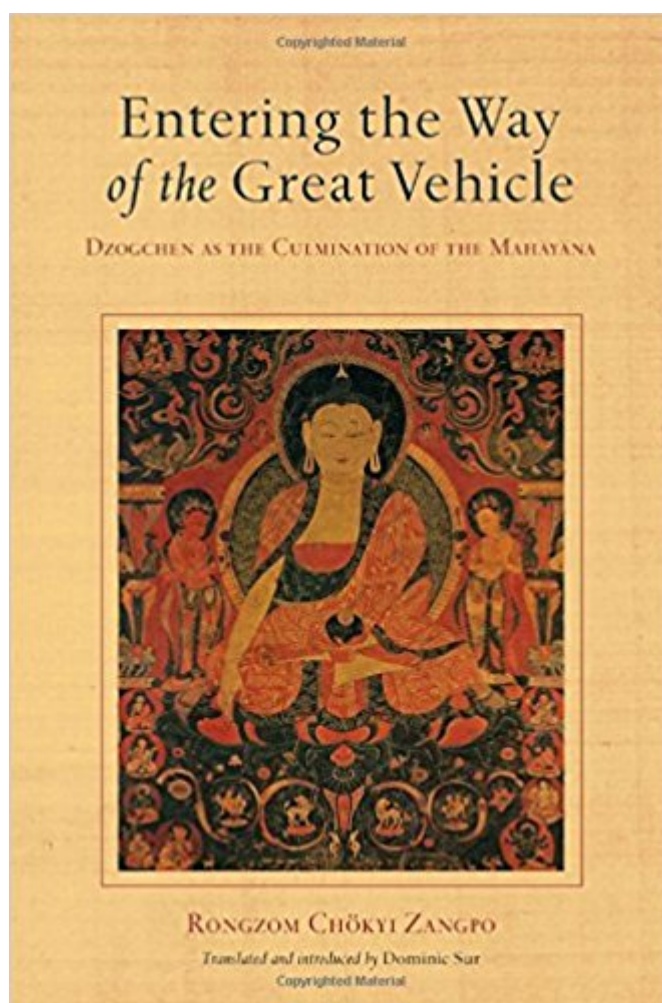


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Entering The Way Of The Great Vehicle: Dzogchen As The Culmination Of The Mahayana



Synopsis

The first English translation of a classic treatise on how the Tibetan practice of Dzogchen, or Great Perfection, is in fact the culmination of the path of Mahayana Buddhism. Rongzom Chökyi Zangpo wrote this treatise in the eleventh century during the renaissance of Buddhism in Tibet that was spurred by the influx of new translations of Indian Buddhist texts, tantras, and esoteric transmissions from India. For political and religious reasons, adherents of the "new schools" of Tibetan Buddhism fostered by these new translations cast the older tradition of lineages and transmissions as impure and decadent. Rongzompa composed the work translated here in order to clearly and definitively articulate how Dzogchen was very much in line with the wide variety of sutric and tantric teachings espoused by all the Tibetan schools. Using the kinds of philosophic and linguistic analyses favored by the new schools, he demonstrates that the Great Perfection is indeed the culmination and maturation of the Mahāyāna, the Great Vehicle. The central topic of the work is the notion of illusory appearance, for when one realizes deeply that all appearances are illusory, one realizes also that all appearances are in that respect equal. The realization of the equality of all phenomena is said to be the Great Perfection approach to the path, which frees one from both grasping at, and rejecting, appearances. However, for those unable to remain effortlessly within the natural state, in the final chapter Rongzompa also describes how paths with effort are included in the Great Perfection approach.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Dominic Sur presents an outstanding study and translation of a renowned treatise by one of the greatest luminaries of Tibetan literature, the great Rongzompa. Starting with the Mahāyāna corpus, this volume illuminates how all the vehicles relate with, and culminate in, the Great Perfection. It is an invaluable addition to Buddhist literature in the West.” •Tulku Thondup, author of *The Heart of Unconditional Love* “In this book, Dominic Sur has rendered into clear and elegant English Rongzom Chökyi Zangpo’s *Entering the Way of the Great Vehicle*, one of the great classics of Tibetan thought, and one of the earliest treatises composed by a self-avowed follower of the Nyingma or “Ancient” tradition. Studied to this day in Nyingma monastic colleges, Sur’s translation of this important thousand-year-old work is a must read for anyone interested in Tibetan intellectual history, and especially the early philosophical elaboration of the Great Perfection.” •Joselyn Ignacio Cabezas, Dalai Lama Professor of Tibetan Buddhism and Cultural Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara “The nature of suffering; the distinction (or lack thereof) between illusion and reality; the value of reason for the spiritual path: all of these essential Buddhist topics are treated with creativity and freshness in this key early work of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. Sur’s incisive English prose renders this rich philosophical work accessible while still retaining the precision and complexity of the original.” •Kurtis Schaeffer, University of Virginia

Rongzom Chökyi Zangpo (eleventh century) was an important Tibetan Buddhist translator, fully adept in Sanskrit and, along with Longchenpa and Ju Mipham, is considered to be one of the three great systematizers of the Nyingma tradition. His works, whether translations from Sanskrit, commentaries on canonical texts, or original compositions such as *Entering the Way of the Great Vehicle*, demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of, and direct experience with, a wide variety of teachings that were coming into Tibet from India. “Dominic Sur first studied with Tibetan masters in India, Nepal, and Tibet for several years before returning to the United States, where he was fortunate enough to study with several outstanding scholars of Buddhism at Sarah Lawrence College, Harvard Divinity School, and the University of Virginia. In 2015, he completed a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Virginia and is now a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Utah State University.

Ronzompa was one of the three giants on the Nyingma tradition. A wonderful translation of one of

the most articulate presentations of Dzogchen.

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