karmapa again saw Jigten Sumgön as the Buddha, with his two disciples appearing as Maitreya and Manjushri surrounded by Bodhisattvas. Thus, Dusum Khyenpa showed great devotion and received many teachings. He also saw the entire area of Drikung as the Mandala of Chakrasamvara. The question arose of who would hold the lineage after Jigten Sumgön's passing. Jigten Sumgön had confidence in many of his disciples, but had thought for a long time that the succession should pass to one of his family clan, the Drugyal Kyura. Since he had been born in Kham, he sent one of his disciples, Palchen Shri Phukpa, to teach the members of his family. Displaying miracles power and proclaiming his guru's reputation, Palchen Shri Phukpa taught Jigten Sumgön's uncle Konchok Rinchen and his uncle's son, Anye Atrak and all the grandsons. When their minds turned and they became attracted, they moved to Central Tibet. Their stories are told in the Golden Rosary of the Drikung Kagyu. One day, Jigten Sumgön told his disciple Gar Choling to go to the Soksum Bridge and offer tormas to the nagas living in the water. You will receive special wealth," he told him. A naga-king named Sokma Me offered Gar Choling a tooth of the Buddha and three special gems. Generally, it is said that this tooth had been

taken by the naga-king Dradrok as an object of devotion. This was the same naga who usually lived in the area of Magadha, but had access to Soksum by way of an underground gate. Gar Choling offered the tooth and gems to Jigten Sumgön, who said, "It is good to return wealth to its owner," indicating that the tooth had once been his own. "As you are wealthy," he continued, "you should make an image of me and put the tooth in its heart." A skilled Chinese artisan was then invited to build the statue, and the tooth was enshrined as a relic. Jigten Sumgön consecrated this statue hundreds of times. It was kept in Serkhang and called Serkhang Choje (Dharma Lord of Serkhang). Its power of blessing was regarded as being equal to that of Jigten Sumgön himself. It spoke to many shrine-keepers, and to a lama named Dawa it taught the Six Yogas of Naropa. Later, when Drikung was destroyed by fire, it was buried in the sand for protection. When the Drikung Kyabgon returned to rebuild the monastery a search was made for the statue, which came out of the sand itself, saying, "I am here." Thus, this image possessed great power. Gar Choling made many other images of Jigten Sumgön during this time. Jigten Sumgön was by now growing very old, and could not travel often to Debsa Thel so Chenga Drakpa Jungne was sent there as his Vajra Regent and his activities there were very successful. Under the leadership of Panchen Guya Kangpa, Jigten Sumgön sent 55,525 disciples to stay at Mount Kailash. Under Geshe Yakru Paldrak, 55,525 disciples were sent to Lachi. Under Dordzin Gowoche, 55,525 were sent to Tsari. Even at the time of Chungpo Dorje Drakpa, the fourth successor to Jigten Sumgön, there were 180,000 disciples at Drikung. Once when Jigten Sumgön went to Dorje Lhokar Cave, he said that the cave was too small and so stretched, causing the inside of the cave to expand, leaving the imprint of his clothes on the rock. Because the cave was dark, he pushed a stick through the rock, making a window. He then made shelves in the rock to hold his belongings. All of these can be seen very clearly. In his travels, he left many foot-prints in the four directions of the area of Drikung. When Jigten Sumgön fell ill one day, Phagmodrupa appeared to him in a vision and explained a yogic technique by means of which he became well again. To Jigten Sumgön's many disciples, taught according to their need and to some, according to their disposition, he gave instructions in the practice of the Eight Herukas of the Nyingma tradition. Towards the end of his life, he predicted a period of decline for the Drikung lineage. Taking a small stick that he used to clean his teeth, he planted it in the ground and said, "When this stick has reached a certain height, I will return." This foretold the coming of Gyalwa Kunga Rinchen, the 15th successor of Jigten Sumgön. Jigten Sumgön then asked Chenga Sherab Jungne to be his successor, but the latter declined out of modesty. Then he asked the Great Abbot, Gurawa Tsultrim Dorje, and he agreed. At the age of seventy-five in the year of the Fire-Ox, Jigten Sumgön entered parinirvana in order to encourage lazy ones to the Dharma. His body was cremated on the thirteenth day of the month of Vaishaka. Gods created clouds of offerings and flowers rained from the sky to the level of one's knees. His skull was totally untouched by the fire and his brain appeared as the Mandala of the Sixty-Two Deities of Chakrasamvara. This was as clear as if a

skilled artisan had made it. His heart, also untouched by the fire turned to a beautiful golden color. This showed that he was an incarnation of the Buddha himself. Likewise, countless relics appeared. After Jigten Sumgön's passing, most of the funerary responsibilities were taken by Chenga Sherab Jungne, even though he earlier declined the succession. He went to Senge Phungpa Mountain to view the Mandala of Chakrasamvara and there saw Jigten Sumgön. Thus he felt that a memorial should be built there. Jigten Sumgön again appeared in a vision on the mountain of the Samadhi Cave and said to him, "Son, do as you wish, but always follow my intention." Then he disappeared. Doing as he wished, Chenga Sherab Jungne built an auspicious Stupa of Many Doors called "Sage, Overpowerer of the Three Worlds." In that stupa, he put Jigten Sumgön's heart and many other relics. Following his guru's intention, he built the stupa "Body-Essence, Ornament of the World," which was made of clay mixed with jewel dust, saffron and various kinds of incense. In that stupa, he put Jigten Sumgön's skull and brain, along with many other relics including the Vinaya texts brought from India by Atisha and the 100,000-Verse Prajnaparamita. Jigten Sumgön now abides in the Eastern Great All-Pervading Buddha Field, surrounded by limitless numbers of disciples from this earth who died with a strong devotion to him. When such people die, they will be reborn there immediately and Jigten Sumgön then places his hand gently on their heads, giving blessing and welcoming them there