



# Great Perfection: Outer and Inner Preliminaries (Heart Essence)

*Third Dzogchen Rinpoche*

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In the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, the Great Perfection is considered the most profound and direct path to enlightenment. The instructions of this tradition present a spiritual shortcut—a radically direct approach that cuts through confusion and lays bare the mind's true nature of luminous purity. For centuries, these teachings have been taught and practiced in secret by some of the greatest adepts of the Buddhist tradition. *Great Perfection: Outer and Inner Preliminaries* contains detailed instructions on the foundational practices of this tradition, from "The Excellent Chariot," a practice manual compiled by the Third Dzogchen Rinpoche.

Distilling the teachings of the *Heart Essence of the Dakinis* into an accessible, easy-to-practice format, *The Excellent Chariot* leads the reader through the entire Buddhist path, starting with basic Buddhist contemplations that work to dislodge deeply ingrained patterns of thinking and behaving, and continuing on to the most advanced and secret meditative practices of the Great Perfection. The teachings in this volume are drawn largely from the writings of the great Nyingma master Longchenpa and the root texts of the *Heart Essence of the Dakinis* itself. The Third Dzogchen Rinpoche begins by discussing the correct way to study and practice the Great Perfection teachings before presenting an overview of the Great Perfection lineage and an explanation on the meaning and importance of empowerment. In the chapters that follow, he presents practical instructions on the outer and inner preliminaries, the so-called "ngöndro" practices. These practices enable the practitioner to transform and purify the mind, preparing it for the advanced Great Perfection meditation of Trekchö and Tögal, the breakthrough and direct leap.

In addition to the translation mentioned above, *Great Perfection: Outer and Inner Preliminaries* contains a beautiful introduction by the Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, a contemporary Great Perfection master, and an extensive glossary of key Great Perfection terminology.

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