

Hidden Sacred Land of Pemakö

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Published April 2022
by TIB SHELF
www.tibshelf.org

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ISSN 2754-1495

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by Dudjom Lingpa
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HIDDEN SACRED LAND OF PEMAKÖ

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And so, it is said that *Ganchentso* (Vairocana)¹ holds a begging bowl brimming with perfumed water, and in the water, a wish-fulfilling tree with five branches grows. The southern branch of the tree is beautiful with blossoming flowers and fruit, and to the northeast, on the anthers of a flower, is the very secret place of Pemakö.²

That place is said to be a terrestrial pure land blessed by Śākyamuni Buddha and Padmasambhava. Simply seeing that place has the power to purify the obscurations of a thousand eons. According to prophecy, all thousand buddhas of the fortunate [210] era will go there.

The triangular shape of the place symbolizes the spontaneously accomplished three bodies of the Buddha. View it from a distance, it is like a victory banner fixed firmly in the ground, like the abodes of dharmakāya deities. In the four valleys of the four directions, deities of the four classes of tantras manifest in this utterly beautiful, wondrously magnificent pure realm.

To the south of that is the lake *Kunsang Latso*.³ Tasting its purifying water has the power to cleanse all karmic obscurations.

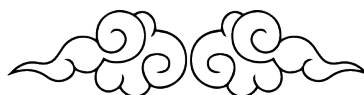
In the northeast is the spirit lake of *Ekajaṭī*, dark red like blood, the color of firelight, which accomplishes without hindrance all entrusted actions of enlightened subduing activities.

In the east is the meditation cave of Samantabhadra Heruka,⁴ where the experience of samādhi naturally increases. Countless other meditation caves, containing the great Padmasambhava's precious treasures and sacred substances, offer great blessings. According to Padmasambhava, simply seeing this place purifies the defilements of a thousand eons.

To the west of those caves is a mountain known as *Riwo Tāla*.⁵ Covered with rocks and snow, the mountain is high and sparkling, beautiful to behold, like a warrior in armor and helmet. In that place, the power of bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara's prayers and aspirations pacifies all eight and sixteen types of fears, and pure clear water possessing the eight qualities flows down along the right side of the most secret valley. Anyone who tastes the lustral white water along the left, [211] which moves like the edge of a blue scarf, will gain longevity, power, and splendor.⁶

The deities of the vajra family live in the east, in the land called "Glorious vajras and endless knots" (*Natsok Dorjepal Bai'u Ling*).⁷

The deities of the jewel family live in the south, in the land called "Jewel whorl of bliss" (*Rinchen Gakhyil Ling*).⁸



The deities of the lotus family live in the west, in the land called “Great blissful ḍākinī land” (*Dāki Dechen Ling*).⁹

Wrathful and powerful deities live in the north, in a land that is like an opening sesame pod, called “Very wrathful yakṣa” (*Nöjin Drakṅgak Rabtrö Ling*).¹⁰

Next, it is said that in the east there is a cave called “Spirit lake of Vajrasattva” (*Dorseṃ Latso*),¹¹ which is a pacifying vajra cave where Padmasambhava concealed innumerable crafted¹² treasures.

In the south is “Jewel cave” (*Rinchen Puk*),¹³ where the assembly of the eight great Heruka gather, and where Padmasambhava concealed innumerable wish-fulfilling treasures, such as gold and silver.

In the west is a lake called “Blissful lotus lake of magnetizing energy” (*Pema Wangdu Dewa Tso*),¹⁴ where Padmasambhava concealed countless treasures of longevity.

In the north is “Wrathful meditation cave” (*Draktsal Tutob Ling*),¹⁵ where Padmasambhava concealed incalculable treasures, and this is where all wrathful activities occur, without exception.

The most secret guidebook *Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance* states:¹⁶

At the mountain’s pinnacle, Avalokiteśvara,¹⁷
 And all the root and lineage lamas, buddhas, and bodhisattvas
 Abide like clouds gathered in the sky.
 At the mountain’s waist, tantric deities gather [212]
 Like a swirling snow blizzard,
 Surrounded by heroes, ḍākinīs,
 And activity protectors, gathered like star clusters in the sky,
 Impossible for the eyes to look at directly.
 The sound of compassion, *kyu ru ru*, roars naturally,
 And waves of radiant nectar swirl, blazing with five-colored lights.
 In the upper valleys, where an excellent mist wafts,
 The medicinal plant *codonopsis pilosula* grows.¹⁸
 The trees and forest are covered with the domed tent of rainbow light,
 And all the birds sing harmoniously, proclaiming the sounds of the Dharma.

Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance explains further:

Those who taste the water and soil of this place
 Purify obscurations of negative karma and attain the seed of enlightenment.
 Those who provide pilgrimage guidance and instruction
 Are messengers of Padmasambhava, who himself said, “these are my followers.”
 Those who build temples on the narrow cliffs of this region



Be they man or woman, good or bad,
 Are emanations of Padmasambhava.
 Each mountain pinnacle has a hundred million A MI DHE WA,
 In the middle of which are a hundred million MAṆI,
 And all around, VAJRA GURU,
 Which two hundred million of the former mantras do not equal.¹⁹
Riwo Tāla is the sublime heart [213] place,
 The secret and innermost unsurpassable
 Abode of the light appearance of Avalokiteśvara and Padmasambhava.
 Offer aspiration prayers, sons of good families,
 And keep in mind the authentic and fortunate aeon.
 Be careful not to offend malicious local deity protectors.
 Those with wrong views will have continuous obstacles,
 So do not mistake pleasure and suffering.
 This is the promise of the truthful Padmasambhava.

COLOPHON

*So it said. This hidden treasure text was revealed by the accomplished master Dudjom Lingpa otherwise known as Jedrung Jampa Jungne, in front of the lower slopes of the great snowy mountain, and it was composed like this.*²⁰

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful for the assistance of several Tibetan scholars living in Toronto: Orgyan Gyalpo for the illustrations and first reading of the text, to Tulku Dawa for an invaluable oral commentary that clarified many points of literal and inner meaning, to Acharya Dakpa Gyatso for additional translation help. Thanks also to Ryan Jones and Frances Garrett for editing assistance. The translation is my own and I assume responsibility for all remaining errors.



1 Khenpo Tsulnam and Orgyan Gyalpo explained that *gangs can mtsho* is a name for Buddha Vairocana and that the passage follows the cosmological model of Jamgön Kongtrul's (*'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas*, 1813–1899, BDRC P264) *shes bya kun khyab*, although another possible interpretation is “Vairocana in the snowy land of Tibet.”

2 *pad+ma bkod*

3 *kun bzang bla mtsho*

4 *bde chen klong yangs*

5 *ri bo tā la*

6 Lama Özer suggests that this spelling should be *thing kha*, meaning a blue scarf, suggesting the effect of a floating scarf when the edge lifts up.

7 *sna tshogs rdo rje dpal bai'u gling*

8 *rin chen dga' 'khyil gling*

9 *DAk+ki bde chen gling*

10 *gnod sbyin drag sngags rab khros gling*

11 *rdor sems bla mtsho*

12 *bzo*

13 *rin chen phug*

14 *pad+ma dbang sdud bde ba mtsho*

15 *drag rtsal mthu stobs gling*

16 This is a selection by Chögyal Ngawang Dargye (*chos rgyal ngag dbang dar rgyas*, 1736/1740–1807, BDRC P369) from the *rdzogs chen ma rig mun sel* (BDRC MW24664).

17 Avalokiteśvara's specific form here is the Ocean of Victors (*rgyal ba rgya mtsho*).

18 *klu bdud rdo rje*

19 The meaning of this passage is unclear.

20 *bdud 'jom gling pa/ rje drung byams pa 'byung gnas*, 1835–1904, BDRC P705



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