

II: A commentary by Geshe Dawa Gyaltsen on the 5th Karmapa's "Prophecies Arisen from Experience"



The following is an edited translation of a commentary, written in Tibetan by Geshe Dawa Gyaltsen on selected excerpts from the prophecies of the 5th Karmapa. (All footnotes are mine.)

An American, Lea Terhune, who was Situ Rinpoche's secretary, wrote a book in which she made false statements about my uncle, Mipham Rinpoche, who is the father of the 17th Karmapa Thaye Dorje. First, she claims that Mipham Rinpoche is a fake rinpoche. Then she depicts him as a desperate father, who brought his two sons around to the monasteries begging for them to be recognized as reincarnated rinpoches. She implies that as a result of Mipham Rinpoche's begging, Shamar Rinpoche recognized his elder son as the 17th Karmapa.³⁸ If this were true, then His Holiness the Dalai Lama's recognition of the younger son as Sonam Tsemo Rinpoche would also be the result of the father's begging.

A few years ago, Situ Rinpoche's people spread a rumour that Karmapa Thaye Dorje was Bhutanese, and not Tibetan. However, Situ Rinpoche's own secretary, Ms. Terhune, gave evidence in her book that Karmapa Thaye Dorje was in fact born in Lhasa – the eldest son of Mipham Rinpoche and his wife, Dechen Wangmo. It would appear that Situ Rinpoche's followers are tripping over their own arguments. This brings to mind a Tibetan proverb: "The madman is not mad. It is the one who follows the madman who is mad."

Whatever her claims might be, Terhune does not know Mipham Rinpoche, his wife or his children. One cannot help but think that she would not have called a stranger's credibility into question unless someone had put her up to it. Another old saying is relevant here: "Behind every noisy little stream, there is a broken pool."

Tibetans know the Karmapa controversy inside and out. We know our own politics better than anyone. This is not because we are more intelligent than scholars from other countries; we simply happen to share the same culture and language. We are thus able to understand the cultural attitudes – as well as hypocrisies – at the centre of such events.

As a Geshe of the Gelug school, I can do research and present my findings more freely and objectively than a Karma Kagyu lama could. Since I have no specific allegiance to any Karma Kagyu rinpoche, my work is more independent than someone under the pressure of one. I can honestly disclose my findings and provide an objective voice in interpreting the 5th Karmapa's prophecies.

Tsongkhapa, the founder of the Gelug School, respected the first five Karmapas, and all Gelug followers respect these Karmapas. Therefore, I have devotion towards the 5th Karmapa. He was truly a knower of past, present and future.

My copy of the chapter containing the prophecies is from a modern woodblock copy of a chapter originally found in *The Biography of the 5th Karmapa* from Rumtek Monastery. I have chosen to research these prophecies because some of the predictions contained therein have now come to pass. I will present here my analysis of selected excerpts that are relevant to the controversy concerning the identity of the 17th Karmapa.

³⁸ Terhune, *KPR*: 219-220



In the following, Geshe Dawa Gyaltzen’s analysis and interpretations are presented in four segments. In each segment, you will first see the pronunciation of the Tibetan words in English, then a word by word translation, and after that, the literal meaning of the sentences. The translations are provided to accompany Geshe’s commentary.

[1]

ད་ནི་འདི་ནས་ཀ་ཡི་རབས།³⁹

Da / ni / di / ney / ka / yi / rab /
Now / is / this / from / (the “ka” in Karmapa) / of / successive /

བཅུ་དྲུག་གཤམ་ནི་བཅུ་བདུན་མཚམས།

Chu / druk / gam / ni / chu / dun / tsham /
Ten / six / or, the same, / is / ten / seven / interval /

ནམ་གཞུག་ཟད་པའི་སྤང་བུ་འདྲ།

Gyal / ten / chi / dang / Kam Tsang / ten /
Victory/ teaching / general / and / Karma Kagyu/ Buddhadharma/

ནམ་ཞུག་ཟད་པའི་སྤང་བུ་འདྲ།

Nam / zhuk / zed / pey / drang bu / dra /
Season/ end / finishing / of / horseflies / like /

ཤར་ཕྱོགས་གནས་བསྐྱོམ་རྒྱལ་བརྒྱད་ཆད།

Shar / chog / nam / ko / gyal / gyud / ched /
East / side / sky / appointed / king / succession line / end /

རྒྱལ་ས་མཐའ་མི་སྤུས་ཐོབ་བྱེད།

Gyal / sa / tha / mi / su / thob / jed /
King / land / outsider / human / who / gain / do /

བྱང་ཤར་གཉིས་ནས་མཐའ་མི་བཏོལ།

Jang / shar / nyi / ney / tha / mi / dhol /
North / east / two / from / outsider / human / flood /

བོད་ཡུལ་ཨ་ལོང་བཞིན་དུ་འཁོར།

³⁹ *The Biography of the 5th Karmapa (BK): page 12, backside, 5th line. The Tibetan page numbering system assigns only one number to one piece of paper where the frontside and backside of the paper are specifically noted.*

Bod / yul / aa long / zhin / du / khor / ...
Tibet / land / ring / as / to / surrounded / ...

From now on, in the successive Karmapas
the turning point will be the 16th same as the 17th,⁴⁰
the general Buddhadharma including the Karma Kagyu doctrine⁴¹
will be like horseflies at the end of the season.⁴²
The line of the sky-appointed emperors of the East will end.
Any outsider will try to take over that country.
Faraway invaders will flood in from (two directions) the east and the north.
Tibet will be encircled in a ring...

[1] Geshe's commentary:

The Gyalwa Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje is known as the 16th Karmapa. However, he was actually the 17th if the reincarnated Karmapas are counted by birth order.

After the 14th Karmapa passed away, his next incarnation was born into the same family. The baby boy was recognized as Karmapa, but passed away at the age of three⁴³ before he could be formally enthroned. Nonetheless, the baby's body was placed inside a golden stupa at Tsurphu monastery, in keeping with the funeral traditions of the previous Karmapas.

Counting by the order of birth, this baby was the 15th Karmapa. However, since he was not officially enthroned, he was not counted in the line of the throne holders.

The next Karmapa incarnate, Khakhyab Dorje, was recognized and enthroned by the 9th Drukchen Rinpoche, the head of the Drugpa Kagyu School. After his enthronement, Karmapa Khakhyab Dorje became known as the 15th Karmapa, even though by birth, he was technically the 16th. This means that the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje was technically the 17th in terms of birth order.

In the prophecies, the 5th Karmapa's reference to "the 16th same as the 17th" refers precisely to these two ways of counting the Karmapas – by order of the throne holders and by birth, respectively.

The 5th Karmapa also predicted events in the lifetime of "the Karmapa in question," or the 16th Karmapa. The fact that those events came to pass is a strong indicator of the accuracy of the prophecies. Those historical events also provide a time frame to identify the correct Karmapa, and rule out any other interpretations.

Let us examine those predictions one by one.

The 5th Karmapa foresaw the weakening of the general Buddha-dharma and of the "Karma Khamtsang"⁴⁴, using the comparison of horseflies about to die. When communism swept through Tibet during the lifetime of Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, the dharma – including the Karma Kagyu doctrine – was nearly wiped out.

⁴⁰ The Tibetan word here translated as "or" means "the same as."

⁴¹ Victory teaching means the Buddha dharma.

⁴² This is a simile to describe a "very weak" condition.

⁴³ This account of the baby 14th Karmapa was described in the biography of the tertön, Chokgyur Lingpa. A translated excerpt of it can be found in Chapter 2 under this cover.

⁴⁴ Another name for the Karma Kagyu School.

The Chinese communist regime destroyed the Tibetan temples and banned the monks and lamas from practising their religion.

The second prediction was the end of the sky-appointed emperors of the East. In this context, “east” refers to China. Emperors in China were literally called “Tien Tchi”, which means “one who is of the sky.” The prophecy states that “the line of the sky-appointed emperors of the East will end,” and the reign of the last emperor of the Qing dynasty did come to its end. The former emperor Puyi (who was a captive in his own palace) finally left the Forbidden City in 1924, the same year that the 16th Karmapa was born.

With the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, China was left vulnerable to foreign invaders. In the end, Mao Zedong succeeded in taking over China, and then Tibet. This was the third event predicted, which came to pass during the 16th Karmapa’s lifetime.

As to the “ring” that was to encircle Tibet, I believe it refers to communist powers. The country was surrounded at the time, by communist Russia in the north, and communist China in the east, and China’s military spread all the way to the Indian border in the south. Thus, Tibet was encircled by communism.

All four of these events transpired as prophesied, during the lifetime of the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje. Therefore, Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje must be the Karmapa who is the 16th same as the 17th Karmapa, fulfilling every aspect of this segment of the prophecy.

[2]

ཀ་ཡི་ཐིང་བ་བཅུ་དྲུག་སྐད།⁴⁵

(...)Ka / yi / trengwa / chu / druk / smed /
Karmapa / of / rosary / ten / six / the latter part /

ཅུ་དྲུག་འགོ་ཅུ་དམ་སྐྱེའི་སྐྱེལ།

Chu / dun / goh / ru / damsri /
Ten / seven / beginning / to / powerful evil happening repeatedly /
yi / trul /
of / emanation /

ན་ཐའི་མིང་ཅན་གྲ་མ་ཞིག།

Natha / yi / ming / chen / lama / shig /
Protector / of / name / has / lama / a /

ས་སྐྱོད་གདན་ས་འདི་ཅུ་འབྱུང་།

Sachod / densa / de / ru / jung /
Name of Karma Gon / seat / this / at / appear /

(...)In the successive line (or rosary) of Karmapas,

⁴⁵ BK: page 14, backside, 4th line.

during the latter part of the 16th Karmapa's life,
and at the beginning of the 17th,
the emanation of one who has broken Vajrayana vows,
a lama who has the name of "Natha"
will appear at this seat of Karma Gon.



First, a brief explanation about Vajrayana practice and vows:

An empowerment is a spiritual transmission given with oral instructions that connects and authorizes practitioners to do a Vajrayana/tantric practice. The spiritual teacher who confers the empowerment is generally referred to as the vajra master. To safeguard the integrity of the practice, practitioners vow to abide by "Vajrayana samaya" or commitments (similar to moral standards), that are associated with the practice.

When a person who has extensively practised the tantric methods then turns in the wrong direction, he violates his samaya or commitments of Vajrayana practice. One example of "wrong direction" is to intentionally harm, physically or verbally, one's vajra (tantric) master, which constitutes a breaking of Vajrayana vows.

"One who has broken Vajrayana vows" in a serious way is referred to as a samaya-broken being. The Tibetan term for a samaya-broken being is "dam log". The negative consequence of this transgression is that the being will reincarnate again and again; he is called a "damsri" in Tibetan. In other words, a damsri is the emanation/reincarnation of a dam log. Moreover, a damsri will always act in a way that would harm the Buddha Dharma. The literal meaning of damsri is therefore "a powerful evil happening again and again."

The "yi" in "damsri yi trul" is a modifier for "trul", which means "emanation," or "appearance." "Yi trul" therefore means that the emanation of something or someone.

When "damsri" is added to "yi trul", the full meaning becomes clear: the emanation "of a samaya-broken being" will appear again and again. In other words, someone will take rebirth repeatedly as a powerful evil being due to his violation of Vajrayana vows in the past. And he will continue to act against the Buddha Dharma.

[2] Geshe's commentary:

During the course of my research, I learned that the 1st Jamgon Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye had transmitted all the Vajrayana empowerments to the 10th Situ Rinpoche. Despite this connection, the 10th Situ Rinpoche turned against his vajra master or guru quite publicly. The description of his transgression can be found in the autobiography of Jamgon Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye.

At that time, the 10th Situ Rinpoche sued the 1st Jamgon Kongtrul for gathering disciples at Palpung, his seat monastery, which he viewed as his territory. He accused his guru of personally undermining his authority, name, and position by drawing a following there. He felt that the 1st Jamgon Kongtrul had compromised his prestige. The legal suit was settled when the court of the government of Derge recommended that Jamgon Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye move away from Palpung and not teach there again. Jamgon Kongtrul agreed, moved away, and developed his

own Tsadra retreat some distance from Palpung, where he lived and taught.⁴⁶ Through his actions against his teacher, the 10th Situ Rinpoche seriously violated the principles of Vajrayana practice.

In the Buddhist doctrine, it is explained that the ripening of a particular karma can skip a generation, or more. It depends on which karma is next in line to mature, or to take effect. The current Situ Rinpoche is likely an emanation of the 10th Situ Rinpoche for two reasons. First, he is the 12th reincarnation in the line of Situ tulku. Second, it appears that he, too, has violated the principles of Vajrayana practice. He had received Vajrayana vows and empowerments from the 16th Karmapa, but on August 2, 1993, the current Situ Rinpoche led his people to attack the 16th Karmapa's main seat at Rumtek Monastery. Therefore, this current Situ fits the description of the trul or emanation who is destined by past karma to come again, and commit the same transgression again. His appearance also falls within the predicted time frame – in the last part of the 16th Karmapa's life and at the beginning of the 17th.

Moreover, the current Situ has “natha” in his name, a condition which the 5th Karmapa specified in his prediction. “natha” is a Sanskrit word, which is “gon” in Tibetan, meaning “protector.”⁴⁷

I will explain the full name of Situ Rinpoche to show that “gon” or “natha” is in his official name as the Tai Situ of the Karma Kagyu Lineage. The current Situ Rinpoche's formal name is “Byam⁴⁸Gon” (Natha) Tai Situ Rinpoche.

One of the eight great bodhisattvas was Bodhisattva Maitreya Natha, who resides in Tushita. Literally translated, Maitreya Natha means “loving protector,” or “Byam Gon” in Tibetan. The 8th Tai Situ Rinpoche was reputed in his time to be the emanation of Maitreya Natha in Tushita. Ever since, all successive Situ Rinpoche reincarnates have carried the title, “Maitreya Natha Tai Situ Rinpoche,” or “Byam Gon Tai Situ Rinpoche.”

Interestingly, I also discovered that among the Situ Rinpoches with this name, only the current Situ Rinpoche uses “Chamgon” in his name in the written documents.



A quick search on the internet showed the following websites among numerous others where Situ Rinpoche's full name is clearly posted with “Chamgon” in it.

“<http://www.simhas.org/kagy.html>” shows Chamgon Tai Situpa.

“http://kagy.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=13&Itemid=28” shows Chamgon Tai Situ Rinpoche.

“<http://palpung.org.uk/taisitu.htm>” shows His Eminence The XIIth Chamgon Tai Situ Rinpoche

“http://www.platt-form.com/Kunden/lama/eng/?page_id=27” shows H.E. Palpung Chamgon Kuanding Tai Situ Rinpoche

Sachod, or Karma Gon is one of three seats of Karmapa in Tibet. It is also the site of this prediction, which was told by the 5th Karmapa to his disciple, Shen Yeshe Nyingpo while Shen was doing a retreat in a cave near Karma Gon. That is why the 5th Karmapa refers to it as “this” seat of Karma Gon. It is also the place where the

⁴⁶ In the autobiography of Jamgon Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye, the 10th Situ Rinpoche is referred to as Kushab Rinpoche.

⁴⁷ Please see the end of this chapter for a dictionary explanation of Natha or Gon.

⁴⁸ “Byam” is pronounced as “jam” or “Cham” as in Jamgon, or Chamgon.

current Situ Rinpoche began his plans to take Rumtek by force, the seat of his Vajrayana teacher, the 16th Karmapa.

The current Situ Rinpoche held one of his earliest strategy meetings with his collaborators in 1991 at his seat monastery at Palpung.⁴⁹ The purpose of the meeting was to organize a takeover of Rumtek monastery in Sikkim. Situ Rinpoche met with Akong Tulku from Scotland, among others. Afterwards, Situ Rinpoche went to Karma Gon and its vicinity to mobilize the people there to support him. Just as the 5th Karmapa predicted, the current Situ Rinpoche – a lama with the name of “natha” – did appear at the seat of Karma Gon.

[3]

ལོག་སྒྲོན་དེ་ཡི་རྣམ་མཐུ་ཡིས།

Log / mon / de / yi / nu / thu / yee /
Wrong / wish / that / of / power / effect / by /

ཀར་བསྟན་ཟུང་ལ་ཉེ་བའི་ཚེ།

Kar / ten / phung / la /
Karmapa or Karma Kagyu / lineage or doctrine / destroy / to /
nyi wa i / tshe /
nearly / at that time /

By the effect and power of that wrong wish,
the Karma Kagyu Lineage/Doctrine (will be) nearly destroyed at that time.

[3] Geshe’s commentary:

In Vajrayana, to envy the renown and power of one’s guru is considered a form of harboring a “wrong wish.” This type of wrong wish often manifests itself as greed, or an unethical desire to control the guru, his position, and/or his properties. It can even induce someone to harm the guru.

Situ Rinpoche was envious of the fame and influence of Rumtek Monastery, which in his view, overshadowed his own seat at Sherab Ling. This is a widely-held opinion within the Rumtek community. Members of the community think that Situ Rinpoche attacked Karmapa’s monks and monastery because he wanted Rumtek along with all of its contents.

In his jealousy of the 16th Karmapa, the current Situ Rinpoche stumbled into a karma already committed by the 10th Situ, who was similarly jealous of his Vajrayana guru. Unfortunately, this “lama with the name Natha,” has been caught up in a “wrong wish;” the same one that led his predecessor to break samaya.

In 1963, when Situ and Shamarpa were just children, the 16th Karmapa recognized and formally re-enthroned⁵⁰ the current Shamarpa. Situ’s ranking thus

⁴⁹ Details of Situ Rinpoche’s activities in Tibet and, China were reported in the news.

⁵⁰ During the 18th century, the then ruling government accused the 10th Shamarpa of treason after his death. Since then, no Shamarpa could be recognized or enthroned until the current Shamarpa, who was recognized and enthroned by the 16th Karmapa.

went down a notch. His administration was worried that Situ's prestige would diminish, and expressed their displeasure with the new development in an article in the Tibetan newspaper *Freedom of Tibet*. I learnt that later, as the two boys were growing up, because Shamarpa Chokyi Lodrö was very good to Situ, the latter's administrators had a change of heart and abandoned their negative attitude towards Shamarpa.

During the latter part of the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa's life, Akong Tulku arrived from Scotland and joined Situ's administration, pledging his loyalty to Situ and volunteering his services. Akong gained a great deal of influence with Situ, which exceeded that of the elderly administrators who had raised him. Situ's downgrade in prestige seemed an adequate excuse to retaliate. Akong persuaded Situ to go against the administration of the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa and the institution of the Shamarpas.

Situ Rinpoche proceeded to mobilize other Karma Kagyu lamas who were already at odds with the Rumtek administration, to form a group that would eventually attack Rumtek in 1993. These events all took place during the 17th Karmapa's childhood, or "the beginning of the 17th". Again, the time frame predicted by the 5th Karmapa is accurate.

Having attacked Rumtek, Situ Rinpoche stepped up his offensive by defaming not only the current Shamarpa, but the previous Shamarpas as well. At one point, he banned the doctrines of the past Shamarpas in Situ's monasteries in India and Tibet.

The ban created an awkward situation for the monasteries' residents. Try as they did to comply, they could not find alternate lineage teachings to practise. The Karma Kagyu lineage teachings are inextricably linked to the Shamarpas, who passed those teachings down through the generations. They include Naropa's *Six Yogas doctrines*, and the *Treasures of Kagyu Tantra*. These are the essential lineage teachings of the Karma Kagyu, directly descended from the 4th Shamarpa. In other words, a ban on the teachings of the Shamarpas amounts to a ban on the Karma Kagyu doctrines. Eventually, the ban in Situ's monasteries fizzled out. Nevertheless, it was a powerful sign of Situ Rinpoche's wish to remove "the institution of the Shamarpas" from the Karma Kagyu lineage. The misrepresentations of history presently circulating, which cast the previous Shamarpas in a negative light, provide further, written proof of that same intention.⁵¹



A book entitled *Karmapa The Sacred Prophecy* was published by Kagyu Thubten Choling of Wappingers Falls, New York, in 1999. The back cover of the book notes that the publications committee is comprised of Lama Norlha's senior students. Lama Norlha is a well-known supporter of Situ Rinpoche. It is said that copies of the book were distributed to patrons of Situ Rinpoche. The copy that I read belongs to a Sikkimese politician who had received it as a gift from one of Situ Rinpoche's supporters.

The first chapter of the book presents brief biographies of the sixteen Karmapas. There is hardly any mention of any Shamarpas in these biographies despite the fact that the two masters had recognized one another's reincarnations, and had alternated roles as guru and disciple over several generations. The absence of the Shamarpas is thus conspicuous, and might appear to lend support to Geshe Dawa Gyaltzen's account of efforts to remove the institution of the Shamarpas from

⁵¹ Chapters in Part Two under this cover address these misrepresentations.

Karma Kagyu's history. But without knowing the reasons why the authors chose to exclude such information, I cannot be sure.⁵²

Not only does the current Shamarpa outrank Situ Rinpoche, but he also openly challenges the authenticity of the 16th Karmapa's prediction letter that Situ Rinpoche produced. It is therefore understandable that Situ would resent the current Shamarpa. However, why Situ Rinpoche would attack the previous Shamarpas, who lived hundreds of years ago, is somewhat baffling. Those Shamarpas were the most important of Karma Kagyu lineage holders. They were the gurus of Situ's own predecessors, the previous Situ Rinpoches. The current Situ Rinpoche has no reason to attack the past Shamarpas, unless he is suffering from the effects of the karma sown by the 10th Situ, a violator of Vajrayana vows.

The 5th Karmapa's precise choice of the words, "Karma Kagyu lineage/doctrine will be nearly destroyed at that time," leaves no room for doubt here. All the past Shamarpas were key transmitters of the Karma Kagyu teachings. As explained, banning the Shamarpa's doctrines is equivalent to shutting down the Karma Kagyu. As long as the Karma Kagyu lamas and monks could carry on with the lineage teachings and practices, the Karma Kagyu lineage/doctrine would remain intact. However, if the Shamarpas' doctrines were no longer transmitted and practised, then the Karma Kagyu lineage would be extinguished.

Therefore, the current Situ Rinpoche fits every condition in the 5th Karmapa's prediction. He is someone in the later life of the 16th Karmapa and the early life of the 17th Karmapa. He is an emanation of the 10th Situ, who is someone who has broken Vajrayana vows. He is a lama who has "natha" or "gon" in his name. In 1991, this Situ Rinpoche did go to Karma Gon (known as Sachod) to rally support for himself. His negative actions, which were spurred on by the legacy of his predecessor's wrong wish (the 10th Situ's jealousy toward his guru), brought the Karma Kagyu lineage/doctrine (passed down by the Shamarpas) close to destruction during the 1990s. In my capacity as a Geshe, I invite others to debate this conclusion and to enter into a dialogue with me about these events.

[4]

དེ་དུས་སྔོན་སྔོན་ལྟར་པ་ཡི།

De / du / ngon / mon / den / pa / yi /
That / time / previous / wish / has / by the one / of /

ཨོ་རྒྱན་ཐུགས་སྐྱེལ་རུབ་ཕྱོགས་ནས།

Ogyen / thuk / trul / nub / chog / nay/
Guru Padmasambhava/ mind or heart/ emanation/ west/ direction/ from/

སྤྲི་བའི་དོ་ཤལ་གཏུམ་དྲག་ཐུགས།

Mewa/ yi / doshal / tum / drak / thuk /
Mole/ of/ long necklace on one's chest/ quite a temper/ wrathful/ mind/

⁵² See Appendix A-14 for further discussions where translations of passages from written Tibetan sources are provided to shed light on the connection between the Karmapas and Shamarpas recorded in the history of the Karma Kagyu.

ཞལ་ནས་བྲག་པོའི་གསུང་ཚིག་འབྲིན།

Zhal / nee / drakpo i / sung / tshig / jin /
Mouth / from / wrathful of / speech / word / saying /

སྐྱུ་མཁའ་མདོག་ལྗན་སྐྱེན་གཉིས་འབྱུང།

Mook / nak / dok / den / chen / nyi / bur /
Brown / dark / color / has / eyes / two / prominently shaped /

དམ་ལོག་སྐྱུལ་པ་དེ་ཡིས་འཇོམས།

Dam log / trulpa / de ye / jom /
Samaya-broken / emanation being / by that / defeat or undermine /

དེ་ཡིས་བོད་ཁམས་དང་ཅིག་སྐྱོབས།

De / yee / Bod / kham / darchig / kyob /...
That / by / Tibet / region / for some time/ protected /...

At that time, one who has made wishes in the past,
an emanation of Guru Padmasambhava's mind/heart, will appear from the west.
He has a circular line of moles on his chest and a wrathful temperament.
From his mouth come wrathful words, or the mantra of the wrathful deities.
He has a dark brown complexion and two eyes bulging, or prominently shaped.
He (or that one) will defeat the emanation of the one who has violated the
Vajrayana vows.
Through (or by) that person, the region of Tibet will be protected for some time...

[4] Geshe's commentary:

The 5th Karmapa points to an emanation of Guru Padmasambhava, one who has made positive wishes in the past, who would appear from the west. When he made this prediction, he was at Wog Min Sachod Karma (or Karma Gon) in eastern Tibet. I'd interpret the "west" direction as being "west" of where he was physically at that time, i.e. west of Karma Gon.

The 5th Karmapa here gives us the physical description of an emanation of Guru Padmasambhava, one who has made positive wishes in the past. This emanation will defeat the lama with the name of "natha" or "gon". There is a great deal of evidence that the description of this emanation of Guru Padmasambhava is a match for the current Shamarpa.

The current Shamar Rinpoche has indeed defeated the current Situ Rinpoche. When the controversy surrounding the identity of the 17th Karmapa first erupted, Shamarpa was the only one who was not afraid to challenge the powerful individuals who stood on Situ Rinpoche's side. He spoke directly and strongly, in other words, wrathfully. Ultimately, Situ Rinpoche failed to destroy the Karma Kagyu lineage because Shamarpa completely subdued his activities.

All Shamarpas are considered emanations of Buddha Amitabha of the “Western Paradise.” Furthermore, the current Shamarpa’s place of residence was in Sikkim, an Indian state situated directly to the west of Sachod Karma Gon. Therefore, the current Shamarpa’s physical placement also tallies with the western direction noted in the 5th Karmapa’s prediction.

The current Shamarpa also fits the physical appearance described. He has a dark brown complexion. His eyes, though not bulging, are prominently shaped, and most people would agree that Shamarpa’s eyes are very uncommon looking. Furthermore, one of his attendants did confirm that Shamarpa has a number of shiny red moles on his chest.



In Buddhist tradition, “doshal” or “a long necklace” is a metaphor to describe a half-ring of moles on one’s chest.

“Tum drak thuk” means one who has a wrathful temperament.

“Bur” literally means bulging. Figuratively speaking, bulging means prominent. Therefore, in this context, the words can be translated as “prominently shaped eyes.”

The prophecies of Guru Padmasambhava, the great Buddhist master of Tibet known as the “Lotus-Born One” in the eighth century, are contained in the many hidden teachings called termas. These prophecies state that some Shamarpas would be emanations of Guru Padmasambhava. In my research, I came upon a book published in Dharamsala with an interesting account of the current Shamar Rinpoche and his confrontation with Dorje Shugden. Dorje Shugden is a deity force in Buddhism whom H.H. the present Dalai Lama considers evil as do Karma Kagyu and Nyingma teachers as well. I read that once in 1975, Dorje Shugden tried to harm Shamarpa. In response, Shamarpa immediately meditated in the wrathful form of Guru Padmasambhava and subdued the evil.

In Chokgyur Lingpa’s biography, Guru Rinpoche or Ogyen Padmasambhava is quoted as having said the following:⁵³

Karmapa, and Konchog Bang (the 5th Shamarpa), and Padma Jung-ney me are all just separate in appearance; in reality, there is no separation, (all) in one essence.

The meaning is this:

Karmapa Red-Hat, or Black-Hat, who is the lineage holder of Dhagpo Kagyu, is an emanation of Ogyen Padmasambhava, inseparable from his wisdom mind.

In effect, this confirms that all Karmapas and Shamarpas are part of the same essence as Guru Padmasambhava. Therefore, the current Shamarpa fits the condition in the 5th Karmapa’s prophecy stating that the one who would defeat the damsri, (or the emanation of the samaya-broken being) would be an emanation of Guru Padmasambhava.

All of these indications together provide strong evidence that the current Shamarpa meets all the 5th Karmapa’s criteria to pinpoint the one who would defeat the lama with “natha” in his name and who would come close to destroying the Karma Kagyu doctrine.

⁵³ *The Biography of Chokgyur Lingpa, a Karma Kagyu woodblock print: page 150, 3rd line.*

As I have shown, some of the 5th Karmapa's predictions about Chinese and Tibetan historical events have already come true in our time. I hope that his reference about the emanation of Guru Padmasambhava being able to protect the region of Tibet will be no exception. It is my deepest wish that the people of Tibet will always be protected. I shall ever pray that not only the current Shamarpa, but others like him, will continue to protect Tibet and its people.



A word by word translation from *The Biography of Chokgyur Lingpa*, page 150, 3rd line:

Karmapa dang / Konchog Bang / Padma Jung-ney /
Karmapa and / the 5th Shamarpa's name / Padmasambhava's name /
dhag nyid / nam /
me / all /
Nang / tshul / tsam du / tha ded / kyang /
appearance / style / just as / separate / though /
Thon / la / yer / med / ngo wo / chik /
meaning / to / separation / no / essence / one /