Written by a great modern Nyingma master, Dudjom Rinpoche's The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism covers in detail and depth both the fundamental teachings and the history of Tibetan Buddhism's oldest school. This, the first English translation of His Holiness' masterwork, constitutes the most complete work of its type in the West.

An absolute treasure for students of the tradition, it is also an indispensable reference for anyone with an interest in Buddhism. The book includes chronologies and glossaries that elucidate Buddhist doctrine, and it provides fascinating insights into the Buddhist history of Tibet. Two treatises form the present volume, namely the Fundamentals of the Nyingma School and the History of the Nyingma School. Among the most widely read of all His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche's works, these treatises were composed during the years immediately following his arrival in India as a refugee. His intention in writing them was to preserve the precise structure of the Nyingma philosophical view within its own historical and cultural context.

This is the first time this text has been available in a trade edition. Beautifully presented, this single-volume edition represents a truly wonderful gift, and features illustrations in black and white and in color, plus maps, bibliographic information, and useful annotations.

[Table of Contents]

SECTION ONE: THE TRANSLATIONS

List of Illustrations
Foreword by Shenpen Dawa Rinpoche
Preface to the Second Edition
Credits for Illustrations and Maps
Technical Note
Guide to Pronunciation
Abbreviations for Section One

BOOK ONE: FUNDAMENTALS OF THE NYINGMA SCHOOL OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM

Detailed Contents of Book One
Translator's Introduction

THE TEXT

Verses of Invocation
Introduction

PART ONE: DOCTRINES OF SAMSARA AND NIRVANA

The Essence and Definition of Dharma
Doctrines of Samsara
Doctrines of Nirvana
Transmitted Precepts
Treatises
Quantitative Treatises
Treatises of Inner Science

PART TWO: THE NATURE OF THE TEACHER ENDOWED WITH THE BUDDHA-BODIES

Introduction

Samantabhadra, the Buddha-body of Reality
Vajradhara, the Emanation of Samantabhadra
The Two Buddha-bodies of Form
The Five Buddha-bodies and Five Pristine Cognitions
Distinctive Attributes of the Buddha-bodies and Pristine Cognitions

PART THREE: CAUSAL VEHICLES OF DIALECTICS

Introduction

The Three Promulgations of the Doctrinal Wheel
The Lesser Vehicle
The Greater Vehicle
The Superiority of Great Madhyamaka to Mind Only
The Provisional and Definitive Meaning of the Transmitted Precepts
The Enlightened or Buddha Family
The Two Truths According to Great Madhyamaka
Key to the Appraisal of Causal Vehicle Texts
A Recapitulation of the Causal Vehicles

PART FOUR: RESULTANT VEHICLES OF SECRET MANTRA

Introduction

The Superiority of Secret Mantra
The Essence and Definition of Secret Mantra
The Three Continua of Ground, Path and Result
The Four Tantrapitaka
Mahayoga
Anuyoga
Key to the Appraisal of Secret Mantra Texts
The Superiority of Atiyoga, the Great Perfection
The Definition of Atiyoga
The Divisions of Atiyoga
A Recapitulation of the Resultant Vehicles

CONCLUSION

Concluding Remarks
Dedicatory Verses
Colophon

BOOK TWO: HISTORY OF THE NYINGMA SCHOOL OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM

Detailed Contents of Book Two Translators' Introduction

THE TEXT

Verses of Invocation

PART ONE: THE ORIGIN OF THE PRECIOUS TEACHING OF THE CONQUEROR IN THIS WORLD

Introduction

The Coming of Buddha, Teacher of the Doctrine
The Collecting of Transmitted Precepts by Councils
The Patriarchs of the Teaching
The Preservation of the Teaching and Spread of the Greater Vehicle
PART TWO: THE RISE OF THE PRECIOUS TEACHING OF SECRET MANTRA

Introduction

The Turning of the Secret Mantra Wheel
The Collecting of Transmitted Precepts by Different Compilers
The Emergence of this Teaching in the Human World
The Lineage of Mahayoga, the Class of Tantras
The Lineage of Mahayoga, the Class of Means for Attainment
The Lineage of Anuyoga, the Perfection Stage
The Lineage of Atiyoga, the Great Perfection
Concluding Remarks

PART THREE: THE ORIGIN OF THE CONQUEROR'S TEACHING IN TIBET

Introduction

The Three Ancestral Religious Kings
The Decline and Expansion of the Doctrine during the Intermediate Period
The Revival and Later Expansion of the Teaching

PART FOUR: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE INNER CLASSES OF TANTRA IN TIBET

Introduction

Mahayoga and Anuyoga
The Mental and Spatial Classes of Atiyoga
The Esoteric Instructional Class of Atiyoga, the Innermost Spirituality
Longcen Rapjampa

PART FIVE: THE DISTANT LINEAGE OF TRANSMITTED PRECEPTS

Introduction

The Lineage of Nyak
The Lineage of Nup
The Lineage of the Zur Family
Biographies of the Rong Tradition
Dotokpa's Lineage of the Zur Tradition
Biographies of the Kham Tradition
Miscellaneous Lineages of the Zur and Kham Traditions
Rongzom Choki Zangpo
The Traditions of Vajrakila
The Lineages of the Empowerment of the Sutra which Gathers All Intentions
Later Lineages of the Transmitted Precepts

PART SIX: THE CLOSE LINEAGES OF THE TREASURES

The Nature, Purpose and Kinds of Treasure
Biographies of the Treasure-finders
Sangye Lama
Trapa Ngonshe
Nyang-rel Nyima Ozer
Guru Choki Wangcuk
Como Menmo
Orygen Lingpa
Ngodrup Gyeltsen or Rikdzin Godemcen
Sangye Lingpa
Dorje Lingpa
Ratna Lingpa
Pema Lingpa
Karma Lingpa
Thangtong Gyelpo
Ngari Pancen Pema Wangyel
Rikdzin Jatson Nyingpo
Rikdzin Dudul Dorje
Lhatstun Namka Jikme
The Fifth Dalai Lama
Rikdzin Terdak Lingpa, the Great Treasure-finder of Mindroling