

Guru Rinpoche's Exclusive Sacred Places in Bhutan

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(Translated by Phuntsho Gyaltshen)

Author's tribute

I heartily welcome the most intelligent and beautiful honeybees,
That have swarmed here setting aside all the predicament,
Just to play their melodious throat-drum of excellent expressions,
At this lotus-park of Paro valley!

The topic of my presentation
Doesn't merit to be a gift to please erudite scholars, yet
To the Lord Ogen, accomplisher of the perfect rainbow body,
In order to pay my respect and commemorate his birth anniversary, I shall explain!

Introduction of Bhutan

Among many sacred places blessed by Guru Rinpoche, the Dragon Kingdom of Bhutan is considered as a very special hidden sacred place. The reasons are: the text *Mind Accomplishment that Bears the Seal of Secrecy* (thugs sgrub gsang ba rgya can) states:

A place [in Bhutan] that I have not set my foot on,
Even the size of a horse-hoe or sesame is not there!

In addition to this, in his *Religious History of Southern Dragon* (lho 'brug chos 'byung), Guru Rinpoche stated:

Just by traveling there, one would find the path [to

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liberation],
My followers, who practice the dharma,
Flee to the southern gorges, the hidden sacred land!

And said:

Find a retreat place at the southern gate of the southern gorges,
If you did this what you accomplish in seven years in Tibet
You will accomplish it in seven days in these sacred places.

And the *Lamp that Illuminates All Prophecies* (*lung bstan kun gsal sgron me*) says:

At mountain gorges and snow crevices in the border regions of southern Tibet,
And at the forested gorges, so forth, in all types of gorges,
As they will be needed at a future time,
I, Padmasambhava, blessed and left them as it is.
Dharma Yogis could obtain accomplishment in these places very quickly.
All country gods and local spirits will protect them from obstacle makers.
Even devils and non-Buddhist heretics will not occur.
It is the fatherland of all the dharma practitioners.

And:

At the border between Mon and Tibet, there are four [greater] hidden lands,
Eight lesser hidden lands, and ten thousand sub-hidden lands,
I, Padmasambhava, concealed them as they will of use in future!

These undeceiving and indestructible words of the scriptures

thus confirm [Bhutan as a sacred hidden land]. Among many special sacred places of Bhutan, I will speak about: Paro Taktshang from among the sacred places of West Bhutan; about Bumthang Kurje among the sacred places of Central Bhutan; and Nering Senge Dzong from among sacred places of East Bhutan.

Section I

Taktshangs (Tiger's Lairs)

a. Scriptural statements and evidences that the Three Taktshangs are the gateway to Guru Rinpoche's sacred places

- 1) May I present a brief introduction of the self-arisen replicas of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened body, speech and mind, at the three places of Taktshangs. The Lute with Ghandharva's Song Series, that which reveals the liberative biography of Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal - extracted from the treasure by Taksham - jointly authored by Gyalwa Jangchub and Namkhai Nyingpo (rgyud mangs dri za'i glu phreng), both of who were Guru's pupils, describes that the Onphu Taktshang of Tibet is the special sacred land of Guru's enlightened body. Here one can see the [self-formed] image of the Guru Rinpoche of Oddiyana, the Second Buddha, that which depicts him as he occurred from a lotus bud in the lake Danakosha. Then his enlightened speech is depicted by the [self-embossed] three syllables and the nine-syllables, while his enlightened mind is depicted by the [self-arisen] stupa and a Vajra.
- 2) The Taktshang of Kham represents special sacred land of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened speech. In this sacred place, about the time when Guru subdued devils and pervert heretics through the turning of the dharma wheel at Bodhgaya, India, and elsewhere, there arose uncreated forms depicting Guru's three Kayas; six-syllabled mantra, three-syllabled mantra and the twelve-syllabled mantra that depicted his enlightened speech;

and a stupa as well that depicted his enlightened mind.

- 3) The Paro Taktsang of Mon (Bhutan) is the special sacred place of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened mind. Here at this sacred place, the biography mentions that about the time of Guru Rinpoche's dwelling at the pure land of Akanistha, there arose the forms and figures depicting the Guru's enlightened body, speech and mind, by its own. I have provided their significances and explanations in detail in the following.

b. Of all Guru Rinpoche's sacred places in Bhutan, Paro Taktshang is Guru's first sacred place

The reason why we can establish that Paro Taktshang is Guru's first sacred place located in the Dragon Kingdom, the valley of herbal medicines covered by cypress woods, is stated in the Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal's biography (the one mentioned above) as thus:

[Guru Rinpoche] came to Padro (the name of Paro used in biography) Taktshang of Mon (Bhutan), concealed treasures everywhere, and wrote down their prophecies. As this is the sacred place of Guru's enlightened mind, the Guru said whoever does a retreat here will obtain the siddhi (attainment) of Mahamudra. The landmark features that represent the Guru's enlightened body, speech, and mind which are visible here self-appeared about the time when Guru Rinpoche resided in the pure land of Akanistha. Say aspiration and auspicious prayers to these self-formed Guru Dorje Drolod's image, self-occurred stupa, and to the self-embossed six-syllables!

1) The self-formed image of Guru Dorje Drolod, the replica of the enlightened body

Similar to Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal's biography Terton Dorje Lingpa also describes quite clearly about the existence of Guru Dorje Drolod's self-formed image at Paro Taktshang in his biographical songs. Likewise, the

Ninth Je Khenpo Shakya Rinchen (1710-1959) in his Eulogy of Paro Taktshang (spa gro stag gi gnas bstod) mentions about Guru Dorje Drolod's self-formed image on the left side of the Taktshang cliffs as thus:

To the left side of [Taktshang cliffs], the
Vidhyadhara Pema Gyalpo,
His enlightened body that rips apart and
liberates samaya-breakers (damsis), and
Gyalgong spirits
Like a hurricane bearing clouds,
Stands tall as Dorje Drolod Tsal!

If I explain this verse, it says that Guru Rinpoche has self-appeared at the left side of the rocky-cliffs of Takshang in the form of standing Guru Dorje Drolod Tsal in order to tame devils, damsris, and Gyalgong spirits.

As stated by the two biographies and Eulogy of Taktshang above, the features of the self-arisen image of [Guru Dorje Drolod] are obviously noticeable at the rocky-cliff. The two eyes are located just above the two temples of Taktshang [Pelphug] and Taktshang Shama, and the nose is in between them. The cypresses above represent the hairs. How Guru transformed himself into Dorje Drolod and executed the enlightened activity for the sake of sentient beings will be elaborated later when I explain why Paro Taktshang is very special sacred place from among the rest.

Note: The view of this image is noticeable at the rocky-cliff face of Taktshang if you gaze from Satsham Chorten and Ra-pak-thang otherwise known as Ramthangka.

2) Palchen Dorje Zhonu's (Vajra Kilaya) self-arisen body

The center part of Paro Taktshang's cliff is regarded as the self-arisen form of Palden Dorje Zhonu. It is described by Gyalwa Shakya Rinchen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, in his

Eulogy of Paro Taktshang as thus:

Specially, the central mountain is Dorje Throepa
Jin
In his youthful nature that has been arisen
spontaneously.
Thus, in the pure mandala of appearance and
existence,
It is this magnificent and solid mask that exudes
pervasive clouds of blessings!

Specifically, this verse means the central mountain is Dorje Throepa Jin. It is the natural expression of Palchen Dorje Zhonu that has occurred spontaneously. The “pure mandala of appearance and existence that exudes pervasively...” means the clouds of blessings that is emitted by the magnificent face [of Guru Dorje Drolod formed] solidly on the rock are infinite both in size and numbers.

3) Self-arisen six syllables, the replica of the enlightened speech

The self-arisen Mani or the six syllabled-mantra representing the enlightened speech is found on the rock-face is located near the lower cypress of the two cypresses that grow little above the lamp-offering shrine after taking the descent from the point of diversion that leads to Machig Ladron’s sacred place. This rock-face has fallen so close to the steps of trail that regular through fare by the pilgrims has already caused the letters to diminish considerably. The letters are hardly legible today.

4) Self-arisen stupa, the replica of the enlightened mind

The self-arisen stupa is said to be the Enlightenment Stupa-like image, which is painted white today, seen on the rock face to the right of the four-guardian kings’ gate of Pelphug Temple. This can be traced to as one enters

into the temple through the security gate located nearby the Taktshang's Drupchu (accomplishment-stream).

Today, I have just inserted the picture of this image considering that it is the replica of Guru's enlightened mind as mentioned in the biography of Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal, but I petition the scholars to kindly research on this matter conclusively in future.

5) Guru Rinpoche's visit to Taktshang in the form of Dorje Drolod

Paro Taktshang is one of the most special sacred places among all sacred places of Guru Rinpoche. It bears the replicas of Guru's enlightened body, speech and mind and they all occurred when Guru lived in the pure land of Akanishtha. Following this Guru journeyed to the southern continent of Zambudvipa, and then came to this sacred place of Paro having assumed Guru Dorje Drolod's form. He then subjugated devils and damsels of the land. This episode is described in the Seven Chaptered Supplication to Guru Rinpoche as:

At the Senge Samdrup's Taktshang,
Tamed malignant Tirthikas, devils and Samaya
corruptors.
In this great sacred place of mountains and
cliffs, he concealed great treasures
Compassionately caring for the future beings of
the degenerated age.
To the Dorje Drolod Tsal, I supplicate!

Likewise, it is said in the Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal's biography as:

In the night after witnessing incredible signs of
wonder, Guru Rinpoche assumed Dorje Drolod's
form while his copulating consort Yeshe Tshogyal
transformed into Ekazati's form and brought

the gods and demons of trichiliocosm, of Tibet, and of the four continents, under their control. His liberating consort [Tashi] Chidren who has transformed herself into a tigress lifted the Guru couple. The couple remained in the Vajra Kilaya's Samadhi while brandishing the nine-pronged Vajra scepter with their right hands and spun the walking staff of kilaya peg. From their aggressive bodies emitted countless forms of themselves and particularly, a dark blue kilaya called Throephur (ferocious peg) flew off to Paro Taktshang. And from there summoned the gods and demons of Bhutan, Nepal, India, etc., and bound them under his samaya."

6) Ganteng Trulku Tenzin Lekpai Dondrub's account of seeing Guru Dorje Drolod

Tenzin Lekpai Dondrub, the [Second] Gangteng Trulku [1645-1727], narrates how he saw the vision of Guru Dorje Drolod at Paro Taktshang in his auto-biography. Accordingly, at that time, at the cave of Taktshang cliff above the valley, a place where no humans could climb, a huge tiger appeared. It resided in the cave while strolling here and there, and even sometimes rolling over for almost four days. The people who were flocked down there in the valley also saw it but nothing more than an ordinary tiger. However, in Tenzin Lekpai Dondrub vision, he saw that the tiger was as huge as the size of two elephants while a dark-brown skinned Guru Dorje Drolod rode on it. The Guru stared with three fiery eyes and his mouth was clinched. His black hair was spiralled and tufted. He wore all ornaments, costumes, and implements. With an awe-inspiring pose, he appeared so real inside a raging fire and was surrounded by dakas and dakinis. This is how Tenzin narrates about his vision of Guru Dorje Drolod for three days at Taktshang in his autobiography.

7) Vision of Guru Rinpoche seen by many Lamas

At this sacred place of Paro Taktshang many Lamas regardless of their different traditions saw the vision of Guru Rinpoche. Among them were Thangtong Gyalpo, the king among accomplished adepts, Mahapandita Naki Rinchen, Gyalse Tenzin Rabye, the fourth Desi, and others. As this encounter is stated clearly in their individual biographies I did not quote them here in full. Just as His Holiness, the late Dudjom Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje said, "If you think, I shall perform the accomplishment practice, please read the liberative biographies of the former masters," for those who wish to know these accounts in detail, kindly read the biographies of these masters.

c. Topographical visions of mountains at Taktshang

1) Appearance of the five Buddha families on the mountains behind Taktshang and other appearances on the mountains located before Taktshang

The Mahasiddha Jinpa Gyaltshen [17th Century] saw all the mountain ranges located behind Paro Taktshang as the Five Buddha Families. This account is given in the liberative biography of Jingpa Gyaltshen authored by Namgyal Tenzin. Upon arriving at Nyangmed Gedkha, the Mahasiddha remarked:

This Taktshang was frequented by Guru Rinpoche in the past and blessed it. Hence it is a very ideal and special place of retreat. All the mountains behind it look like the Five Buddha Families are sitting. It is really spontaneous and majestic. The five spurs that are located before Taktshang are in the form of offerings of the five desirable qualities. The mountain on its right looks exactly like the hoisting of white silk scarves. The mountain on its left looks like heaps of turquoises dotted inside the silver ladle. The clean blue river is like making of water

offering. The location of the place, mountains, and the rocky cliffs, all look extremely ideal and beautiful.”

This is how Jinpa Gyaltshen remarked and it was noted in his biography.

2) Vision of the Protectors of the Three Families

In his Eulogy of the Paro Taktshang, Gyalwa Shakya Rinchen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, states, “That also, externally signifies the Protectors of the Three Families...” The meaning of this statement is that Taktshang mountains signify: Manjushri - the embodiment of omniscience of the Buddhas of the three times; Avalokiteshvara - the embodiment of compassion of the Buddhas of the three times; and Vajrapani - the embodiment of power of the Buddhas of the three times.

3) The central mountain of Taktshang can be seen as the white Dharma conch

Based upon the different devotional perceptions of the faithful individuals, Paro Taktshang’s topography is seen to represent many visions. When we take a look at Taktshang from Ogen Dorje Phendeling at Satsham Chorten, the central mountain can be clearly viewed as the white Dharma conch. How does it appear as the conch? Ogen Tsemo where the Zangdokpalri is located is the head part of the conch. The rocky cliff of Taktshang is the body of the conch. The foothill of the cliff is the tail of the conch. The Senge cave is seen as the end of the conch’s face. In addition to this, all the mountains to its right and left also bear the shape of a white dharma conch. Today why Paro Taktshang has become so popular in the world is all because of this conch-like topography. [Conch represents auspicious fame in Buddhism].

4) Appearance of Tiger, Dorje Drolod's ride

When we look from Samtsham Chorten or from Ramthangkha, we can see the image of a savage Tiger, Guru Dorje Drolod's ride, at the feet of the Taktshang's cliff. Here some visionary people have even noticed the vivid image of the Thuenpa Puenzhi, the four harmonious friends. However, I as a researcher, could not trace more than the image of an elephant at the waist of the mountain.

5) Taktshang cliff seen as the Bhaga of a dakini

Also, according to the elderly visionary people and their narratives, the Bumthrag Mountain represent the upper torso of a dakini. The hill on which the old Zangdokpalri temple is located is the dakini's right knee while the hill of Odsel Gang is her left knee. And the central mountain is seen as her private part - Bhaga. All these wonder - striking features are clearly visible.

However, all these visions are seen mainly based upon the individual's confidence, faith, devotion and reverence. In the words of the former Vidyadharas, it is stated:

80,000 great sacred places and thousands of
minor sacred places,
All that which bear infinite wonders, have
although been identified by the Buddha,
Yet their greater and lesser blessings are all
dependent upon one's own mind.
In case our private perceptions are impure, lack
faith, and devotion,
Everyone will see nothing more than earth and
stones at all times!

Hence, just as it is said so, it is critical for each one of us to train in obtaining the pure perceptions.

Note: The accounts that I have provided in the

sections number 3 to 5 are not mentioned by former Vidyadharas. They are mostly my observations that I have made after studying the topography of Taktshang from various places and angles located at a distance in the front of Taktshang. Thus, whatever, that is possible to see through our ordinary eyes, I have presented here in black and white as a seed to trigger curiosity in the minds of the sacred place hunters from both in and outside the country of Bhutan.

d. The values of Paro Taktshang

1) Duration of Guru's sojourn and concealment of treasures at Paro Taktshang

If I present the account of Paro Taktshang in nutshell, in his Chronicles of Golden Rosary (*bka' thang gser phreng ma*), Guru Rinpoche says, "Four months at Paro Taktshang." Hence, Paro Taktshang is a very special sacred place where Guru Rinpoche spent four months, concealed many dharma and wealth treasures, and granted his blessings.

This statement can be understood through the following prophetic statement given by Terton Drukda Dorje as thus:

In the Senge Mountain of Paro Taktshang in the south, [there are]:

The treasure bearing the heart-essence of the 84,000 dharmas,

And the heart-essence of the great Vidyadhara of the past (Guru).

To use this sacred place secretly is the samaya [that one should keep],

As [its significances] are tied to time, individual perceptions, and intelligence.

To the east, atop the *Lhashoe*-like (torma) stone, Is the mother, the bearer of the Three Doors of Emancipation,

Keurima, the chief of all families,
She who leads her partner through the empty-bliss experience.

Also, in his versed Eulogy of Paro Taktshang, Gyalwa Shakya Rinchen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, explains the significance of Taktshang in the three levels of outer, inner, and secret details.

Section II

Bumthang Kurje, the second sacred place of Guru Rinpoche

1) Kurje of Bumthang

The supreme deity of the degenerate age, Ogen Guru Rinpoche, set his gracious foot in the Valley of Medicines filled with cypresses (Bhutan) at the invitation of the King Sindhu Raja of Bumthang. Kurje located at the Drakmar Dorje Tsekpa (the red cliff of stacked scepters) is regarded as the first sacred place established in Bumthang by Guru Rinpoche. The Melodious Song that Fulfills Wishes—a guide to the sacred place of Zhabje Thang (footprint meadows) of Choekhor Toed of Bumthang—composed by Dokham Tulku Chonyid Rangshar (????-?????) (bum thang chos 'khor stod kyi gnas mchog) says:

The one that is enumerated as the first one is
Dorje Drak of Bumthang,
I urge the scholars to know the rest [of the
sacred places] after this!

Additionally, the Seven Chaptered Supplication to Guru Rinpoche says:

On the cliff of Monkha (Bhutan) toward the south, he left his body imprint,
Left envoy statues of treasure for the purpose of Tibetans...

Moreover, as the basis for accumulating merits and purifying sins for the liberation-seeking people of Bhutan, Guru said himself that he left many body imprints on rocks and cliffs of Bhutan. This is further confirmed by Dokham Tulku in the guide (mentioned above) as thus:

Specifically, on the cliffs of the Monkha of the south,
Guru has verbally said that he left many of his body imprints.
In fact, in total there are a hundred and ten or eight of them.

Also, Kunkhyen Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798) mentions in this Collected Talks (gtam tshogs) as:

On cliffs, rocks, and crevices of Bumthang, so forth, toward the direction of Lhomon (Bhutan) there are a hundred and eight body imprints of Guru Rinpoche.

The Kurje's body imprint is formed upon merging of two body imprints. This is described in his versed liberative biography of Terton Lethro Lingpa (1488-1553) gter ston lad 'phro gling pa'i rnam thar tsigs bcad ma) as thus:

Guru Rinpoche of Oddiyana,
Subjugated the haughty eight classes of Lhomon
and left his body imprint.
The body imprint at the cliff known as Dorje Drak,
Two lotus-cap donning imprints of Guru,
Are merged together, and in this solitary place,
When I was doing my retreat
I met with Guru Rinpoche
And saw dreams such as these...

Abhayadvipa describes how he noticed the Guru Rinpoche's body imprint of Kurje in his meditative state as thus:

In my meditative experience of translucent awareness,
I saw the body imprint on the cliff of Lhomonkha.
The shape of the cliff resembled to that of the Chimpulu cave.
On the face of the peace-inducing and blackish cliff,
I saw you in cloak including its creases,
I had this audience extremely vividly.
There, overwhelmed with unbearable devotion and respect,
Waves of tear drops rolled down my eyes.
Not able to bear my missing of the father, Ogen [Guru Rinpoche],
I wished I could arrive upon that sacred place right now.
This experience of the bliss-emptiness was the summit of all!

In the liberative biography of Selwala Jamgon Ngawang Gyaltshen (1647-1732), the author Gyalwa Shakya Gyaltshen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, writes:

In the past, there lived a king called Chagkharwa in that region (Bumthang). A powerful naga-spirit has caused a harm to the King. In order to dispel this evil-spell the Great Vidyadhara Padmasambhava was invited. There the Guru entered into the Samadhi of taming naga-spirits. Soon after the terrified naga attempted to flee but the Guru pressed the naga against the rock cliff with his body. As a result, rock bore the Guru's body imprint. This vivid body imprint was left by Guru through power of the Samadhi of illusion as a share for the future beings to

accumulate merits. Later this was enshrined by constructing a temple that possessed countless replicas of the enlightened body, speech, and mind, around it.

2) Vision of Guru Rinpoche and the benefits of retreating [Kurje]

Kunkhyen Longchen Rabjam said:

On the cliff of the northern mountain, nearby it
(Tharpaling)

There is the self-arisen body-imprint of the
Pema Gyalpo.

Even if you see that just for a single time,
The doors to lower rebirths will be closed and
one will tread on the liberation path.

The meaning of this statement is: On the cliff-face to the north of the Drakmar Dorje Tsekpa, one can see Guru Rinpoche's body imprint. Merely seeing it once is enough for anyone to block the gateways to lower rebirths, and one will find the way that leads to liberation and state of omniscient Buddhahood. Hence, it is very important for everyone to pay a visit to this site with full faith, devotion, and respect.

3) All the grasses on the grounds of Kurje bear self-arisen syllables

The grasses that grows in the meadows of Kurje bear the self-arisen mantra syllables. In the Oral Accounts of Successive Generations of Bhutan, Lopen Nyabe Thrinley Namgyal states:

In the past, Lama Drukpa Kunley, the lord of the dharmas, traveled to Bumthang and lived there. When he wanted to relieve himself, he said, "There is no place where I can relieve myself. All the grasses of Kurje bear self-arisen

syllable AH.

Later, Kunga Gyatsho (1722-1772) and Sangdak Yonten Thaye (1724-1784), the 12th and 13th Je Khenpos, as they went on a pilgrimage to the sacred place of Tsari, they passed by Jampa Lhakhang and headed to visit Kurje. When they reached at the edge of the Kurje's ground, they saw the Vajra Guru Mantra syllables in every blade of grass that grew on it.

Owing to this reason, it is said that during the reign of the Second King of Bhutan, no domestic animals were allowed to graze on this ground. The Oral Accounts of Successive Generations of Bhutan says:

As Kurje ground is visited very often by Guru Rinpoche and grants the teachings of the profound secret mantra, not even insects and ants inhabit it.

Hence, we humans, defined as who can speak and understand, it is very important to avoid defecating or dumping litters in this area.

Section III

Nering Dzong, Guru Rinpoche's third sacred place

Based upon the King Sindhu Raja's biography, Guru came again to Bumthang (after his first visit) via Nering Dzong's cave and Khenpa Jong from Tibet. Therefore, it is credible to contend that Nering Dzong is the third sacred place visited, blessed and established by Guru Rinpoche.

1) Nering Dzong is one of the eight great Yang Oen Caves of Guru Rinpoche

Guru's Chronicle of Golden Rosary says:

Yangdzong, Chimphu, Kharchu, Sheldrak,

Monkha Nering, Taktshang, Sengephug,
Shampo Gang, Drakmar, and Yama Lung,
Are the eight great Yang-oen rocky caves
Where Guru Padmasambhava meditated.

These are enumerated as the eight great Yang-oen caves where Ogen Guru Rinpoche performed accomplishment practices. Also, in the Guru's Chronicles, it is said, "Three months at Nering Dzong." Accordingly, Guru Rinpoche spent three months at Nering Dzong while doing accomplishment practices and blessed it as the sacred place of Guru's enlightened activity. Just as it is so the only mother, the queen of accomplished adepts, Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal, performed the Kilaya accomplishment practice and obtained its attainments.

2) Senge Dzong is the sacred place of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened activity

Rahor Choedrak Rinpoche, the pupil of Khenchen Zhenga (1871-1927), told to Tshangkha Rinpoche Lama Norbu Wangchuk that Senge Dzong is the sacred place of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened activity and the latter gives the account as thus:

The land of Lhodruk (Bhutan) is tameable by enlightened activity.

It is indicated by attire of multi-colored dharma costume.

Also, the face of the Kilaya mandala of the sacred place of Senge Dzong,

Is said to be facing toward Bhutan.

In this supreme sacred place of enlightened activity of Senge Dzong

With appropriate yogic practice of the Kilaya,
If one can accomplish the wrathful activity excellently,

To reverse the war fare of our time is easier.

I said, "The authentic Yogi of the Kilaya

Is you, the most venerable Lama, please visit
that sacred place!"

At that time, the lama was pleased and with a
smile,

He said, "Yes, it is alright if I go there."

The lord Gyalwang Tshokey Dorje (Guru) and

The mother Yeshe Tshogyal who blessed

The Nering Senge Dzong as the supreme sacred
place,

Use it as the main spot of performing retreats.

The Tamboura, a Lute - condensed biographical
supplication to Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal - composed by
Pema Garwang Lodoe Thaye (1813-1899 mkha' 'gro ye
shes mtsho rgyal gyi rnam gsol 'debs tam bu ra) says:

At the borders of Yagang, you obtained the
blissful warmth of the Tumo,

Then dropping ordinary attires you wore
magnificently the six bone ornaments.

As you performed the *Chudlen*¹ practice at
Senge Dzong

Even the ascetic medicine lord made offerings
and supplicated to you!

You exhausted your corporeal body and obtained
rainbow body of Khechara,

Your speech was perfected with the sixty
branches of pure voice,'

You mind was equipped with Vajra-like Samadhi.
To you, the achiever both common and the
supreme siddhis, I supplicate!

3) How to see the six wondrous marks of this sacred place

As for this, Terton Ratna Lingpa (1403-1478) describes
in his liberative biography as thus:

¹*bcud len* is an advanced yogic practice done by surviving on highly nutritious pills made from medicinal herbs and extracts. The retreat can last as many as three weeks.

Namo Guru (Homage to Guru)!
The lord, the king of power, is the crown
ornament,
And from the universal form of the Buddhas of
the three times,
Has appeared as the Nirmanakaya - a form to
tame anyone in any way necessary,
To the feet of the Great Orgen, I bow down!
I, Rinchen, who is the lazy mendicant,
At the sacred place of three Dzongs of Nering
Senge Dzong,
Where the mother Yeshe Tshogyal obtained the
siddhi,
At the time I travelled to that supremely sacred
region,
I noticed the six wonder marks.
The Pema Dzong of heros on the right,
Resembles a standing golden Vajra.
What a great wonder it is that this is the sacred
place to accomplish
The unchanging reality, the supreme essence!
The Rinchen Dzong of heroines on the left,
Resembles a mound of the five precious jewels.
It is the sacred place to practice Tsalung and
the method path,
And where one can accomplish effortlessly,
what a great wonder!
The white-cliff Senge Dzong in the center,
Resembles a king sitting on the throne,
It is the sacred place to accomplish the four
types of enlightened activity²,
And where one can fulfill every wish, what a
great wonder!
The front hill resembles a queen making an
offering,
It is the sacred place where one can obtain
unceasing bliss-emptiness experience,

² The four types of enlightened activity of peace, increasing, force, and wrath.

And where one can develop one's experiential vision higher and higher.

What a great wonder it is that one can obtain the siddhis!

The Yui (turquoise) Dzong of Nering in the front, A river bearing [the eight] qualities³ flows smoothly.

Its source is naturally ceaseless.

Here, awareness become fresh naturally, what a great wonder!

This region resemble a lotus that is blossoming. It is a sacred place where sky-farers throng forever,

And where one overhears the talks of gods and demons.

It give rise to sadness [toward samsara], what a great wonder!

These six types of wondrous marks,

I noticed them in these ways as I studied [the topography of the region].

Also, in his praises to this sacred place of Senge Dzong, Dungse Khedrub Kunga Wangpo, son of Terton Pema Lingpa, says:

Nering of Monkha is like the pure land,

The three Dzongs of Senge Dzong are like the celestial mansions of the Buddhas.

The great caves that can accommodate a thousand people is like the pure Khechara.

They resemble the union of the sun and moon of the Ogen Guru couple.

The hills on the right resemble a file of

³ Water bearing the eight qualities are: 1) pure as there is no foul smells, 2) crystal-clear as there is no contaminants, 3) cooling as it has a minty flavor, 4) soft as it causes no discomfort, 5) aromatic as it contains fragrance, 6) sweet as it possesses supreme taste, 7) quenching as it does not enhance the urge, and 8) blissful as it benefits the body.

Vidyadharas.

The hills on the left resemble a file of Mahasiddhas.

The great river in the centre resemble water offering.

The divine junipers resemble the offering goddesses.

The hills in the back resemble hanging of curtains.

The hills in the front resemble placement of ganachakra offerings.

The great ground of Nering resemble the turquoise mandala offering.

The dwarf plants *balu* and *sulu* resemble flowers that bloom eternally.

This supreme sacred place lauded by the conqueror [Guru Rinpoche]

Is so special that one's Samadhi increases just by merely dwelling there;

One's obstacles and incidents subside by merely recollecting this place,

And if one circumambulates it, one's bodily sins will be washed away.

May this sacred place have many wealthy ones offering ganachakras,

Have practitioners performing the practices diligently,

And have all the fortunate ones residing in this place!

May its virtue, in the minds of infinite numbers of sentient beings,

Cause to arise the inseparable experience of bliss and emptiness!"

So forth are the words that many sublime and noble masters of the past have praised and lauded. This is why this sacred place of Nering Senge Dzong has turned out to be a supremely special.

Excellent concluding aspiration

Driven by the chariot of merits accumulated in the past,
The sun, all sublime erudite scholars, who are assembled here,
Effectively abandon the perpetration by the opposing Rahula,
And I pray that we shine here again like today!