

Appearances as Metaphor
By Jigme Lingpa (1730-1785)

Ho Ho!

Deep in vast expanse of sky above,
Crimson vultures glide with majesty,
So too **I**, in mind-appearance vast expanse,
Soar without a goal distraction-free.

Below in verdant gardens of the earth,
Fragrant leaves of shrubs and forests dance,
So too **I**, to grow and feed experience,
Train *rigpa* in the sway of thought.

In **between**, in villages of human kind,
Ladies ravishing will flaunt their dress.
So too **I**, within the endless vast expanse,
Wear appearances as ornaments.

To the **sound** of “Swirling waves of Kokonor”
Dancers sway and clasp their partner’s waists.
So too **I**, to mix appearances with mind,
Rest in vastness, but cut to the chase.

In **courtyards** of monasteries of esteem,
Scholars forge debates both day and night.
So too **I**, untethered in simplicity,
Forge this wisdom path in mundane life

On **thrones**, with silks and cushions piled high,
Abbots are busy with all kinds of tasks.
So too **I**, to capture inter-being’s throne,
Discern thinking mind from *rigpa*’s truth.

Inside of hallowed mansions, grand estates
Landlords keep their servants close in check.
So too **I**, in this humble natural cave,
Keep projections, concepts well subdued.

In the **snare** of ordinary household life
Matrons till their fields and work the land
So too **I**, in this natural discipline,
Tend to progress as already free.

Atop this turquoise meadow mandala

Herders tend their cattle and their sheep
So too **I**, this sheep strand of conceptual mind
Herd into the heart of insight's fold.

On these **i**solated lonely narrow paths,
Bandits try to rob the people poor.
So too **I**, these stubborn thoughts of hope and fear
Let awareness plunder to the core.

In the **v**ast counties where ascetics roam,
Yogis fend away the dogs' attacks.
So too **I**, at portal of the vast expanse
Pounce on selfish dualistic mind.

On the **d**oorsteps of these prosperous village homes,
Beloved children play their games.
So too **I**, within this home of naturalness
Enjoy this *rigpa*'s fine display.

In **sams**ara, endless diversions arise.
In **nirv**ana, poles of good and bad recede.
This whole **m**ind has one basis, but many moods,
Mirrors both delusion and the truth.

These **a**ppearances arise as metaphor.
Metaphors hide meanings deep within.
If these **m**eanings find their way to declaration,
Many are the ones who will not care.

But if **y**ou absorb them, you will find the truth.
Those with wisdom, you will understand.
I, this scion of good lineage,
Cutting subtle threads of hope and fear,
Take impressions to a song of life.
Dwelling in this lonely mountain cave,
Free **w**ithin, I hoist the practice banner high,
Chasing all phenomena's collapse.

First, these **w**ords are wondrous and peculiar chatter.
Second, this is straight authentic talk.
Third, this springs anew from wakeful mind.
On this **p**eak that dwarfs this endless sky above,

Bathed in radiant rays of wisdom-love,
I behave just like a demoness.