

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

A	
abhidharma (Skt)	one of the three pitakas
Abhidharmakosha	“Treasury of Abhidharma” written by Vasubandhu
Abhisamayalankara	“Ornament of Realization”, one of the five treatises of Maitreya
abhisheka (Skt)	empowerment
acharya (Skt)	master, teacher
Adzom Drukpa	(1842-1924) a great Tibetan master
agama (Skt)	commentary
Akanishtha (Skt)	the highest celestial realm or buddha-field
Akshobhya	buddha of the East
alaya vijñana (Skt)	all-ground consciousness
Amdo	a region of Tibet
Amitabha	Buddha of Infinite Light, buddha of the West
Amitayus	Buddha of Infinite Life
Amoghasiddhi	buddha of the North
amrita (Skt)	(i) nectar of immortality; (ii) white alcoholic substance used in rituals
Ananda	cousin and attendant of Buddha Shakyamuni
Anuttarayoga tantra (Skt)	highest yoga tantra, the highest tantric teachings according to the Sarma tradition
anuyoga (Skt)	eighth of the nine yanas
arhat (Skt)	Literally “one who has conquered the enemies” or “foe-destroyer”. The highest level of realization in the Hinayana.
arya (Skt)	“noble one”, realized being
Aryadeva	great Indian master of madhyamika, disciple of Nagarjuna
Asanga	great fourth century Indian master who received teachings from Maitreya
Ashoka	buddhist emperor of India

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

asura (Skt)	demi-gods
Atisha	an eleventh century Indian master who travelled to Tibet
atiyoga (Skt)	another word for Dzogchen, the ninth yana
Avalokiteshvara	bodhisattva of compassion
Avichi	hell of ultimate torment
B	
bak mé	careless, not vigilant
bak yö	carefulness, vigilance
Barché Lamsel	Prayer for Removing all Obstacles
bardo	intermediate state, transition
Bardo Tödrol	Tibetan Book of the Dead
bhagavan (Skt)	epithet of the Buddha, translated as “blessed one” or “(transcendent) lord”
Bhavaviveka	fifth century Indian master of Madhyamika
bhikkhu (Pali)	monk
bhumi (Skt)	literally “ground”, stage of realization
bindu (Skt)	essential drop
Bir	town in Himachal Pradesh, India, where many Tibetans, including Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche, live
Bodh Gaya	site of the Buddha’s enlightenment
Bodhicharyavatara (Skt)	Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life by Shantideva
bodhichitta (Skt)	heart of the awakening mind
bodhisattva (Skt)	“awakening being”, follower of the mahayana path
Boudha	area in Kathmandu where many Tibetans live
Buddhapalita	Indian Madhyamika scholar
bumchen	big vase breathing
Bylakuppe	name of a Tibetan settlement in Mysore, South India

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

C	
Chadral Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in Nepal, aka Chadral Sangye Dorje
Chagdud Tulku	Tibetan master who taught extensively in North and South America
chakdzö	treasurer, secretary
chakgya chenpo	Tibetan for mahamudra
chakravartin (Skt)	“wheel-turning” universal monarch
Chandrakirti	a great seventh century Indian master of Madhyamika
chang ter	“Northern Treasures”, termas revealed by Rigdzin Gödem (1337-1408)
charya yoga (Skt)	fifth of the nine yanas, same as upa yoga
ché gom	analytical, investigative meditation
ché ta	nihilistic view
Chengdu	Chinese town near the Tibetan border
Chenrezik	Tibetan for Avalokiteshvara, buddha of compassion
chépa	contemplating, analyzing
Chetsün Nyingtik	a terma of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo
chi dön	general overview, a form of commentary
chik charwa	“sudden realizers” who do not need to take a gradual approach
chinlap	blessing
Chittamatra (Skt)	the “mind only” school of buddhist philosophy
chö	(i) Dharma, (ii) phenomena, (iii) to cut, cutting
chö kyidak	the self of phenomena, ego of dharmas
chö kyidak mé	the selflessness of phenomena, egolessness of dharmas
chö kyidak ma chö, sem kyidak chö	“Do not seek to cut the root of phenomena, Seek to cut the root of the mind”, a quote from Padmasambhava

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

chö kyi ying	Tibetan for dharmadhatu, absolute space of phenomena
chö nyi	Tibetan for dharmata, reality itself
chö rab nam jé kyi yeshé	the wisdom that fully discerns phenomena
Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche	(1939-1987) great Tibetan master and pioneer in bringing teachings to the West
Chöjuk	Tibetan for Bodhicharyavatara
chok shyak	leaving as-it-is, a Dzogchen term
Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa	Tibetan master 1829-1870
Chökhör Düchen	“Festival of Turning the Wheel of Dharma”, anniversary of the Buddha’s first teaching
Chokling Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master
Chokling Tersar	The New Termas of Chokling, revelation of Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa
Chökyi Drakpa	author of commentary on Longchen Nyingtik ngöndro
Chökyi Nyima	Tibetan translator, <i>aka</i> Richard Barron
Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan lama based in Nepal
chönyi kyi drenpa	natural mindfulness or remembrance
chönyi rang bab kyi drenpa	natural remembrance
chöpa	Dharma practitioner
chöpa nangwa chokshyak	Action, appearances: leave them as they are
chöpön	responsible for rituals within a monastery, master of ceremonies
chörten	Tibetan for stupa
chotrul düchen	“festival of miracles”, occurs during the first Tibetan month
Chöying Dzö	Treasury of the Dharmadhatu, a Dzogchen text by Longchenpa

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

chu ma nyok na dang sem ma chö na dé	“If the mind is not contrived, it is spontaneously beautiful, just as water, when not agitated, is by nature transparent and clear.”
D	
dadar	long-life arrow
dak	self, ego, I, myself
dak dzin	ego, ego-clinging, self-grasping
dak nang	pure perception
dak shyen jéwa	exchanging self and others
dak shyen nyampa	equalizing self and others
daka (Skt)	warrior, male counterpart of dakini
Daki Mengak Gabtik	dakini practice revealed by Tertön Sogyal
dakini (Skt)	“sky-goers”, representation of wisdom in female form
dakpa drenpa	recollection of purity (in kyerim practice)
Dakpo Rinpoche	another name for Gampopa (1079-1153)
dakmé tokpé sherab	the wisdom that realizes egolessness
dam ngak	essential instructions
Dam Ngak Dzö	The Treasury of Essential Instructions by Jamgön Kongtrul Rinpoche
damaru (Skt)	small double-sided hand-drum
Damchen Dorje Lekpa	protective deity
dang	radiance
dangwé dépa	vivid faith
dé nö sum	tripitaka (Skt), literally “three baskets”, three categories of teachings: vinaya, sutra and abhidharma
délok	person “returned from death”
dépa	faith

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

denpa	truth, reality; authentic, true
denpa nyi	two truths
dé shyin shekpé nyingpo	tathagatagarbha (Skt), buddha nature
Devadatta	evil cousin of Buddha Shakyamuni
dewa chenpo	great bliss
dewar shekpé nyingpo	sugatagarbha (Skt), buddha nature
Dezhung Rinpoche	great Tibetan master of the Sakya school who spent many years in Seattle
Dhammapada (Pali)	collection of Buddha's sayings included in the Pali canon
Dharamsala	town in Himachal Pradesh, home of the Tibetan government in exile
dharmadhatu (Skt)	the absolute space of phenomena
Dharmakirti	great Indian master and logician
dharmapala (Skt)	Dharma protector
dharmata (Skt)	reality itself, intrinsic reality
dhatu (Skt)	(i) realm; (ii) element, as in the 18 dhatus
dhyana (Skt)	meditation
Dignaga	great Indian master and logician
dikpa	Negative, unwholesome or harmful action, Chögyam Trungpa: "neurotic crime"
dikpa chi yang mi cha shyin gewa punsum tsokpar ché rang gi sem ni yong su dul di ni sangyé tenpa yin	"Commit not a single unwholesome action, Cultivate a wealth of virtue, To completely tame this mind of ours, This is the teaching of all the buddhas."
Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche	Great Tibetan master (1910-1991), teacher of Sogyal Rinpoche
dö chak	desire
Do Khyentse Yeshé Dorjé	Great Tibetan master (1800-1859?)

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Doctor Tamdin	contemporary Tibetan doctor
Doctor Trogawa	contemporary Tibetan doctor
Dodé Kalpa Zangpo	The Sutra of the Fortunate Aeon
Dodrupchen Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in Sikkim
Dodrupchen Jikmé Tenpé Nyima	Third Dodrupchen Rinpoche (1865-1926), author of Turning Suffering and Happiness into Enlightenment
doha (Skt)	song of realization
Döjo Bumzang	“Noble Wish-granting Vase”, a collection of empowerments compiled by arranged by Terdak Lingpa (1646-1714) and his brother Lochen Dharmashri (1654-1718)
Dolpopa	(1292-1361) great Tibetan master of the Shyentong view
döndam	absolute, ultimate
döndam chang chub kyi sem	absolute or ultimate bodhicitta
döndam denpa	Absolute or ultimate truth
döpé depa	vivid faith
Dorje Den	“Vajra Seat”, Tibetan name for Bodh Gaya
dorjé depa	vajra recitation
Dorje Drak	name of a Nyingma monastery in Central Tibet
Dorje Drollö	wrathful form of Guru Rinpoche
dorjé lobjön	vajra master, vajra acharya
drangpo	honest
drebu ma chö chokshyak	Fruition, unaltered: leave it as it is
drebu rigpa chokshyak	Fruition, rigpa: leave it as it is
dren shé	mindfulness and awareness, remembrance
drenpa	mindfulness
drilbu	ritual bell
drö	warmth, heat

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

drol lam	path of liberation
Drukpa Kagyü	a branch of the Kagyü school
drupchen	ritual of intensive vajrayana practice performed by a group of practitioners continuously, day and night, for several days
drupchö	shorter version of a drupchen
drupdra	retreat center
drupta	philosophical tenets, tenet systems
Dudjom Lingpa	Great Tibetan master (1835-1903)
Dudjom Rinpoche	Great Tibetan master (1904-1987), teacher of Sogyal Rinpoche
Dudjom Tersar	“New Treasures of Dudjom”, termas revealed by Dudjom Lingpa and Dudjom Rinpoche
düdtsi	Tibetan for amrita, spiritual medicine and ritual substance kept in kapala
duhkha (Skt)	suffering
dukkha (Pali)	suffering
dukngal	suffering
Düpa Do	tantra of Anuyoga, referred to in Tendrel Nyesel
Dzachukha	place in Kham where Patrul Rinpoche was born
Dzam Ling Chi Sang	day of offering to local deities
Dzambhala	deity of wealth and prosperity
dzé	(ritual) substance
dzepé triné	enlightened activity
Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in Colorado
dzin	to hold, grasp
dzin kyong	to hold and care
dzinpa	grasping
dzinpa'i lo	the grasping mind
Dzogchen	see Dzogpa Chenpo

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Dzogchen Pema Rigdzin	(1625-1697) great Tibetan master, first Dzogchen Rinpoche
Dzogchen Pönlop Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master
Dzogchen Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in South India
Dzogpa Chenpo	“Great Perfection”, the highest teachings in the Tibetan tradition
dzogrim	completion phase, perfection stage
Dzongsar	Sakya monastery, seat of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo
Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master, incarnation of Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö
E	
Ekadzati	Protectress of Secret Mantra
emaho	expression of wonder and amazement often used at the beginning of a prayer
G	
Gampopa	(1079-1153) disciple of Milarepa, also known as Dakpo Rinpoche
ganachakra (Skt)	tsok feast
Ganden	major monastery of the gelugpa tradition
Ganden Podrang	the Tibetan government
Ganden Tripa	holder of the throne of Tsongkhapa, head of the Gelugpa school
gandharva (Skt)	a class of beings, “scent-eaters”
gangzak gyüpe lama	lama who is a holder of the lineage, one of the four kinds of lama
Garab Dorje	first human Dzogchen master
garuda (Skt)	mythical bird
Gautama	name of Buddha Shakyamuni
gekö	master of discipline within a monastery

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

gelong	fully ordained monk
gelugpa	one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism
genyen	Tibetan for upasaka, lay practitioner (note the female form is genyenma)
geshé	holder of the highest award in buddhist philosophy
Geshé Chekhawa	great Tibetan master of 12 th century who taught tonglen
Geshé Langri Tangpa	author of Eight Verses of Training the Mind
getsul	“novice” monk
getsulma	“novice” nun
gewé shenyen	a spiritual friend
gokpa	cessation
Golok	a region of Eastern Tibet
gompa	monastery
gompa gyatso chokshyak	Meditation, like the ocean, leave it as it is
gön khang	protectors temple
gong dzok	“fulfilment of vision” after the death of a great master
gong ter	mind terma
gongpa	enlightened vision, wisdom mind
gönpo	(i) lord, protector; (ii) Mahakala
gowa	(theoretical) understanding
Guhyagarbha (Skt)	“Secret Essence”, name of a major tantra
Gunaprabha	great Indian master, one of the so-called “six ornaments”
Guru Rinpoche	Guru Padmasambhava
gutor	day for averting negativity before the new year
Gyalsé Shenpen Thayé	(1740-1800?) great master connected with Dzogchen Monastery and author of a commentary on Riwo Sangchö

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

gyalwa ka yi lama	lama of the buddhas' teachings, one of the four kinds of lama
Gyalwang Karmapa	head of the kagyü school
gyen	literally "ornament" or "adornment"
Gyü Lama	Tibetan for Uttarantra Shastra, a text by Maitreya/Asanga on buddha nature
Gyuma Ngalso	"Finding Comfort and Ease in Illusion" by Longchenpa
gyuma ringpo	literally "long intestine/sausage", slow worker
gyun kyong	maintain the continuity
Gyü Sangwé Nyingpo	Tibetan for the Guhyagarbha tantra
Gyütö	monastery famous for its chanting style
H	
Haribhadra	name of a great eighth century Indian master
Hayagriva	name of a wrathful deity
hedewa	wonderment, transfixed in wonder
heruka (Skt)	wrathful deity
Hevajra	tantra of the anuttarayoga class
hinayana (Skt)	the basic or fundamental vehicle
I	
Indrabhuti	King of Oddiyana
J	
ja lü	rainbow body
ja lü phowa chenpo	great transference into rainbow body
Jambudvipa (Skt)	"rose-apple continent", our continent according to Buddhist cosmology
Jamgön Kongtrul	(1813-1899) great Tibetan master, compiler of

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Lodrö Tayé	five treasures
Jampal Shenyen	Tibetan name for Mañjushrimitra
Jampal Tsenjö	Tibetan for Mañjushri-nama-sangiti, “Reciting the Names of Mañjushri”
Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö	(1896-1959) root teacher of Sogyal Rinpoche
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo	great Tibetan master (1820-1892)
jataka (Skt., Pali)	accounts of the Buddha’s previous lives
jé nang	authorisation, a simple form of empowerment
Jé Rinpoche	respectful name for Tsongkhapa (1357-1419)
Jikmé Khyentse Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in France
Jikmé Lingpa	(1729-1798) revealer of the Longchen Nyingtik
Jikmé Trinlé Özer	(1745-1821) great Tibetan master, First Dodrupchen
jinsek	fire puja, ritual practice of offering into fire
jñana (Skt)	(primordial) wisdom
jñanasattva (Skt)	“wisdom being”, pure form of a deity that is invoked and merges with the samayasattva
Jñanasutra	disciple of Shri Singha
jok gom	settling or placement meditation
Jonangpa	school of Tibetan Buddhism
jönpo	capable
Jowo Rinpoche	statue of buddha Shakyamuni in Lhasa
K	
ka	word of the Buddha
ka chö	the teachings
kadak	primordial purity
Kadampa	school of Tibetan Buddhism founded by Atisha and his disciple Dromtönpa
kagyé	“eight logos” deities

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Kagyü	one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism
Kalachakra	“Wheel of Time” tantra
kalpa (Skt)	aeon
Kalu Rinpoche	great Tibetan master of recent times
Kalzang Gompa	monastery associated with Tertön Sogyal
kama	teachings of the Nyingma passed down in a long transmission, distinct from terma
Kamalashila	great eighth century Indian scholar and disciple of Shantarakshita
kangling	small trumpet
Kangyur	collection of the word of the Buddha in Tibetan translation
Kangyur Rinpoche	great Tibetan master (1897-1975)
kapala (Skt)	bowl made from the top of a skull
karchak	index to a text
Karma Lingpa	great Tibetan master, revealer of Tibetan Book of the Dead
Karmapa	head lama of the Kagyü school
katak	white (ceremonial) scarf used for greeting
Kathok	Nyingma monastery
Katyayana	disciple of Buddha Shakyamuni
ké chik dren dzok	“complete the moment you think of it”
Kham	Eastern Tibet
Khamtrul Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master
Khandro Nyingtik	Dzogchen teachings taught by Padmasambhava
Khandro Tsering Chödrön	spiritual wife of Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö, Sogyal Rinpoche’s aunt
khatvanga (Skt)	trident
khenchen	great khenpo
Khenpo Apé	one of Sogyal Rinpoche’s tutors
Khenpo Jikphun	Khenpo Jikmé Phuntsok, incarnation of Tertön Sogyal based in Larung Gar, Tibet

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Khenpo Kunpal	great Tibetan master, student of Patrul Rinpoche and author of a famous commentary on the Bodhicharyavatara
Khenpo Namdrol	conemporary Tibetan teacher, author of book on Vajrakilaya
Khenpo Ngakchung	(1879-1941) great Tibetan master, student of Nyoshul Lungtok
Khenpo Petsé	great khenpo of recent times, associated with Dzogchen monastery, aka Khenchen Pema Tsewang
Khenpo Shyenga	(1871-1927) great Tibetan master famous for his commentaries on the Thirteen Great Texts
khordé rushen	“separating samsara and nirvana”, a Dzogchen preliminary practice
khordé yermé	“indivisibility of samsara and nirvana”, a term used mainly in the Sakya tradition
khorwa	samsara
khyen tsé nü sum	wisdom/knowledge, love and power/strength
khyenpé yeshé	wisdom that knows
Kollegal	town near Dzogchen Monastery in India
Kön Chok Jé Dren	Sutra on the Recollection of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha
kön chok sum	“the three rare and supreme ones”, i.e. the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha
kriya yoga (Skt)	first vehicle of outer tantra, fourth of the nine yanas
kshatriya (Skt)	“warrior” caste, to which Siddhartha Gautama belonged
ku	enlightened body
kub jipo	“heavy bum”, i.e. lazy
kun long	motivation, literally “that which gives rise to everything”
kun shyi	alaya, ground of all
kundzop	relative

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

kundzop denpa	relative truth
kunkhyen	omniscient
kuntakpé ma rigpa	imputing ignorance
Kuntuzangpo	Samantabhadra, the primordial buddha
Kunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen	a teacher of the Dalai Lama
Kunzang Lama'i Shelung	Words of My Perfect Teacher by Patrul Rinpoche
kyabjé	"lord of refuge", a honorific used as a prefix before the names of great masters
kyangma	left channel
kyérim	generation phase, development stage
Kyi Duk Lam Khyer	Turning Suffering and Happiness into Enlightenment
kyil khor	mandala
L	
labpa sum	three (higher) trainings
labrang	lama's residence within a monastery
ladawa	literally "traversing the mountain pass", a Dzogchen term meaning to reach a final decision
Lakar Tsang	Sogyal Rinpoche's family
Lama Chokden	Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö's assistant and master of ceremonies
Lama Gongdü	terma revealed by Sangye Lingpa (1340-1396) and a section of Tendrel Nyesel
Lama Norlha	Guru Rinpoche of wealth
Lama Tseten	disciple of Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö
lama'i gongpa	vision or wisdom mind of the lama
lama'i naljor	guru yoga
Lamdré	Path With its Result, the highest teachings in the Sakya school

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Lamrim Yeshé Nyingpo	teaching by Guru Rinpoche revealed by Chokgyur Lingpa
Langdarma	King of Tibet during the 9 th century, who suppressed Buddhism until he was assassinated
Larung Gar	centre of Khenpo Jikphun in Tibet
lé lo	laziness
Le'u Dünma	Prayer in Seven Chapters
lha	god, deity
Lha Bab Düchen	"Festival of the Descent from Heaven", anniversary of the Buddha's return from the heaven of Indra, where he went to teach his mother
lhak tong	Tibetan for vipashyana, literally "extraordinary seeing"
lhakhang	temple
lhakma	remainder offering
Lhasa	capital of Tibet
Lhatsün Namkha Jikmé	master who composed the Riwo Sangchö and discovered the hidden land of Sikkim
lhen chik kyepé ma rigpa	co-emergent ignorance
lhen chik kyepé yeshé	co-emergent wisdom
lhöpo	relaxed and spacious
lhundrup	spontaneous perfection
Ling Rinpoche	senior tutor of the Dalai Lama
Lingsang Gyalgenma	The Old King of Ling, a tertön and previous incarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche
lo	(conceptual) mind
Lodi Gyari Rinpoche	Dalai Lama's envoy based in Washington
lojong	mind training
loka (Skt)	world or world-system

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

long dé	category of space, one of three categories of Atiyoga
Longchen Nyíngtik	Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse, revealed by Jikmé Lingpa
Longchen Rabjam	(1308-1363) great Dzogchen master
losar	Tibetan new year
lotsawa	great translator
lü	body, "that which is left behind"
Lumbini	birthplace of Buddha, found in modern Nepal
lung	(i) oral transmission; (ii) subtle wind-energy
lung gi chö	Dharma of scripture
lung ta	(i) "windhorse" energy; (ii) prayer flag
M	
ma chöpa	unaltered
ma dzinpa	without grasping
ma rigpa	ignorance
ma yeng ma gom	undistracted non-meditation
ma yengpa	undistracted
Machik Lapdrön	great Tibetan female master
Madhyamaka (Skt)	Middle Way beyond any extremes
Madhyamika (Skt)	Middle Way philosophy and its followers
Mahakala	name of a protective deity
Mahakashyapa	senior disciple of Buddha Shakyamuni, the first patriarch
mahamudra (Skt)	"Great Seal", highest teachings in the Kagyü tradition
mahasandhi (Skt)	Skt equivalent of Dzogpachenpo
mahasiddha (Skt)	great buddhist saint
mahasukha (Skt)	great bliss
mahayana (Skt)	great vehicle
mahayoga (Skt)	seventh of the nine yanas
Maitreya	the future buddha
Maitripa	Indian siddha, teacher of Marpa

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Mandarava	consort of Guru Rinpoche
Mañjushri	bodhisattva of wisdom
Mañjushrimitra	disciple of Garab Dorje
Mañjushri-namasangiti	“Reciting the Names of Mañjushri”
Mara	demonic force, evil influence
Maratika	sacred cave of Guru Rinpoche in Nepal associated with long-life practice
Marmé Mönlam	A practice of aspiration combined with the offering of butter lamps
Marpa	Teacher of Milarepa
Matam Rudra	demon of ego
Maudgalyayana	disciple of Buddha, famed for his miraculous abilities
Mayadevi	mother of Buddha Shakyamuni
mé nang tong zuk	empty forms of non-existing presence
melong	mirror
men	literally “medicine”, another name for düdtsi
mendrup	spiritual medicine, see düdtsi
mengak	pith instruction
mengak dé	category of pith instructions, one of three categories of Atiyoga
mengak nyengyü chenmo	great aural lineage of pith instructions
mengak nyongtri chenpo	great experiential teachings through pith instruction, teaching according to the student’s experience
mikpa	focus, reference, visualization
mikpa mépa	referencelessness
Milarepa	Tibet’s famous yogi-saint
Mindroling	Nyingma monastery in Central Tibet
Mingyur Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master
Minling Trichen Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in India
Mipham Rinpoche	(1846-1912) Great Tibetan master of the Nyingma school

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

miyowa	unmoving
mö gü	devotion
mönlam	prayer of aspiration
Mönlam Chenmo	Great Prayer Festival
mudra (Skt)	literally “seal”, symbolic hand gesture
muni (Skt)	sage
N	
nadi (Skt)	subtle channels
naga (Skt)	class of serpent-like beings who live in water
Nagarjuna	great Indian master
Nalanda	great Indian monastic university
Namdroling	Monastery of Penor Rinpoche in South India
Namgyal Dratsang	Dalai Lama’s personal monastery
Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in Italy
nampa salwa	clear appearance (in kyerim practice)
namthar	spiritual biography, “life and liberation”
namtok	discursive thoughts
Nanam Dorje Dudjom	disciple of Guru Rinpoche, previous incarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche
Nangchen	a region of Tibet
nangpa	literally “insider”, buddhist
Nangsi Zilnön	“Prevailing Over All that Appears and Exists”, a form of Guru Rinpoche
nangwa	appearance, perception, experience
nangwa da yi lama	symbolic lama of appearances, one of four kind of lama
Narak Kongshak	a practice of confession and fulfilment
Naropa	great eleventh century Indian master, teacher of Marpa
né	crucial instruction, key point
né luk	nature, natural condition, “way of abiding”
Nechung	monastery, home of the state oracle

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

ngagyal tenpa	stable confidence or pride of the deity (in kyerim)
Ngagyur Nyingma	Nyingma School of Ancient Translations
Ngalso Kor Sum	Trilogy of "Finding Comfort and Ease" by Longchenpa
Ngari Panchen	(1487-1542) a great Nyingma master
ngé jung	renunciation
ngé tsik	etymology, literal definition
ngo tsa	self-control, sense of shame
ngö shyi	main part
ngön shé	supernormal perceptions, such as clairvoyance
ngöndro	preliminary practice
Ngor	sub-school with in the Sakya
ngowo	essence
ngowo tongpa	empty essence
nirmanakaya (Skt)	"emanation body", form of a buddha that appears in various forms to ordinary beings
nirvana (Skt)	enlightenment or "passing beyond suffering", the opposite of samsara
Nubchen Sangyé Yeshé	one of 25 disciples of Guru Rinpoche
Nyala Pema Düddul	(1816-1872) great Tibetan master and tertön who attained rainbow body, teacher of Tertön Sogyal
nyam	meditative experience
nyam len	practice, "taking to heart" (nyam su lenpa)
nyé gyü	short or direct lineage
nyen gyü	aural or hearing lineage
nyenpa	approach
nyen drup lé sum	three stages of approach, accomplishment and activity
nyépa sum	three ways to please the master
nyingjé	(i) compassion; (ii) "Oh, how sad!"
Nyingma	one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Nyingma Gyübum	Collection of Nyingma Tantras
nyingpo	heart-essence
Nyingtik Yabshyi	Four Parts of the Nyingtik: Vima Nyingtik, Lama Yangtik, Khandro Nyingtik and Khandro Yangtik
nyön drip	emotional obscuration
nyön mong	disturbing emotions
Nyoshul Khenpo	(1932-1999) teacher of Sogyal Rinpoche
Nyoshul Lungtok Tenpé Nyima	(1829-1901/2) principal student of Patrul Rinpoche
nyung né	ritual practice that involves fasting
O	
Oddiyana	birthplace of Guru Rinpoche, sometimes written Uddiyana
Orgyen	Tibetan for Oddiyana, sometimes written Urgyen
Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in Bir, India
ösal	clear light, luminosity
P	
Padmakara	(i) another name of Padmasambhava; (ii) Tibetan translation group based in Dordogne, France
Padmasambhava	“Lotus Born”
pakpa	Tibetan for arya, noble one
Palyul	important Nyingma monastery
Panchen Lama	second highest incarnation in Tibet
pandita (Skt)	scholar, one who is learned in the five major sciences
paramita (Skt)	transcendent perfection
parinirvana (Skt)	final nirvana
Paro Taktsang	“Tiger’s Nest”, sacred place in Bhutan

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Patrul Rinpoche	(1808-1887) author of Words of My Perfect Teacher
pecha	Tibetan text
Pemajungné	Tibetan for Padmakara, an alternative name for Padmasambhava
pen nö mepé drolwa	liberation beyond benefit and harm
Penor Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master based in South India
Pharping	sacred place in Nepal with caves in which Guru Rinpoche meditated
phurba	ritual dagger
phowa	transference of consciousness
pitaka (Skt)	“basket”, section of teachings
prajña (Skt)	wisdom, knowledge, intelligence
prajñāparamita (Skt)	transcendent perfection of wisdom
pramana (Skt)	valid cognition, buddhist logic
prana (Skt)	subtle wind-energy
Prasangika (Skt)	a Madhyamika school of buddhist philosophy
pratimoksha (Skt)	vows of “individual liberation”
pratityasamutpada (Skt)	interdependent origination
pratyekabuddha (Skt)	“solitary realizer”
preta (Skt)	hungry ghosts
pungpo	Tibetan for skandha, aggregate
R	
Rahula	name of Buddha’s son
Rahulabhadra	Indian master who composed praise to Mother Prajñāparamita
rakta (Skt)	literally “blood”, red-coloured ritual substance kept in kapala

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

rang drol	self-liberation
rang gyü	one's basic being
rang gyüpa	Svatantrika, one of two streams within the Madhyamika school
rang rig	(i) self-awareness; (ii) one's very own rigpa
rang sal	self-cognizance
rangshyin	nature
rangshyin salwa	cognizant nature
rangshyin shyiwa chenpo	natural great peace
rangtong	"self-empty" or intrinsic emptiness philosophy
Ratnasambhava	buddha of the South
ré dok	hope and fear
Rechungpa	disciple of Milarepa
richö	(i) "mountain Dharma", a form of text that includes advice for retreat; (ii) sometimes used in Rigpa to refer specifically to a richö text by Dudjom Rinpoche
rigdzin	Tibetan for vidyadhara
Rigdzin Düpa	lama practice from Longchen Nyingtik
rigpa	pure awareness, intelligence
rigpa dön gyi lama	one's own rigpa, the actual lama; one of four kinds of lama
rigpa'i tsal wang	the empowerment of rigpa, in which the nature of mind is introduced
rik	buddha family; enlightened potential
Rimé	non-sectarian movement which began in East Tibet in the 19 th century
rimpa	stage, level
Rinchen Terdzö	Treasury of Precious Terma Revelations, a major collection of terma sadhanas and empowerments, one of the five treasures of Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé
Rinchen Zangpo	(958-1055) famous Tibetan translator

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

ring gyü	long or indirect lineage
ringsel	pearl-like relics often found after the cremation of great masters
Ringu Tulku	contemporary Tibetan master based in Sikkim
Riwo Sangchö	Mountain Incense Offering, a practice
rolmo	large Tibetan cymbals (with large raised centre)
rolpa	radiance
roma	right channel
rupakaya (Skt)	“form kayas”, i.e. nirmanakaya and sambhogakaya
S	
sa	bhumi, stage of realization
sa dangpo rabtu gawa	first bhumi, the Joyous
sa ter	earth terma
sabché	contents, main points of a text
Sachen Kunga Nyingpo	a great Sakyapa master
sadhana	Vajrayana practice for accomplishing a deity or mandala of deities
saga dawa	fourth Tibetan month, in which the anniversary of the Buddha’s birth, enlightenment and parinirvana all fall
Sakya Pandita	(1182-1252) a great Tibetan master
Sakya Trizin	contemporary Tibetan master, head of the Sakya school
Salga	contemporary Tibetan artist
samadhi (Skt)	meditative concentration
samadhisattva (Skt)	form of a deity appearing at the heart of another deity

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Samantabhadra	(i) primordial buddha; (ii) name of a bodhisattva renowned for making infinite offerings to the buddhas
samaya (Skt)	vajrayana commitment
samayasattva (Skt)	visualized form of the deity
sambhogakaya (Skt)	“enlightened body of perfect enjoyment”, pure form of a buddha which appears to bodhisattvas
Samkhya	non-buddhist school of Indian philosophy
Sampa Lhundrupma	Prayer for the Spontaneous Fulfilment of All Wishes
sampa zangpo	good, kind or noble heart
samten	Tibetan for dhyana, meditation
Samten Ngalso	“Finding Comfort and Ease in Meditation”, a text by Longchenpa
Samyé	Tibet’s first monastery, founded by Guru Rinpoche and Shantarakshita
sangha	community of buddhist practitioners
sangyé	buddha, literally one who has “awakened (from the sleep of ignorance) and developed (all positive qualities)”
Saraha	name of an Indian mahasiddha famous for his songs of realization
Sarasvati	goddess of wisdom
sarma	“new” schools of Tibetan Buddhism, as opposed to the Nyingma, the “ancient ones”
satipatthana (Pali)	foundations of mindfulness
Sautrantika	literally “Followers of the Sutras”, one of the two philosophical schools of the hinayana
sem	(ordinary) mind
sem dé	category of mind, one of three categories of Atiyoga

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

sem la sem ma chi té sem kyi rangshyin ni ösal wa'ö	“Mind is devoid of mind. The nature of mind is clear light.” (from the prajñāparamita sutras)
sem nyi	nature of mind
Sem Nyi Ngäl So	“Finding Comfort and Ease in the Nature of Mind”, a text by Longchenpa
Senge Dongma	“Lion-faced” dakini
Sera	great Gelugpa monastery
Shakya Shri	great Tibetan teacher and yogi of the 19 th century
Shakyamuni	buddha of the present time
Shakyaprabha	great Indian master, one of the so-called “six ornaments”
shamatha (Skt)	calm abiding, tranquility meditation
Shantarakshita	Indian abbot who came to Tibet and founded Samyé monastery with Guru Rinpoche
Shantideva	great Indian master, author of the Bodhicharyavatara
shar drol	liberation upon arising
Shariputra	disciple of Buddha famed for his intelligence
shastra (Skt)	commentary
shé shyin	(continuous, watchful) awareness
Shechen	Nyingma monastery in East Tibet
Shechen Gyaltsab	Gyurme Pema Namgyal (1871-1926), disciple of Lama Mipham and teacher of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche
Shechen Rabjam Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master, nephew of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche
shedra	study college
shenjë	clarification, clear separation
Sherab Özer Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master associated with Kalzang monastery
shila (Skt)	morality, ethics, discipline
shin jang	pliancy, flexibility
Shinjé	Yama, Lord of Death

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

shravaka (Skt)	“hearer”, a follower of the hinayana
Shri Singha	(i) disciple of Mañjushrimitra; (ii) name of shedra at Dzogchen Monastery
Shuddhodana	father of Siddhartha Gautama who became Buddha Shakyamuni
shunyata (Skt)	emptiness
shyakpa	letting be
shyal lung	oral teaching
shyaldam	heart advice
shyé dang	anger
Shyenpa Shyi Dral	Parting from the Four Attachments
shyenpen	altruism
shyentong	“other empty” or extrinsic emptiness philosophy
shyi	ground
shyi lam dré sum	ground, path and fruition
shyiné	Tibetan for shamatha
siddha (Skt)	adept, accomplished yogi
Siddhartha	Prince who became Buddha Shakyamuni
siddhi (Skt)	accomplishment, attainment
skandha (Skt)	psycho-physical aggregate
stupa (Skt)	reliquary monument which symbolizes the enlightened mind
sojong	practice of confession performed during full and new moon
sok	life-force
Songtsen Gampo	King of Tibet in the seventh century when Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet
Subhuti	famous disciple of Buddha
sugata (Skt)	epithet of Buddha meaning “one who has gone to bliss”
sugatagarbha (Skt)	buddha nature
sundok	practice to “turn back the summons” of the dakinis
sutra (Skt)	category of scriptures
sutrayana (Skt)	sutra vehicle

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

svabhavikakaya (Skt)	unity of the three kayas
Svatantrika (Skt)	a Madhyamika school
T	
tab lam	path of skilful means
Tai Situ Rinpoche	lama of the Kagyü school
tak ché dang dralwa	neither permanent nor non-existent
Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master
takpa	permanent
Talgyurpa	Tibetan for Prasangika, a school of Madhyamika
tamal gyi shépa	wisdom of ordinariness
Tangtong Gyalpo	(1385-1510) Tibetan master who lived to the age of 125
tantra (Skt)	literally “continuum”, secret teaching
Tashi Jong	Drukpa Kagyü centre in Himachal Pradesh
Tashiding	sacred place in Sikkim
Tashilhunpo	important monastery in Tibet, seat of the Panchen Lamas
Tathagata (Skt)	literally “thus gone”, the buddha
Tathagatagarbha (Skt)	buddha nature
tawa	(i) View; (ii) looking
tawa riwo chokshyak	View, like a mountain: leave it as it is
ten	support
tenchö	Tibetan for shastra, commentary
tendrel	(i) interdependence; (ii) auspicious coincidence
tendrel chunyi	twelve links of dependent origination

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

tendrel lü la drik na tokpa sem la char	“If you create an auspicious condition in your body and environment, then meditation will automatically arise.”
Tendrel Nyesel	Practice revealed by Tertön Sogyal
Tengyur	collection of the major buddhist commentaries in Tibetan translation
tenpa	teachings
tenpo	stable
tenshyuk	ceremony for a master’s long life
Terdak Lingpa	(1646-1714) great Tibetan master, Minling Terchen Gyurme Dorje
terma	(ter for short) spiritual treasures hidden by Guru Rinpoche and Yeshe Tsogyal for the sake of later generations
tertön	revealer of terma
Tertön Sogyal	(1856-1926) previous incarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche
thangka	Tibetan painting
Theravada (Pali)	“Way of the Elders”, form of Buddhism popular in Sri Lanka and many parts of South East Asia
Thinley Norbu Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan lama based in America and son of Dudjom Rinpoche, often called Dungsé Thinley Norbu
tiklé	Tibetan for bindu, essential drop, sphere
tiklé nyak chik	unique sphere
timuk	closed-mindedness, stupidity, dull indifference
tirthika (Skt)	non-buddhist, extremist philosopher
tö sam gom sum	Three Wisdom Tools— listening, reflection and meditation
tögal	advanced Dzogchen practice
tokden	realized yogi
tokpé chö	Dharma of realization
tonglen	“sending and receiving” practice
tongpa nyi	Tibetan for shunyata, emptiness

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

tongwa	seeing
Tönmi Sambhota	Tibetan minister of Songtsen Gampo who developed the Tibetan script
tönpa	teacher, “one who shows”
torma	ritual cake used in ceremonies
trekchö	Dzogchen practice of “cutting through solidity”
trekchö trek ma chö na tögal tö mi gal	“If the practice of Trekchö is not accomplished, then the Tögal cannot transcend.”
tri	instruction
Tri Ralpachen	King of Tibet, grandson of King Trisong Detsen, who ruled in the ninth century, one of the Three Dharma Kings
trinlé	(enlightened) activity
Trisong Detsen	King of Tibet who lived during the eighth and ninth centuries and invited Shantarakshita and Guru Rinpoche to Tibet
trödral	simplicity, beyond conceptual elaboration or complexity
trulchor	yogic exercise
Trulshik Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master, teacher of the Dalai Lama
Trungpa Rinpoche	see Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche
tsa	Tibetan for nadi, subtle channels
tsa tsa	small images made from relics and placed inside stupas
tsa uma	central channel
tsakli	small pictures used in empowerments
tsal	energy, strength, power
tsal jang	train, develop strength
tsalung	yoga of the subtle channels, energies and essences
tsam	(i) retreat; (ii) boundary, border
tsampa	flour made from roasted barley

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Tselé Natsok Rangdrol	master who wrote about Dzogchen, Mahamudra and the bardos
tséma	Tibetan for pramana, valid cognition, buddhist logic
Tsewang Paljor	Sogyal Rinpoche's father, treasurer to Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö
tsewé tukjé	compassion that cares
tsik jé dön dren	remembering the meaning after each word
Tsik Sum Né Dek	Hitting the Essence in Three Words, last teaching of Garab Dorje
Tso Pema	"Lotus Lake", sacred lake of Guru Rinpoche in Rewalsar, Northern India
tsok	(i) accumulation, gathering; (ii) feast offering
tsok dzé	food and drink offerings during a tsok
tsok lu	song of the tsok feast
tsok nyi	two accumulations, of merit and wisdom
tsok shé	teaching for the general assembly
tsok shyng	field of merit
Tsokchen Düpa	Anuyoga practice, section of Tendrel Nyesel
Tsoknyi Rinpoche	contemporary Tibetan master
tsol ché kyí drenpa	deliberate mindfulness
tsol ché kyí dzogrim	Dzogrim with effort
tsol mé kyí drenpa	effortless mindfulness
tsol mé kyí dzogrim	Dzogrim without effort
tsolwa	effort
tsowo yabyum	chief deity of the mandala in union with consort
Tsuktor Namgyal	Ushnisha Vijaya, of whom Sogyal Rinpoche's mother is an emanation
tsultrim	discipline, ethics
Tsurphu	the seat of the Karmapas in Tibet
Tukdrup Barché Kunsel	series of teachings and practices, major revelation of Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa and Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo
tukjé	(i) compassion; (ii) compassionate energy

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

tukjé gakmé	unceasing compassionate energy
tukjé kun khyab	all-pervading compassionate energy
tukjé magak	unceasing compassionate energy
tulku	incarnation, nirmanakaya
Tulku Pegyal	Tibetan master connected with Dzogchen monastery
Tulku Pema Wangyal	contemporary Tibetan master, based in France
Tulku Thondup	contemporary Tibetan master, based in USA
Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche	Great Tibetan master, teacher of Sogyal Rinpoche
tummo	inner-heat practice
Tushita (Skt)	The Joyous, a buddhafield where Maitreya resides
U	
Ü	Central Tibet
Ü Tsang	Central Tibet and the region of Tsang
Uma Chenpo	the great Middle Way or Madhyamaka
Uma Gyen	Tibetan for Madhyamaka-alankara, The Ornament of the Middle Way by Shantarakshita
umdzé	chant-leader
upa yoga (Skt)	fifth of the nine yantras
upadesha (Skt)	essential, pith instructions
upasaka (Skt)	lay practitioner (note that for females it is upasika)
Ushnishavijaya	female deity, one of the three deities of long-life
utpala (Skt)	blue lotus
Uttaratantra Shastra	a text by Maitreya/Asanga on buddha nature
V	

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Vaibhashika (Skt)	one of the two schools of hinayana philosophy
Vairochana	(i) buddha of the central direction; (ii) disciple of Guru Rinpoche
Vajradhara	“Vajra Holder”
Vajrakilaya	wrathful deity associated with enlightened activity
Vajrasattva	“adamantine being”, buddha associated with purification and healing
Vajravarahi	name of a dakini
Vajrayana (Skt)	“adamantine vehicle”
Vajrayogini	name of a dakini
Vasubandhu	great fourth century Indian master, author of the Abhidharmakosha
vidyadhara (Skt)	awareness-holder
Vikramashila	great Indian monastic university
Vima Nyintik	Dzogchen teachings taught by Vimalamitra
Vimalamitra	Kashmiri scholar and disciple of Jñanasutra, who brought Dzogchen teachings to Tibet
vinaya (Skt)	one of the three pitakas, the rules of discipline
vipashyana (Skt)	clear seeing, insight meditation
W	
wang	empowerment
Wang Dü	name of a prayer by Mipham Rinpoche
wang dzé	empowerment substances/articles
wang thang	Chögyam Trungpa: authentic presence
Y	
Yama (Skt)	Lord of Death
yana (Skt)	vehicle

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

Yang Nying Pudri	“The Razor of the Innermost Essence”, Vajrakilaya practice revealed by Tertön Sogyal
yangsi	reincarnation
yé né	primordially
yeshé	(primordial) wisdom
Yeshé Tsogyal	consort of Guru Rinpoche
yidam	personal deity
yoga tantra (Skt)	sixth of the nine yantras
Yogachara	another name of Mind Only school
yogin (Skt)	male practitioner
yogini (Skt)	female practitioner
yönten	(noble) quality
Yönten Dzö	Treasury of Precious Qualities, famous text by Jikmé Lingpa
yönten sum	three qualities
yul	(i) object; (ii) place
yul dang yulchen	object and subject
Yumka Dechen Gyalmo	dakini practice of the Longchen Nyingtik
Z	
Za Rahula	protective deity
zab shyi trödral ösal dümaché	profound peace, free of complexity, uncompounded luminosity
Zangchö Mönlam	famous aspiration prayer
zangpo	kind-hearted
zangthal	unimpeded, all-penetrating, transparently clear
zen	upper robes, shawl
ziji	power, majesty
zindri	(i) notes, a form of commentary; (ii) often refers specifically to the commentary on Kunzang Lama'i Shelung by Khenpo Ngakchung

Rigpa Tibetan and Sanskrit Glossary

zung juk	(inseparable) unity
Zur Gyen	additional information, appendix, literally “extra adornment”

*Please send comments, additions and suggestions for improvement to Adam,
aspearcey@hotmail.com*