



# **A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems: Biographies of Masters of Awareness in the Dzogchen Lineage (A Spiritual History of the Teachings of Natural Great Perfection)**

*Nyoshul Khenpo Jamyang Dorjé*

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A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems: Biographies of Masters of Awareness in the Dzogchen Lineage is the only comprehensive history of the Nyingtik lineage, which forms the core of the body of teachings known as Dzogchen (Great Perfection) in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. It was written by the late Nyoshul Khen Rinpoché, Jamyang Dorjé (1931-1999), one of the most outstanding and knowledgeable exponents of Dzogchen. In this work, framed as a series of biographical accounts, Nyoshul Khenpo provides a wealth of information invaluable to spiritual practitioners as well as to historians studying the cultures of central Asia. In his introduction, Sogyal Rinpoche underscores the importance of this work: “‘There could come a time in the future,’ [Nyoshul Khenpo] wrote, ‘when holders of the lineage would profess to transmit the lineage without being able to recall even the names of its masters.’ This is why he considered this history to be ‘as indispensable as our eyes or our life force,’ providing all the grounds and inspiration ever needed for total conviction. He compared the life stories of the vidyadhara masters in this lineage to a fine chain of gold or a garland of rare gems. ...With immense attention to detail, Nyoshul Khenpo maps out the ‘ultimate lineage of direct transmission,’ the heart of all the lines of transmission of Dzogpachenpo from the primordial buddha to the present day, showing the connection between masters and students in an unbroken line of succession. His work stands out because of its completeness, for it includes all of the distinct lineages, along with the lives of the students of the great masters, stories from the oral tradition, and the different teaching styles. Anyone who matters is represented here, every link in the chain, including masters of our time. ...It is a milestone, and I do not feel that it will ever be equaled.”

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