

Melody of Dharma

❁ Peace and Impermanence
A teaching by H.H. the Sakya Trizin

❁ H.H. the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung
Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in East Asia

❁ Remembering Great Masters
Tsarchen Losal Gyatso

❁ Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche in
Europe and Asia



CONTENTS



- 1* **From the Editors**
- 2* **2013 Tentative Schedules**
- 4* **Sakya Hospital**
- 7* **Remembering Great Masters**
 - 7* • Tsarchen Losal Gyatso
 - 9* • A Poem by Tsarchen Losal Gyatso
- 10* **Peace and Impermanence**
 - A teaching by H.H. the Sakya Trizin
- 17* **Maitreya's Semtsema**
 - A teaching by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche
- 20* **Oral Instructions on the Practice of Guru Yoga**
 - A teaching by H.E. Chogye Trichen Rinpoche
- 25* **Received in Front of the Stupa**
 - by Jetsün Drakpa Gyaltzen
- 28* **Dharma Activities**
 - 28* • H.H. Jetsun Kushok in Frankfurt
 - 29* • H.H. the Sakya Trizin in Mandali
 - 30* • H.H. the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in East Asia
 - 43* • Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche in Europe, Mongolia and Singapore
 - 50* • Vajrakilaya Puja at the Sakya Centre
 - 53* • H.H. the Gyalwang Karmapa in Dehradun
 - 54* • H.H. the Dalai Lama in Dehradun
 - 56* • In Memoriam: Drakpa Zampo

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From The Editors

Dear readers,

We hope that each one of you had many days of happiness and fulfillment since we last went to print.

Much has happened since our last issue, with His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche bringing their wisdom to East Asia and Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche blessing many European centres with his illuminating teachings and initiations. This issue owes a very special debt of gratitude to all those who enriched it with their valued texts and photographs. To them, we extend our most effusive thanks for their generosity in sharing their precious moments with our readers.

Not only have our Teachers been spreading the treasures of the Dharma abroad, but they have also been busy on home ground, with the Sakya Centre in Rajpur hosting many important pujas. Auspiciously, the Sakya Centre and Sakya Nunnery were hugely privileged to welcome both His Holiness the Dalai Lama and His Holiness the Gyalwang Karmapa during their respective visits to Dehradun in late summer.

This year had its share of conflicts and natural disasters, in response to which our Teachers have redoubled their prayers so that all those affected by them may find immediate and long-lasting relief. To their prayers we join our aspiration that we may swiftly and steadily progress on our spiritual path so that we may bring benefit to all beings.

Before too long, the festive season will be upon us, and so we wish that every one of you may enjoy its days in ease and contentment. May all of us be filled with the presence of our revered Teachers, and may their wisdom accompany us always.

The Editing Team

HIS HOLINESS THE SAKYA TRIZIN'S TENTATIVE 2013 SCHEDULE

DATE	PLACE	CENTRE	ACTIVITY
Dec 22 –28	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Cakrasamvara Puja
Jan 4 – 10	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Düchen Puja
Feb 3 – 9	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Gutor
Feb 11	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Losar
Mar 7 - 10	Lausanne, Switzerland	Thegchok Ling	Preliminary teaching on Vajrakilaya initiation
Mar 12-13	Arosio, Switzerland	Thubten Changchub Ling	To be announced
Mar 17	Rikon, Switzerland	Rikon Institute	Teachings to Western & Tibetan people
Mar 19	Kuttolsheim, France	Sakya Tsechen Ling	Welcome Ceremony Hevajra Sadhana teachings
Mar 20 - 23	Kuttolsheim, France	Sakya Tsechen Ling	Hevajra Sadhana teachings
Mar 24	Kuttolsheim, France	Sakya Tsechen Ling	Three Buddhas' Aspects Manjushri-Avalokiteshvara-Vajrapani initiation
Mar 25	Kuttolsheim, France	Sakya Tsechen Ling	Long-Life ceremony
Mar 27 - 28	Denia, Spain	Sakya Foundation	Parting from the Four Attachments
Mar 29	Denia, Spain	Sakya Foundation	Avalokiteshvara Jenang and Teaching
Mar 30	Denia, Spain	Sakya Foundation	Buddha Jenang and Teaching
Mar 31	Denia, Spain	Sakya Foundation	Avalokiteshvara Jenang and Teaching
Apr 1	Denia, Spain	Sakya Foundation	Achala Jenang and Teaching
Apr 2	Denia, Spain	Sakya Foundation	Tara Jenang and Teaching
Apr 4	Barcelona, Spain	Sakya Gephel Ling	Avalokiteshvara Jenang and Teaching
Aug 7- 12	Singapore	Sakya Tenphel Ling	Pujas
Aug 17	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Vajrakilaya Puja

KHÖNDUNG RATNA VAJRA RINPOCHE 2013 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DATE	PLACE	CENTRE	ACTIVITY
Dec 22 –28	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Cakrasamvara Puja
Jan 4 – 10	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Düchen Puja
Feb 3 – 9	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Gutor
Feb 11	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Losar
Mar 26 – May 22	Taipei, Taiwan	Sakya Vajrayana Manjushri Centre	Lamdre Reteaching
May 24 – July 7	Singapore	Sakya Tephel Ling	Lamdre
July 12-26	Kathmandu	IBA	Teachings from Shantideva's "Bodhicaryavatara"
Aug 17	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Vajrakilaya Puja

KHÖNDUNG GYANA VAJRA RINPOCHE 2013 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DATE	PLACE	CENTRE	ACTIVITY
Dec 22 – 28	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Cakrasamvara Puja
Jan 4 – 10	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Düchen Puja
Feb 3 – 9	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Gutor
Feb 11	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Losar
Aug 17	Rajpur, India	Sakya Centre	Annual Vajrakilaya Puja

Sakya Hospital

“We at the Sakya Hospital aim to provide affordable healthcare to the best of our abilities and resources to each and everyone who approaches us, regardless of their race or religion, their social or financial status.” Thus states the Sakya Hospital Mission Statement. These words will ring vividly true to anyone who has sat in the hospital waiting room, and even more so to one who has received treatment at the hands of its dedicated staff.



Even as one enters the courtyard of the hospital building, one is welcomed by a profusion of flowers, an introduction to the freshness and generosity that pervades the establishment. In spite of the sparseness of its facilities, good humour and camaraderie prevail



among the staff, while affability is dispensed to clients as a core part of their treatment.

With an ethos based on compassion married to proficiency, the hospital brings to its patients optimum care and attention while charging the lowest possible rates for its services. It caters to all members of the local community, and its personnel is committed to treating all patients equally, with the utmost expertise, concern and thoughtfulness. With a dedicated staff of eight doctors in addition to fifteen medical and administrative staff, it has since its inception treated some twenty thousand patients every year.

Since its inauguration by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin in 2000, it has functioned under the able





H.E. DAGMO KALDEN DUNKYI SAKYA

Dagmo Kushok Kalden was born in 1978 in Kalimpong, India, in the Tibetan year of the Horse. She spent her early years in missionary boarding schools in India, and upon successfully completing her grade 12 exams, Dagmo Kushok obtained an academic scholarship to pursue her higher studies in the U.S.A., where she graduated with an honours degree in Psychology. While at school, Dagmo Kalden la excelled both at studies and sports, especially swimming. A strong interest in social work prompted her to volunteer at The Missionaries of Charity and other organisations in Kathmandu, as well as to participate in various programs at college, such as 'Adopt-A-Grandparent' and 'People Who Care', both involving weekend visits to neighbouring hospitals and old people's homes. It was this deep-seated interest that caused her to take responsibility of Sakya Hospital

after joining the holy Khön family as consort to Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche in 2002.

Since its inception in 2000, Sakya Hospital had been looked after by the Sakya Centre staff. Two years after her marriage, Dagmo Kushok offered her services to help oversee Sakya Hospital in the capacity of Director. Some years later, as she was expecting her first-born, Dagmo Kalden la asked Ms. Tsering Luding to join her as Assistant. Together, they have made substantial changes and improvements to Sakya Hospital. The number of patients attending Sakya Hospital has gradually increased, as has its reputation and popularity with the local community.

Today, whilst Dagmo Kushok's time is mostly centered around her two children, the elder of whom she is homeschooling, she still is very much involved in the supervision of Sakya Hospital, while its day to day running is managed by Ms. Tsering Luding.



Tsering Luding

direction of H.E. Dagmo Kalden Dunkyi Sakya, seconded by Tsering Luding, who acts as Assistant Director.

Equipped with three general wards, three semi-private rooms and two private rooms, it has a total of twenty-two beds and can accommodate the same number of in-patients. Facilities are in place for orthopedic and gynecological intervention, supplemented by post-surgery care, while an average of fifty deliveries are carried out every year.





Additional amenities include general consultations, home visits, ambulance service and 24/7 emergency assistance, vaccinations, dental treatment and ophtalmological care. The hospital also offers free health camps throughout the year and free consultations on special days.

Sakyapa monks and nuns receive free treatment and, in certain cases, people who find themselves below the poverty line are also exempted from paying fees. Discounts are offered to NGO's and to institutions for the visually impaired, senior citizens, Downs Syndrome sufferers and orphans.



The hospital has been able to do its valuable work not only thanks to the openhanded generosity of sponsors, but through that of foreign medical teams who have periodically visited the premises and shared their expertise with the home staff, while untiringly tending to the scores of patients who have swarmed the hospital seeking their care and advice.

Construction of a hospice was started in 2011 that is to cater to fifteen terminally ill patients. It is expected to open its doors in the early part of 2013. Plans are in place for various projects, which will be implemented as funding becomes available. These include more frequent health camps, furniture for the hospice, a shelter for the ambulance, an oxygen pipeline, a solar panel, a lead curtain for the X-Ray room and an upgrade of the X-Ray machine.

In a community where paid medical care is within the reach of only a very small segment of the population and where the free care that is available to the great majority is highly unsatisfactory, Sakyapa Hospital offers a vital lifeline to whomever seeks adequate medical care that is within their means. It not only plays a substantial role in keeping the local residents healthy and well informed on the practice of preventive medicine, but it also helps to foment social cohesion among the different cultural groups that share its benefits.



Remembering Great Masters

Tsarchen Losal Gyatso (1502-1566)

The great Tsarchen Dorjé Chang, who was an emanation of the venerable lord, the powerful master Virūpa, was the spiritual son of lord Doringpa and the sole backbone of the doctrine of oral transmission. Lord Tsarchen was born in a water-dog year [1502], in the Dong clan. He received ordination from the omniscient Gendun Gyatso. ^①

Once when Tsarchen was staying and studying at Tashi Lhunpo ^② the monks

proclaimed, “Dharma lord Tsarpa does not study!”

So one day he went to the Dharma arena, debated everyone present there, and defeated them. Then the lord said, “I’m Losal Gyatso, who just lies around sleeping, but I know this much. Now bring it on!”

Everyone in the Dharma arena lacked the confidence to debate and became filled with faith.

One day while Tsarchen was staying there a woman said over the opening of the well, “You are summoned into the presence of the venerable lord, the great Doringpa. This is his gift.”

She offered into his hands a book, and then vanished. When he opened the book, it was the



Dharma cycle of Khecarī. ^③

He went to the venerable lord Doringpa and offered him the book, telling him the previous story.

“The other day this Khecarī went to invite you,” Doringpa replied. “And this book is her Dharma cycle. Now, for the time being, you should put it in the book stacks.”

Tsarchen went to the library as he had been told. Among the many volumes in the stacks there was a gaping hole where

a book had been removed. When he put the book there, it fit exactly. He was amazed and filled with an uncommon faith.

From then on Tsarchen studied at the lotus beneath the feet of the venerable lord Doringpa. As experiential guidance, he received the Precious Teaching in the tradition of the Explication for Disciples three times and in the tradition of the Explication for the Assembly twice. He mastered absolutely all the meaning of the words. He also received many esoteric instructions other than those, such as the Golden Dharmas and the large and small protectors. In brief, he received absolutely

all the profound Dharma possessed by that lord, thoroughly investigated those teachings down to their minor practices, and became the lord of all the oral transmissions.

For the explanation of the Precious Teaching in the tradition of the Explication for Disciples, Tsarchen composed such works as the indispensable *Sunbeams Explication* and the *Rosary of Jewels*, which is a supplement to the *Stream of Initiation*.⁴

The venerable lord Doringpa, on the verge of passing away, bestowed absolutely all the remaining teachings. He sometimes gave some of the profound oral instructions in a small teahouse he had. Sometimes he said he was going somewhere like a meadow, or to circumambulate a stupa, and said, “Come as my attendant.” He would stay at a place where there were no other people and give the instructions as a unique transmission to Lord Tsarchen alone. Doringpa also gave him sacramental substances of Phakpa Rinpoché, Dakchen Rinpoché’s nectar pills and the manual for creating them, and oral directions needed for creating the nectar pills. He also gave him the lord’s own bell and, saying “Dharma lord, ring this and bestow initiations!” installed him as the lord of the doctrine.

Lord Tsarchen also received many profound

Dharma teachings from Lord Gorumpa, such as the Path with the Result.

In his continual meditations, he recited every day without break a thousand each of the aṣṭa, the oṃ gsum ma, the yamarāja, and the śāsana⁵. When he was young, he saw the ground in all directions entirely filled with figures of the buddhas and was unable to place his feet on the ground. Furthermore, he repeatedly beheld the faces of many calm and wrathful chosen deities, such as powerful Khecarī, the Great Master of Oḍḍiyāna, Hevajra, and glorious Vajrabhairava. He had the inconceivable ability to command an ocean of oathbound protectors, such as Pañjaranātha and Caturmukha, as if they were slaves.

Tsarchen gave the Path with the Result many times in numerous monastic establishments of Ü and Tsang, making the doctrine of the Path with the Result in the tradition of the Explication for Disciples as brilliant as the sun.

At the age of sixty-five, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of a fire-tiger year [1566], he passed away to become the assembly leader of the spiritual heroes and ḍākinīs of Khecara.

*An excerpt from Taking the Result as the Path, by Cyrus Stearns
Reproduced by kind permission of Cyrus Stearns*

1 Gendun Gyatso (Dge ‘dun rgya mtsho, 1475–1542) was the second Dalai Lama.

2 The great Gelukpa monastery of Tashi Lhunpo (Bkra shis lhun po) was founded in 1447 by the first Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup (Dge ‘dun grub, 1391–1474).

3 In this context, the Dharma cycle of Khecarī refers to the practices of Vajrayoginī in the Sakya tradition. The main practice is Nāro Khecarī (Nā ro Mkha’ spyod ma), but the practices of Indra Khecarī (Indra Mkha’ spyod ma) and Maitrī Khecarī (Mai trī Mkha’ spyod ma) are also used. These are three of the Thirteen Golden Dharmas of Sakya.

4 Tsarchen’s Sunbeams (Nyi ma’i ‘od zer) is the definitive commentary on the creation stage of Hevajra according to the tradition of the Explication for Disciples. It is found in volume 10, tha, of the Sa-skya Lam-‘bras Literature Series. The Rosary of Jewels (Nor bu’i phreng ba), Tsarchen’s explanation of the Hevajra initiation, supplementing the earlier work of Lopön Sönam Tsemo (Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo, 1142–82) entitled Stream of Initiation (Dbang chu), is found in volume 18, tsha, of the Sa-skya Lam-‘bras Literature Series.

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A Poem by Tsarchen Losal Gyatso

The apparent images
of existence and peace
in this dream drama
are apparitions of one's
mind alone—nothing else.
The essence of mind itself
is beyond what is to be realized
and the act of realization.

The hair of the tortoise
covered the lotus of the sky.

The sound of the echo
called to the moon in water.

The horns of the rabbit
killed the son of the barren woman.

I tricked myself before
with pointless confusion.

Mind that can't be gazed upon—

I've gazed upon now.

The truth that can't be seen—

I've seen.

How to express what
can't be expressed in words?

Kye Ho!

Now practice is over.

Kye!

An excerpt from: "Song of the Road: The Poetic Travel Journal of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso"
by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications. (Scheduled for publication Jan 15, 2013)

Peace and Impermanence

A Teaching by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin



The world in which we live today is complicated and turbulent, and if we are to live well in it, we need to find a way to tackle the problems that afflict it. There are many different systems, philosophies and religions that attempt to solve these problems, and they all share one basic belief: that everyone wishes to be free from suffering and everyone wishes to be happy. It seems to me that the Buddhadharmā is a very effective way to attain these goals.

Most of our efforts are dedicated to the pursuit of happiness. In this endeavour, we have made tremendous progress in the fields of science and technology; and due to this progress, we have been able to solve many issues and to greatly benefit mankind.

But although valuable, this material progress cannot bring us true peace and happiness. If we are to find true peace and happiness, it is absolutely essential

that we achieve inner spiritual progress. In order to do so, we need to study the Buddhadharmā, follow its advice and put it into action in our daily life.

It is my belief that the basic principles of the world's major religions are similar in their essence, although each religion has its own ways of expressing them and methods of applying them. As I am a Buddhist, it is according to the Lord Buddha's teachings that I will try to explain how spiritual life can bring us genuine peace and happiness. The Buddha's teachings are based principally on the fact that every living being, not only human beings but every living being, possesses Buddha nature.

Buddha nature means that the true nature of our mind is pure, right from the beginning, and has been since beginningless time. It is not itself stained by obscurations, but it is completely covered by them and so we cannot see it. But by practising the spiritual

path, we can discover its nature.

Buddha nature is like a seed that we have inside us that, if allowed to grow, will ripen into enlightenment. The main reason why we can reach enlightenment is that we have this seed inside us. If we didn't have it, then there would be no possibility of attaining enlightenment.

This seed has actually been inside us right from the beginning. But until now, we haven't met with the right conditions for it to grow. For a normal seed to grow, we need to create the right conditions, such as placing it in fertile soil with the right amount of moisture, the right temperature, and so forth. Similarly, in order to allow the seed of our Buddha nature to grow, we must create the right conditions. Without the right conditions, it will not grow.

Although every living being has Buddha nature, human beings have the most potential to discover it. Because human life offers the best foundation to practise the Dharma, the teachings say that it is paramount to obtain the precious human birth, especially one that is free from all unfavourable conditions.

A human life that is endowed with all the favourable conditions is in fact very difficult to obtain. But by the same token, it is of enormous benefit, as it can be a vehicle to Enlightenment. So when we have obtained this precious human life and with it the opportunity to become enlightened, it is crucial that we fully realise its potential, and that we make optimal use of it. There is no greater loss than that of missing the opportunity for enlightenment that human life brings us. So the first important thing to do is to realise how precious human life this. Once we fully realise this, then we cannot remain without striving to make the best of it.

The second thing we need to do is to ponder on impermanence and death. The Lord Buddha said that everything that is created by causes and conditions is

impermanent. This applies in particular to human life. We have no possibility of knowing how long our life will be. Our only certainty is that one day we will die. Furthermore, death could occur at any moment.

There are many, many causes that can shorten our life. Just as a breeze can extinguish a lamp in a single moment, even though it has enough oil to burn for many more hours, in the same way our lives can suddenly be cut short by unexpected circumstances, even if we are strong and healthy.

Every single moment that we live is deducted from our lifespan and there is nothing more that we can add to it. Something that is constantly being depleted while not being replenished is bound to run out. Through the centuries there have been many great spiritual masters, as well as many great historical figures, and great historical moments, but today they are all gone. People can read about them and remember them, but not one of them is still in existence.

Similarly today, we are all leading our normal lives, but the time will come when all of us will also become history. And so it is very important that we make the most of this life. Impermanence is actually a great thing, because if we realise impermanence, we naturally lose our attachment to ordinary things and we enter the spiritual path. If we have already entered it, meditating on impermanence will speed up our practice, and if we are already at an advanced level, it will help us to realise ultimate truth.

Lord Buddha said that anyone who thinks about impermanence is making an offering to the Buddha. One who can think about impermanence is one who has received the prophecy of the Buddha.

As ordinary persons, we have many perceptions, but the best perception we can have is that of impermanence. Through remembering impermanence, we can be released from all forms of suffering. The main source of our suffering is attachment, and by

remembering impermanence, we lose this attachment and become free from suffering.

The life we are living now is short, and so we have to make the best of it. Just to pass through this life in an ordinary way, even animals can do. But we human beings are blessed with intelligence and wisdom, and so we must do all we can to get the most out of this precious human life. The best way to do this is to practise the spiritual path.

If we are to embark on the spiritual path, we must begin by pondering on the difficulty of obtaining a precious human birth, and on impermanence and death. This is the best way to get rid of our attachment to this life.

Although this life is important, it is only temporary. Very few people can live beyond a hundred years. So even at its longest, a human life can last little more than a hundred years. And when our time comes, when we leave this world, no matter how many possessions we have, how much wealth and power we have, no matter how talented or learned we are, nothing can help us. We leave everything behind, not only our relatives, our friends and our possessions, but even our precious body.

From the moment that we are conceived in our mother's womb, this precious body and our consciousness are inseparable. But when we pass away, even this precious body, for which we care so much, has to stay behind. Many people believe that our consciousness dies along with our body, like a candle blowing out. But it isn't so. Our body and our consciousness are two separate things.

Our body is a life form that we inherited from our parents, that grew and developed, and that will eventually disappear. The body is a visible and solid organism, which we can apprehend with our senses.

The mind, however, is something completely different. It is not a solid entity, and so, when we die, it cannot be disposed of in the way our bodies are. It

continues in another form of life and when it does, nothing of its present life goes with it. What does follow it is karma, the result of the actions that we perform in this life, and which will determine the kind of life form that we will be embodying in the future.

It is written in the Sutras: "When the time comes and the king dies, none of his possessions, none of his friends, none of his relatives can follow him, however numerous these may be. His consciousness has to travel all alone to an unknown destination."

The same applies to us. When our time comes, the only thing that follows us is our karma, the result of the actions that we have performed. This will follow us, just as our shadow follows us wherever we go. For this same reason, the life that we are living now doesn't come out of the void. Nothing appears out of empty space; what's more, nothing appears due to the wrong causes and nothing appears due to incomplete causes.

For example, each and every grain has to have its own seed. Wheat will not grow from a rice seed. In order for wheat to grow, we need to plant a wheat seed. Not only this, but the right causes and conditions must be present, such as a fertile soil, moisture and a suitable temperature.

So when all the causes and conditions come together, then the result is bound to appear. Similarly, the experiences that we have in this life do not appear out of nowhere, or from the wrong causes, or from incomplete causes. Each and every experience that we have now has to have its own causes. These causes do not come from outside forces, but they are the results of our own actions. Everything positive that we experience such as good health, long life, prosperity and so forth, all of this is the product of our own positive actions. The same applies to our negative experiences, such as a short life span, illness, poverty and so forth. No outside force created them. They are all the result of our own negative actions.

So this unique teaching of the Buddha, the law of karma, means that we are the authors of our own reality. And so, if we truly wish to have happiness, and we truly wish to be free from suffering, then we must work on the causes of happiness. Without working on the causes, we cannot expect to produce the result.

For example, in order to cure ourselves from a disease, we must avoid what aggravates it and we must use the right therapy to cure it. So similarly, in order to eliminate suffering, we must eliminate the causes of suffering. And in order to experience happiness, we must create the causes of happiness. So what are these causes?

According to the Buddha's teachings, the main cause of samsara, or the cycle of existence, is not knowing the true nature of the mind. And so the source of all suffering is ignorance. Ignorance, in the sense of not seeing the true nature of the mind. Instead, without a logical reason, we cling to the concept of a self.

The Buddha's teachings state that there is no self. If there were a self, it would have to be our name, or our body, or our mind. But our name is empty, in the sense that it's just a label that our parents gave us. Any name can be given to anybody, at any time.

As for our body, if we try to examine our physical body, from head to toe, we won't find anything that we can call the self. Even in our ordinary use of language, we don't consider the body as being ourselves. We make a connection between the self and the body. We say "my hand" in the same way as we say "my house", or "my possessions". So when, for example, we say 'my house', it is obvious that the house is not the self, it just belongs to us. The same applies when we say "my body", the body belongs to us but the body is not the self.

With regards to the mind, when we divide the mind into past, present and future, the past mind is something that is already gone, and the future mind has yet to appear. So neither of these two can be the

self. As for the present mind, it is actually changing from moment to moment, and something that is constantly changing cannot be our self. Our mind, our consciousness, is the same continuity, but it always varies.

For example, once we were babies, and now we're adults. Two very different minds. But at the same time, it is the same mind continuum, it is unbroken, it carries on uninterruptedly. This is why we can remember things from our childhood. The stream, the mind flow, is the same but the actual mind is changing every single moment. Something that is continuously changing cannot be the self either. So in reality, there is no self, there is no logical reason that can prove that there is a self.

But we have a very strong tendency from the very beginning, from beginningless time, to think that the body and the mind together form a self, and this clinging to the self is the source of all our faults. And it is the source of all our suffering. Because when there is the self, then, in juxtaposition to this, there are others. And when there is the notion of self and others, there is attachment to one's own side and hatred for the others'. This gives rise to the three root poisons, which are ignorance, desire and hatred.

With these three defilements, all the other impurities arise in the mind. And as a result of this, we take negative action - physical action, verbal action and mental action. And when we take negative action, we do something akin to planting a bad seed in fertile soil. Due to these impure causes, the harvest will be rotten. In the same way, these actions will make our life rotten.

Physical, verbal and mental actions that arise from these defilements are called non-virtuous deeds, and they are what creates all our disturbances and suffering.

No outside enemy can create major sufferings. No outside enemy can create as much disturbance as

our own defilements can. So our worst enemy is not outside, our worst enemy is actually within our own mind.

The person who feels hatred cannot possibly experience peace or happiness. Not only that, but this hatred also affects everybody and everything around him or her. All the disturbances and all the calamities, man-made calamities, that we face today come from human beings' hatred. Hatred is the worst enemy that anyone can have. It destroys one's own peace as well as that of others.

It is easy to say that the defilements are the source of all suffering and that they are negative. But it is quite another thing to actually realise it and to correct ourselves, because our mind has been associated with defilements since beginningless time. The concept of beginningless time is something difficult to comprehend.

We pointed out earlier that although our present body came from our parents, our consciousness cannot have come from them. It is not that our consciousness arises from nowhere, or due the wrong causes, but rather it has its own continuity. And so our present consciousness needs to have had this same continuity before we took our present life. In this way, we can see how there has been a life before this present life. And a life before that one, and another before, so that one could never establish where this continuity began.

There is no such time as the beginning of a person's consciousness. The nature of life is such that it has no beginning, it has been the same continuum from beginningless time. So as oneself wishes to be free from suffering and as oneself wishes to experience happiness, every sentient being has the same feeling. It is wrong to thrive to obtain only our own happiness and get rid of our own suffering, we have to think of all the other beings surrounding us.

All through our life, we were taken care of with love and compassion. When we were first born into

this world, if our mother had not looked after us out of loving kindness and compassion, we would not have survived. But thanks to our mother's love and compassion, we survived. When we turned from a baby into a child, and later into a teenager, and then into an adult, all through our life we were cared for and looked after with compassion and loving kindness.

Even when we are healthy and do not face any major problems, no matter who we are, whether we are great or small, we all long for loving kindness and compassion. Especially when we face suffering, when we are in pain, or we have to face old age, we have to depend on other people's loving kindness and compassion. During our whole life, from beginning to end, we have survived through the loving kindness and compassion of others. It is very wrong if we, as adult persons, do not reciprocate these feelings. If we don't bring happiness to others, we cannot achieve our own. So we must make every effort to develop loving kindness and compassion.

All the positive things that we experience now are the product of the positive actions that we have performed in the past. Likewise, our present positive actions bring about our happiness in the future. Therefore, as we are longing for happiness, it is important that we work on the causes of happiness. Without working on the causes, we cannot expect the result.

Positive actions that are free from the defilements, such as ignorance, hatred and desire, but rather are performed out of loving kindness and compassion, are called virtuous deeds. They are the source of all happiness and qualities. We must make every effort to create these. No outside force, including our closest friend, can bestow us real happiness. Happiness has to come from our own actions. If we are really longing for happiness, we have to create the causes of happiness. In this way, we must work on the law of

karma.

Generally speaking, Lord Buddha's teachings say that the whole of samsara is nothing but suffering. The teachings describe three kinds of suffering. The first is called the suffering of suffering. This means the suffering that we as normal people tangibly feel, such as physical pain and mental anxiety.

The second is called the suffering of change. As we mentioned earlier, everything that is created by causes and conditions is impermanent and everything that is impermanent is suffering. It is a fact of life that powerful people can easily fall from power, wealthy ones can easily lose all they have, famous people can become unknown, and healthy people can become ill.

Things that we normally crave for, such as possessions, position and fame, are not worthy of any attachment. Sooner or later, we are bound to lose them and when we do, this will cause us great suffering. The suffering of change means that what we ordinarily consider to be happy feelings, is in reality suffering. What we experience as happy feelings is really only so in comparison to their opposites: when we are ill and then recover, we feel very happy. But good health is not really happiness, because it is impermanent. We can again fall ill at any moment. Anything that is impermanent is suffering. What we consider happiness is only so in appearance.

If what we think brings us happiness is a real cause of happiness, then the more we have, the happier we should be. But it is also a fact of life that this is not so. If we take for example a person living in very poor conditions being offered to live in a luxurious home. At the beginning, this person will be very happy, enjoying his new opulence and comfort. If these new conditions were a real cause of happiness, the person should become happier with every day that goes by. But it doesn't happen this way. He will eventually tire of his new situation and will feel in need of a change. And so, what we normally consider

to be happiness, is in fact suffering. This is called the suffering of change.

The third kind of suffering is called 'the suffering of the conditional nature of all appearances'. This means that the feelings we normally consider to be neutral are also in reality suffering. However hard we try, we fail to find satisfaction. Wherever we go, whomever we associate with, nothing brings us satisfaction. We always have something to complain about. This shows how the nature of life is suffering. Just as the nature of fire is heat, whether it is a small fire or a big fire, the nature of life, or cyclic existence, is suffering, whether it is light suffering or acute suffering.

In the same way that food that is mixed with poison is harmful whether it is delicious or foul-tasting, the whole of cyclic existence is suffering, whether it is in the higher realms or the lower realms. Keeping in mind the law of karma and the suffering of samsara, we should give up attachment to the whole cycle of existence. But first, we need to give up attachment to this life. Once we have done this, then we can give up attachment to the whole cycle of existence.

The third thing that we need to do is to embark on the true Mahayana path by developing loving kindness and compassion. We mentioned earlier how much we long for love and compassion. We need to remember that every other sentient being feels the same way. Moreover, if we consider the continuity of life from beginningless time until now, we see that we are caught up in this cycle of existence, taking innumerable births in different forms of life, and that there is no sentient being who has not become our very dear parent and our very dear friend.

It is wrong to only think of oneself. If, for example, one of our beloved family members is going through a difficult time, and we ourselves are in a safe place, we don't feel happy; we'd rather be there

with him or her and share his or her suffering. In the same way, if every sentient being has been our very dear parent or relative in past lives, we should feel the same way towards them.

And so, we should not work exclusively for our own wellbeing and ignore all the other living beings, who are actually our very dear parents. Every time they have become our parents, they have given us all their love and compassion, as our present parents have in this life. Therefore, instead of working for ourselves, we have to think of all other living beings. Besides, if we only think of ourselves, we're only thinking of one person, whereas if we think of others, we're thinking of countless beings. And between the one and the many, the many is evidently more important than the one. We must make every effort to develop loving kindness.

Loving kindness means the wish that other sentient beings be happy and have the causes of happiness. Loving kindness toward all sentient beings without exception, including our worst enemy, is the basis for the enlightenment thought. Once we have cultivated loving kindness, we can begin to develop the feeling of compassion.

Compassion means focusing on sentient beings that are experiencing suffering, wishing for these beings to be free from suffering and the causes of their suffering. The two, loving kindness and compassion, should not merely be understood intellectually. Rather, by contemplating and meditating on them, we should develop a deep inner feeling that our mind is immersed in the nature of loving kindness and compassion. Once we have attained this, there arises what is called the enlightenment thought.

Enlightenment thought means the wish to attain perfect enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. In this way, by practising loving kindness, compassion and the enlightenment thought, we give up the third attachment, which is the attachment to

our self. Every spiritual practice that we do is totally devoted to the benefit of other living beings. This aspect of spiritual practice belongs to the method side.

The method side alone is a great help in eliminating our faults, but it is not sufficient. It has to be combined with wisdom. Without wisdom, one cannot succeed. So now, we need to analyse what is wisdom.

Wisdom also has two paths. The first, its base, is concentration. Concentration in the sense that, through meditational techniques, we must bring our mind to a stable level. Our present mind is caught up in its stream of thoughts, and such a busy mind cannot be the base for wisdom. So we must practise concentration to bring the mind into singlepointedness. With our mind under control, we can meditate on wisdom. Wisdom sees the ultimate nature of all phenomena.

What is the ultimate nature of all phenomena? Different schools have different ideas on this. According to the highest Mahayana philosophy, known as the Middle Way, the true nature of all phenomena is away from all descriptions. If you describe anything, if you cling to anything, then you cannot have the proper view. The proper view is away from all descriptions. Through these two, concentration and wisdom together, we can eliminate our clinging to this life as real.

In order to travel on a road, we need eyes and we need feet. If we do not have eyes, we cannot see. If we do not have feet, we cannot walk. But with eyes and feet together, we can travel on the road. Similarly, wisdom is like our eyes, it allows us to see reality, while concentration is like our feet, it serves us as a vehicle. So, with the two together, we can succeed in attaining enlightenment.

I pray that all beings may be able to fulfill their wishes, temporal as well as spiritual.

Maitreya's Semtsema

A Teaching by the Most Venerable Khenchen Appey Rinpoche (part 6)

Maitreya's 'Semtsema' is one of the teachings by the great Bodhisattva Maitreya that were brought down to earth from Tushita Heaven and given to Arya Asanga.

This is the last part of the Semtsema, in which the infinite and unsurpassable qualities of the Buddha continue to be praised.

The elucidation of the Buddha's qualities resumes with the description of the Fully Enlightened One's Ten Powers, whereby the Buddha has dominion over innumerable phenomena.

The first of these powers is the power over rebirth. The Buddha is able to choose His own rebirth in the way most expedient for Him to benefit beings. He can choose to be reborn in any form and in any realm of existence whatsoever in order to carry out beneficial activities.

The second is the power over material objects, which allows the Enlightened One to effortlessly obtain and use any material object to serve His purpose. These two powers are referred to as the dominion over external phenomena.

The third is the power over one's own mind, the power to practise and meditate at will. The Buddha's mind has power over its wishes and desires, power over itself.

The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh powers are the dominion over both external and internal phenomena. The fourth is the power over lifespan – one can



choose to live as long as one wishes to, while the fifth is power over one's actions of body, speech and mind, whereby one always elects to perform whatever activity is most beneficial to beings. The sixth power allows one to easily and successfully pursue one's purposes by transforming phenomena and circumstances according to one's wish. The seventh is the miraculous power over miracles, that of displaying miracles for the benefit of sentient beings.

The eighth power is the dominion over prayers and aspiration, the ability to create the correct aspiration and to recite the appropriate prayer in order to attain the desired result. The ninth is power over primordial wisdom, the wisdom that sees the nature of things as they really are with discriminating awareness. This gives one dominion over the knowledge of all knowable things. The tenth power is the dominion over Dharma. This means that one has mastered all the fields of outer and inner Dharmas, in particular the teachings of the Buddha contained in the Three Baskets, or Tripitaka.

With these ten powers, the Fully Enlightened One has the capacity to carry out every possible activity that can be of benefit to sentient beings.

The next set of qualities of the Buddha that are

eulogised in these verses is that of the Enlightened One's *samadhi* qualities. These are described as wondrous qualities, spontaneous realisation qualities and unhindered qualities. The Enlightened One carries out wondrous activities effortlessly and spontaneously and, due to His knowledge of all things through meditative concentration, these are free from all obstructions and mistakes.

Of these two forms of *samadhi*, one is accomplished *samadhi*, and the other relinquished *samadhi*. The first is called this way because *samadhi* is attained through the relentless practice of the Path, while the second refers to the relinquishment of faults. Together, accomplishment and relinquishment create a diamond-like *samadhi*, unshakeable and perfect.

A further set of qualities is now extolled, called *zum* in Tibetan. There is no exact English translation for this, but it might be described as 'retentive memory'. It is comparable to what we call photographic memory. The Enlightened One fully understands everything without ever needing any explanation, and perfectly retains everything that His senses encounter. Not only this, but He is able to expound concisely and with the utmost clarity the rich and profound meaning of everything that His mind apprehends. This is what we call in Sanskrit '*skatarani*'.

So the verse "You, diligent custodian of knowledge, endowed with the firm retention and ability needed to dispense the teachings and to eloquently and concisely elucidate their meaning, by merely pronouncing a few words or even syllables, You are able to expound the meaning of numberless teachings, thereby revealing the treasure of spiritual knowledge that is otherwise inaccessible to beings. To You who are the giver of this treasure, I pay homage."

The next set of qualities described in this eulogy is that which brings about the complete elimination of all the obscurations that are otherwise exceedingly difficult for sentient beings to overcome. Not only gross obscurations are eliminated by the Fully Enlightened One, but also the subtle conceptual

constructs that uphold the belief in a separate self. The verse "To You who have eliminated the obscurations to knowledge caused by the conceptual structure of the three spheres" refers to the realisation of dependent origination, that is to say the knowledge of the lack of inherent existence of phenomena and of the interdependence of the three spheres of subject, action and object.

All the deep, subtle stains of the mind are gradually removed by the Enlightened One, even what are called *bhakhak* in Tibetan, the latent, deeply sedimented propensities that are hidden in the mind, until the ultimate relinquishment of all obscurations is attained.

Next begins a praise to the four stainless wisdoms. The first among these is mirror-like wisdom. Just as a mirror reflects reality as it is, likewise one who has mirror-like wisdom clearly and vividly sees the nature of things as they truly are.

The second wisdom is that of equality, through which the notion of self and others is eradicated, and with it all dualistic and extremist views of reality.

The third is the wisdom of discriminating awareness, which causes the Fully Enlightened One to be utterly free from delusion and completely realise ultimate reality and intrinsically know every aspect of relative reality with clarity and precision.

And the fourth is the wisdom of accomplishment, the manifestation of the Buddha's enlightened activities, through which He spontaneously and effortlessly knows what is the most effective method to free beings from *samsara*.

The first, mirror-like wisdom, serves as a base for the three others. By seeing the nature of things as they truly are, the Buddha realises the non-existence of self and knows all aspects of ultimate and relative reality. Through this, not only is He free from delusion, but He knows exactly what skillful means are necessary in order to awaken beings from ignorance.

The next verse eulogises the qualities of the Buddha's melodious speech and voice. The words

“Your speech is the roar of the fearless lion and is endowed with the sixty melodious sounds of the Buddha” refer to the Enlightened One’s complete lack of fear of anything whatsoever and to His ability to expound the teachings with such melodious tones that beings are captivated by the sound of His speech.

The sound of the Buddha’s voice is soft and appealing and yet thunderous in the sense that it can make itself heard by all beings and awaken them from their delusion.

Next follows a eulogy to the Buddha’s qualities of transformation: “You have transformed the defiled stream of ordinary existence through Your realising the truth of the Path.” This expresses how the Buddha’s teachings show the noble truth of the Path that leads to the ultimate realisation of the noble truth of cessation. The mindstream of beings, otherwise tainted by defilements, is no longer defiled and their consciousness is transformed into the four wisdoms. Their physical body ceases to be ordinary and transforms into the *rupakaya*.

And then, “I pay homage to You who know the purity inherent in all beings” expresses how the Buddha sees through the apparent defilements of beings and knows how to transform them into wisdom.

The next verse praises the perfect possessions of the Buddha. “Homage to You who are consummately endowed with all the attributes that pertain to the gods of the worldly spheres and the sons of the conquerors, and with the supreme attributes of a great teacher.” This refers to all the qualities that pertain to the *sravakas* that are surpassed by those of the *pratyekabuddhas*, whose qualities are surpassed by those of the bodhisattvas, and these in turn surpassed by those of the Fully Enlightened One.

“Homage to You who are the refuge of all living beings in the world.” The Buddha is endowed with qualities shared with superior beings such as *sravakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*, but the text reiterates that He also possesses unique qualities, one of which is that of being a worthy refuge for all

beings. Examples of the shared perfect possessions are the four immeasurables, the nine meditative absorptions, as well as the transformative qualities, which are shared with the first *bhumi Bodhisattvas*; the major and minor marks qualities which are shared by *bodhisattvas* dwelling on the 4th *bhumi*; and the four discriminating awarenesses which are shared with bodhisattvas of the 9th *bhumi*; and the eighteen unmixed unique characteristics and ten powers which are shared by those over the ninth *bhumi*. And finally the unique, unshared qualities that only the Fully Enlightened One is endowed with. And so, these absolutely perfect possessions make the Buddha the only perfect, unailing refuge for all beings: “Because You are endowed with shared and unique qualities, preeminent qualities, inestimable qualities, wondrous qualities, powerful qualities, You create wonders and transformations, and thus You are a worthy refuge for all living beings.”

The next and last verse is the dedication of the merit obtained by offering these praises to the Buddha. Whatever virtue, however slight, derived from performing such a virtuous act is enhanced by dedicating its merits to the benefit of all beings. “By the dedication of illuminating the precious jewel of the doctrine of the Buddha and praising His perfect possessions, may all living beings perfectly see the ultimate reality of all knowable things”.

The merits accrued by expounding the Buddha’s teachings are incalculable. These are like a precious jewel because they have the ability to eliminate suffering and to bring happiness, and so their elucidation is extremely meritorious.

“May all living beings be able to see the ultimate reality of all phenomena as they appear in conventional reality and may they see reality as it is, ie ultimate reality, the underlying reality of all things.” Here, the author forms the aspiration that the virtue acquired by this explanation may be a cause of enlightenment for all sentient beings, leading them to reach their respective state of *samyaksambudhaya*.

Oral Instructions on the Practice of Guru Yoga

A teaching by H.E. Chogye Trichen Rinpoche
(part 2)



Guru Devotion

The ceremonies of empowerment are an elaborate way to receive the blessings of the Gurus and the spiritual lineages. Whether our particular

Guru Yoga practice is elaborate or not, Guru Yoga is still a brief, less elaborate way to receive the blessings of the Guru, masters, deities, and so on. In comparison with Guru Yoga, this process of calling

forth blessings through the descent of primordial wisdom (*yeshe bab*) during empowerment is done with a much more elaborate ritual, although the meaning is exactly the same. When we practice Guru Yoga well, the experience of blessings should be the same as when we receive empowerment.

When we ourselves are benefited by the Guru's introduction to the nature of mind, by his blessings and teachings, this will strengthen our sense of gratitude and affection toward the Guru, and Guru devotion (*lama mogu*) will flower. We will know for ourselves the benefits of the Guru's blessings.

Whether or not we receive blessings depends on devotion (*mogu*) and faith (*depa*). When we begin to receive blessings, we will feel something unique that we have not known before; a new kind of feeling or emotion will arise in our hearts. One of the meanings of blessings (*jin lab*) is to feel inspiration (*trowa; spro ba*), to be filled with joy and inspiration (*tro ga; spro dga'*).

The word for devotion, "mogu" (*mos gus*) is made of two words: "mopa" (*mos pa*), which means "to feel devoted to"; and "gupa" (*gus pa*), which means "respectful reverence". Thus the word for devotion, mogu, means "to feel reverent devotion".

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It is not enough just to pray with one's mouth. When chanting verses of supplication, it is very beneficial to give rise to fervent devotion (*mogu dragpo; mos gus drag po*), as a means of increasing our faith, in order to receive blessings. It is helpful to remember that it is through the blessing lineage (*jinlab kyi gyupa; byin rlabs kyi brgyud pa*) that one gains realization. If there is no experience of the stream of blessings (*jinlab kyi gyupa*), one will not experience the true benefits of practice.

Once we begin to receive these blessings during empowerment or during our practice, we should call to mind our Guru's introduction to the nature of mind.

During our practice, once we have prayed to the Guru with fervent devotion (*mogu dragpo*), then as we receive the empowerments and dissolve the Guru into ourselves, we can experience this same feeling, the quality of blessing.

Even if one sees oneself as just an ordinary being, if one is able to receive the introduction (*ngotro*) to the true nature of mind (*sem nyid*) from a realized master who is able to truly introduce the enlightened essence (*sugatagarbha*; *desheg nyingpo*), a significant realization will be experienced.

Having been truly introduced to one's own awareness wisdom (*rang rigpa'i yeshe*), the yogi may gain a great enthusiasm for practice and a new confidence in the meaning and intent of the teachings. As a result of such an experience, we will know for ourselves something of the Guru's qualities and will feel deep gratitude for the Guru's incredible kindness in revealing to us our Buddha nature (*sugatagarbha*; *desheg nyingpo*).

These are just a few of the limitless benefits that come from being genuinely introduced to the true nature of mind (*sem nyi*). Once we know something of the qualities of the Guru from our own experience, we will feel great devotion for him or her. When I hear the name of my root Guru Dampa Rinpoche Zhenpen Nyingpo, immediately tears come to my eyes and I am filled with devotion. I have seen his qualities for myself, and I have experienced his kindness, because I have practiced his teachings and received his blessings. The gratitude I feel toward my Gurus is something that has remained with me and has continued to increase throughout my whole

life.

Blessing: The Descent of Primordial Wisdom

There are different ways in which the nature of mind is explained. In the Sakyapa school, we speak of the Indivisibility of Samsara and Nirvana. The Kagyupa speak of Mahamudra and the Nyingmapa teach Dzogpa Chenpo, but all of these refer to exactly the same essence.

Sakya Pandita did explain that the Sakya tradition uses the term Mahamudra to refer to what is experienced due to the descent of wisdom (*yeshe bab*) at the time of empowerment, when the empowerment is given by a fully qualified master. This is the source of our tradition of Mahamudra, the initiation of a great master.

In the case of my root Guru Dampa Rinpoche, Zhenpen Nyingpo, there were often signs of the transmission of blessing when he bestowed empowerment. When a great master like Dampa Rinpoche would give empowerment, during the descent of primordial wisdom (*yeshe bab*), many people would shake or jump or cry. Some people would move or utter something, and many special signs would occur during the empowerment.

When a disciple would experience such signs, Dampa Rinpoche would instruct them to recognize the nature of mind. This was the way Dampa Rinpoche liked to give the pointing-out instructions (*ngotro*; *ngo sprod pa*), the introduction to the true nature of mind. Introducing through the descent of primordial wisdom is actually one of the greatest methods of introducing one's innate awareness wisdom (*rang rigpai yeshe*). As Sakya Pandita said, "My Mahamudra is that which is experienced during the descent of wisdom at the time of empowerment."

Much is possible when a great master gives

initiation, as I so often saw when Dampa Rinpoche offered empowerments. Many experienced immense blessings, the great descent of blessings (*byin rlabs bab chen po*). When receiving empowerment, some people would cry, some would chant, some would shake or even dance; each had their own unique expression. Since there were so many different types of people, and they may have been following various methods of practice, each disciple would experience blessings in a different manner.

However their experience would be expressed, Dampa Rinpoche then gave the introduction to the nature of mind. At these moments, Dampa Rinpoche would very often say, "Rigpa rang ngo toh! (*rigpa rang ngo Itos*)", meaning "Look and recognize the essence of awareness!" He might then continue, "Now, remain in this state."

Lama Gephel and his nephew were together with us receiving the Gyude Kuntu from Dampa Rinpoche. Lama Gephel's nephew was a khenpo of the Ngor school. Whenever Dampa Rinpoche would bestow empowerment, and the time for the descent of primordial wisdom (*yeshe bab; ye shes dbab pa*) came, Lama Gephel's nephew would cry or shake, showing many different signs of blessings.

Lama Gephel would inevitably scold him, and poke him or give him a whack, telling him to stop acting in front of everyone. Lama Gephel would reproach his nephew and start shaking him, but Dampa Rinpoche would always say, "Don't say that." Dampa Rinpoche would correct Lama Gephel, saying "Don't scold him. Don't beat him. He is not acting. He is being introduced to the true nature of mind, receiving the blessing of the initiation."

Dampa Rinpoche would continue, "Leave him alone. He is receiving the blessings of primordial wisdom. We must tell him now to recognize awareness wisdom (*rigpai yeshe*). Or he might say,

"He is experiencing primordial wisdom (*yeshe*). Let him sustain the experience of awareness wisdom (*rigpai yeshe*)."

During Dampa Rinpoche's empowerments, a lot of disciples would definitely receive blessings in many special ways. Some would shake; others would float into the air above their seat. There was one monk, an attendant of Dampa Rinpoche with only one good eye, who would float up off the ground during every empowerment. Someone would always slide his cushion back and forth to show he had lifted off the ground. Many others would likewise ascend into the air, at different times, during different empowerments.

Some disciples would rise up into the space a cubit (*bskums khru; about eighteen inches*) or higher during the descent of blessings (*jin bab*). Those with greater realization would rise as high as two cubits (*three feet*) or more. I had these experiences as well, although I have no idea how high I rose above the ground. For me, all ordinary perception ceased (*tha mal gyi snang ba 'gags*). At these moments, I experienced the Guru's introduction, and many results of the blessings. As soon as signs such as these would occur to anyone, immediately

Dampa Rinpoche would say, "Now you look into the essence of your experience. This is your own awareness wisdom (*rang rigpai yeshe*). Recognize it." At the moment the disciple received blessings, Dampa Rinpoche was truly able to properly introduce the nature of mind.

If one would ask if the same things occurred when Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, Jamgon Kongtrul, or Jamgon Loter Wangpo, gave empowerment, the answer would of course be yes. Where else would the lineage have come from?

One may also ask, what is the nature of blessing (*jinlab; sbyin rlabs*), which is transmitted at the

time of empowerment? During the empowerment ceremony there is the descent of blessing (*jin bab*), or the descent of primordial wisdom (*yeshe bab*). At this moment, one's ordinary thinking processes are stopped, suspended, and one has the definite feeling that one has received blessings. It is at this moment that the primordial wisdom (*yeshe*) is revealed, and through the Guru's pointing-out instruction (*ngo tro; ngo sprod*), one is able to recognize it. Then the Guru will explain that this is the state we should continue in from now on.

When people would receive the blessings of the descent of primordial wisdom from Dampa Rinpoche, he would always say "Look to your essence!" (*rang ngo toh; rang ngo ltos*). He was saying "Do not look outward, but look to the source of your mind." The blessings had been received and the experience of primordial wisdom (*yeshe*) was manifest for the disciple. But, unless instructed to look toward his own mind, the disciple might not recognize it. Hence it is not enough for the wisdom to manifest, it must be recognized. For this, we rely on the Guru's introduction.

Sometimes Dampa Rinpoche would introduce the View through the power of his gestures or of his gaze. As Dampa Rinpoche brought about the descent of primordial wisdom (*yeshe bab*) during empowerment, some people would cry uncontrollably. This is a sign of the descent of wisdom, a sign that they were flooded with blessings.

During the descent of primordial wisdom, ordinary perception is stopped (*nangwa gag*), one's conceptual thinking is suspended (*namtog gag*). At these moments, Dampa Rinpoche would often give introduction to the nature of mind again and again, repeating a few simple words such as "Sustain the recognition of the essence!" (*rang ngo kyong; rang ngo skyong*).

I often experienced this for myself, and after each such experience an even deeper feeling of devotion (*mogu*) would arise. It is true that even deeper faith and devotion can arise from within the sustaining of the View. The experience of blessings does not obstruct the recognition of the View, and the recognition of the View does not obstruct the experience of blessings; each benefits the other.

Such things can happen when great masters like Dampa Rinpoche and Zimog Rinpoche give empowerment. I witnessed these things when those lamas gave empowerment. Although I am not that well qualified, we do have the lineage; it is present, and there are blessings that are sure to be very effective for each of us.

During the experience of receiving blessings, feelings may arise such as great faith and devotion toward our teacher, and tears may come by themselves. Or some may have an experience of clarity and happiness, and remain with the empty essence (*ngowo tongpa*) of that state. Even in our times, experiences of blessings definitely occur. One who is able to receive blessings should, at that moment, recognize the nature of mind and remain in that state. I have received many teachings from great and holy masters. But even if one receives such blessings and transmissions, one must still unite them within oneself, within one's own practice.

Translated by John Dewese and Guru Rinchen Chodar. According to the wishes of Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, this was compiled and edited by John Dewese. Boudhanath, Nepal, March, 2007

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Received In Front of the Stupa

By Jetsün Drakpa Gyaltsen

I prostrate with devotion to the sublime Guru.

“Received in Front of a Stupa”,
is also called “The Oral Instruction of Certainty
About The Mind”;
also called “Meditating on Ultimate Bodhicitta”
and also “Showing Mahāmudrā as the Perfect
State.”

In addition to that, the bodhicitta of Akśobhya in
the second chapter of the Guhyasamāja states:

In the ultimate, phenomena
of the three realms are meditated as being unreal,
the existents meditated as unreal
are not meditated as objects of meditation;
therefore, the real and the unreal
are not objects of meditation.

In dependence upon which, Saraha wrote the
Dohakośa.

Further, the bodhicitta of Vairocana in the second
chapter of the Guhyasamāja states:

Free from all phenomena;
skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas,
and subject and object abandoned;
because phenomena are equally without self,
one’s mind, having never arisen from the
beginning,
is naturally empty.

In dependence upon which, Master Nāgārjuna

wrote the Bodhicittavivarana.

As such, this is the intimate instruction of those
two.

Also the lineage; Mahāvajradhāra, Vajrapani,
Mahāsaraha, Ārya Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Bhikṣu
Kṛiṣṇa, Candrakīrti, Brahmin Śīdihāra, Viravajra,
Nyugu Lungpa [Drogmi], Se Khar Chung, Je Gonpa
up to the Jetsun Sakyapa.

As such, there are five topics in the practice of
this Dharma: determining the view in the beginning.
After that gathering accumulations. Stabilizing the
mind in the middle. After that, introducing the mind
to suchness. After realization has arisen, applying it
to one’s behavior.

View

First, having listened to the *Bodhicittavivarana*
in detail, in order to realize it, also this is the intimate
instruction for practice.

Since chance or God and so on did not create all
inner and outer phenomena, a creator does not create
them. Also they are not made out of subtle atoms and
so on.

Since one’s mind itself is completely polluted by
the traces accumulated from beginningless samsara
created by virtuous and non-virtuous actions, it is
like a horse or an elephant in a dream, in brief, the
appearances of one’s mind.

Further, when that mind itself is thoroughly
investigated, in the beginning it is empty of a
cause of arising; in the end, empty of a result of
cessation; in the middle, empty of an abiding intrinsic
essence, possessing the nature of luminous clarity.

Although empty, clarity is unceasing. As such, that inseparability of clarity and emptiness is termed “inexpressible”.

One should reflect in this fashion for as many days as one can to attain a definitive understanding.

Gathering Accumulations

Second, gathering the accumulation of merit: not in a place where there are non-Buddhists and those who are in the dark, but in a retreat center with open sky and isolated, face looking in the southern direction and offer four maṇḍalas to Vajradhāra, the deities, the lineage Gurus and the root Guru.

After that meditate the Guru on the crown of ones’ head and develop devotion again and again. Go for refuge to the Buddha down to the lineage Gurus, offer supplications. One should offer as many supplications and maṇḍala offerings as one can. As such, that should be done for some days, one has gathered the accumulation of merit.

Stabilizing the Mind

In the middle, stabilizing the mind: in solitude, seated cross legged, eyes half-opened, go for refuge and meditate bodhicitta, meditate the Guru on the crown of the head and develop devotion. Remember the meditation deity. Then since:

This mind tied in knots,
without doubt will be freed when released.

Release the mind and remain fresh and relaxed in uncontrived innate clarity.

No matter what is done, virtue and non-virtue and so on, action will not affect the mind.

Since one has done so and remains like that, the mind is calm.

If the mind is not calm, if there is always distraction, since it is said:

Allow the elephant of the mind to wander.

Allow the mind that is being observed to do what it likes. Since that is allowed, it will return, which is the meaning of:

Just as a crow flies from a ship
circling and circling again, will land on that.

Having done so, it is the gauge of calming the mind, but like glue stuck to one’s hand, one will not be distracted elsewhere, laziness increases, forgetfulness increases, whatever one does is only touched upon.

Introducing Suchness

The fourth general topic is the three in introducing suchness: first, recognizing clarity; in the middle, training in the mind in freedom from extremes; in the end developing certainty in inexpressibility. Since the meaning is:

Leave water or a lamp in its own clarity.

In the beginning, having recognized clarity based upon the way it has been left without contrivance; by meditating as before, the mind is ultimately utterly clear, mindfulness is clear, forgetfulness is reduced, also whatever is done will be done with great diligence.

Then, second, training the mind in freedom from extremes: The *Bodhicittavivarana* states:

Abiding in the mind without objects,
is the characteristic of space;
that meditation of space is
held to be the meditation of emptiness.

The meditation on the meaning of this: when investigating one’s mind, the mind lacks beginning and end like space; lacks arising and perishing like

space; lacks coming and going like space; lacks periphery or center like space— keeping this in mind rest the mind upon that.

When the mind is distracted from that, recall “Do not follow the past.”

When concepts of the future occur, recall “Do not anticipate the future.”

When the concepts of the present occur, recall “Be present. ❶”

In brief, remember that all phenomena do not arise and remain in that state.

Also that is meaning of the statement of the *Sāmayoga*:

E ma! The secret of all Buddhas,
Perfect Buddhas do not arise,
everything arose from non-arising,
the merely arisen itself did not arise.

Finally, developing confidence in inexpressibility: integrate those experiences of realization that arose from equipoise with all post-equipoise behavior and confirm inseparable appearance and emptiness, inseparable clarity and emptiness, and inseparable awareness and emptiness as inexpressible and sustain one’s experience.

Furthermore:

If there is attachment to anything, give it up,
if there is realization, that is everything.

Other than that, what else is there to know?

And:

Having trained the elephant, the mind, it becomes disciplined,

having cut coming and going, one’s mind is relaxed,

why should I pretend “Realization is like this.”

Behavior

The fifth general topic: after realization has arisen, apply it to one’s behavior: after slight realization has arisen, train in eating food without regard to pure and impure. Train in companions without regard to good and bad companions. Train in clothes without regard to good and bad clothes.

After that, the realization above the first stage will arise gradually manifesting up to actual Buddhahood.

Here, to remove obstacles— when lethargic, focus the mind on the crown of the head; when agitated, focus it on the soles of the feet. When obstacles of the disturbance of the elements of the body occur ❷ use the elixir of the three fruits. When the obstacles of the outer demons occur, dissolve body, speech and mind in the syllable *Hūm* at the heart. Verbally reciting *Hūm*, body and mind are alert and engage in unconventional conduct.

The three kāyas with seven limbs: dharmakāya is the limb of absence of nature. Sambhogakāya has three: union, great bliss and perfect enjoyments. Nirmānakāya is great compassion, the uninterrupted stream of the wheel of activities, and never ceasing.

This “*Showing Mahāmūdra as The Perfect State*” obtained in front of the Stupa was written at the noble place about two miles to the east of the Palden Sakya Monastery by the Śākya upasaka Dragpa Gyaltzen in order to clarify the unclear writings of previous Gurus.

The End.

From ‘Mahamudra in the Sakya Tradition’; translated by Khenpo Migmar Tseten and Loppön Kunga Namdrol during the summer of 2006.

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❶ ie. Be present with the concept

❷ Arura, Kyurura, Barura

Dharma Activities



H.H. Jetsun Kushok in Frankfurt

On April 20th, Sakya Kalden Ling in Frankfurt was privileged to receive a visit by H.E. Jetsun Kushok Rinpoche. Frankfurt sangha members revelled in the blessing of her presence as she gave an extended Tara initiation. Carmen Landgraf was present on this happy occasion and writes:

“On 20th April 2012 our precious teacher H.E. Jetsun Kushok Chimey Luding, sister to His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, arrived in Sakya Kalden Ling, Frankfurt am Main, in Germany. Her Eminence was welcomed by the centre’s resident lama Venerable Gedun Gyatso and by members of the centre. She was accompanied by her husband Sey Kushok- la and by her youngest son.

First Her Eminence went to the Gompa, where a short ceremony was held, and milk-tea and sweet-rice were served to welcome the precious guests. Rinpoche was overjoyed to see for the first time Her beautiful three year-old Gompa in Frankfurt.

Her Eminence’s visit was dedicated to the celebration of a three-day Twenty-one Tara initiation, for which disciples had gathered from several European countries. Next day a three-day Tara retreat started under the guidance of Venerable Lama Gedun Gyatso. Lama Gedun did it with so much kindness, that all participants were really happy.

Meanwhile Her Eminence made with her entourage a short trip to Switzerland to see and bless for the first time little one year-old Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya, first child of Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and H.E. Dagmo Sonam Palkyi.

We were so deeply impressed by Her loving and maternal kindness, her wisdom and the inspiration we received from our precious teacher. We thank Her Eminence with all our minds and hearts and our biggest wish is to see her soon again in Sakya Kalden Ling.”



H.H. the Sakya Trizin in Manali

From the 10th to the 15th of May, His Holiness visited Manali, a hill station nesting in surroundings of breathtaking beauty in the mountains of the Indian State of Himachal Pradesh. Invited by Lama Chömbe Söba, His Holiness bestowed the Drago Sum Gril (Vajrapani, Garuda, Hayagriva)

Empowerment and gave a teaching at the Himalayan Buddhist School. Thousands of people joined the school's staff and student body for this memorable occasion. His Holiness visited several schools and institutions during His all-too-short visit, all of which beseeched Him to return swiftly.



H.H. the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in East Asia

On the 27th of May 2012, His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche arrived in Singapore, the first stop of what was to be a three-month teaching tour of East Asia.

They were accompanied throughout their journey by Her Eminence Gyalyum Chenmo and, briefly by Her Eminence Dagmo Sonam Palkyi. Their visit to Singapore was to be followed by a month in Taiwan, where His Holiness would impart the Holy Lamdre,



after which would come visits to the Philippines and Malaysia. Altogether a very intensive program, which left thousands of people basking in the light of the Sakya Dharma.

A representative of the Buddha Sasana Society 42nd Executive Committee describes the event:

“His Holiness arrived on 27th May, Sunday, accompanied by His Eminence Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, Her Eminence Gyalyum Chenmo, and an entourage of monks. A traditional welcome ceremony was held and a Ten Soom was offered to His Holiness by the 42nd Exco members at the Main Hall of our temple.



His Holiness’ program began with a 2-day Public Dharma talk on His book “Freeing the Heart and Mind” on the evenings of 28th and 29th May at Tai Pei Buddhist Center. Despite being weekday evenings, Tai Pei Buddhist Centre was completely packed with enthusiastic devotees. From the question and answer session at the end of each evening it was apparent that the audience came from a wide spectrum of backgrounds. To each intriguing question raised, His Holiness responded with wit and wisdom. This public talk immediately struck a cord in the audience’s heart and created a positive karmic link with His Holiness.

After this auspicious beginning, His Holiness

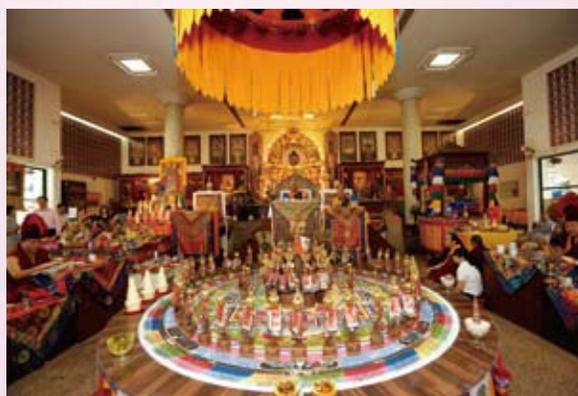
bestowed the Mind-Resting 2-Armed Chenrezig Wangchen on 30th May. On 31st May, His Holiness took a rest to prepare for the all-important Vajrakilaya Event which was linked to our fourth Land Lease and Building Renewal fundraising activity.



His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche at the Vajrakilaya empowerment

At Sakya Tenphel Ling, the Vajrakilaya Event started with a 2-Day Vajrakilaya Great Empowerment (Wangchen) on 1st and 2nd June and an explanation on the Sadhana on 3rd June. Some 600 to 700 people attended this Wangchen.

This is very precious, as the teaching has continued through an unbroken lineage from the Primordial Buddha and has passed down through the Khön hereditary lineage.



The Vajrakilaya mandala

Each of these masters, from Guru Padmasambhava to those of the present, has achieved great realization, and as a result, performed great miracles. Many members, old and new, and overseas disciples and Sangha gathered in Singapore to benefit fully the enormous blessing of Vajrakilaya bestowed by our matchless Guru His Holiness Sakya Trizin.

Some devotees came as far as China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Australia just to name a few.

Vajrakilaya is not only special to the Khön lineage, but also very special for His Holiness as Vajrakilaya is His personal Yidam. Indeed it is very beneficial to practitioners and of extremely great blessings for people who attended this Empowerment. The Great Blessing of Vajrakilaya is especially beneficial as it dispels obstacles, maras and black karmic influences and swiftly accomplishes our



Gyana Vajra Rinpoche dismantling the Mandala

wishes and missions. People will live harmoniously and united in pursuit of the Buddhadharma with the enormous auspiciousness and miraculous power of Vajrakilaya passed to them through His Holiness' empowerment.

Then came the first of the Vajrakilaya Drupchod Ritual on 4th June that continued for another six days. Within these seven days of Kilaya ritual activities, we immersed ourselves in the great blessings of the Deity Kilaya. Devotees also participated in the Phurpa blessings where we can retain the blessings of the Deity by acquiring a Phurpa consecrated by His Holiness and His Eminence to be brought home.

His Holiness then concluded His Singapore trip by giving the Hevajra Path Empowerment on 11th June before His departure on the 12th of June for Taipei to continue the next leg of His teaching tour in Asia. Rejoice, rejoice!!"



Hundreds of students attended the empowerment



Lamdre in Taiwan

Although its teaching always remains the same, the experience of Lamdre varies every time it is given, even if it bestowed by the same teacher. Not only is it apprehended in a unique way by each disciple that receives it but as a group experience, it also takes on a distinctive character each time around.

If each Lamdre has a flavour of its own, the Hevajra teachings that were given in Taipei by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin over the better part of the months of June and July of this year were exceptionally unique in character.

Exuberant generosity, an inherited trait in Chinese culture, did much to lend the occasion its singular tone. Throughout the six weeks of their visit, His Holiness, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, Her Eminence Gyalyum Chenmo and Her Eminence Dagmo Sonam Palkyi were objects of veneration to



the hundreds of Taiwanese sangha members who vied to lavish them with favours and attentions, sparing no effort to make their revered teachers' stay as comfortable, agreeable and regal as could possibly be.

It was a time for offering, where each and everyone unreservedly brought the best of themselves, where beauty and abundance prevailed and the singular gave way to the plural.







In Taiwan, His Holiness is known as ‘Sakya Fawang’ or ‘Sakya Dharma King’, and He is indeed regarded by disciples there as a God-King, a living Buddha. Wherever He and His family went, they were escorted by a motorcade of glistening black cars, which impeccably uniformed drivers aptly steered through the sometimes baffling Taiwanese traffic.

Every place that they visited was replete with lavish flower arrangements and cornucopias of exotic fruit, while white-gloved stewards and ‘offering goddesses’ clad in vibrantly coloured chubas solemnly ushered their arrivals and departures.

Over eight hundred devotees attended this year’s Lamdre, which called for an organisational tour-de-force, faultlessly rendered by the Taipei Vajrayana Sakya Manjushri Center, with an indefatigable Ani Jamyang Wangmo at the helm. With the assistance of

a small army of staunch volunteers, in tandem with a cultural sense of group cohesion and hard work ethics, the centre’s committee ensured that everything went



Ani Jamyang Wangmo

like clockwork. A special mention goes to Jimmy Ma whose translation into Chinese of the Lamdre teachings throughout their duration was flawless in its rendition and acted as a pure channel to His Holiness' words.



Hard-working volunteers



Jimmy Ma translating His Holiness' words



His Holiness tending to disciples in His reception room

Whenever His Holiness wasn't teaching, the 16th floor of the hotel that hosted Him and His entourage was abuzz with activity from early morning until late at night, as an continual trickle of devotees filed through the door of His apartment, seeking His advice or His blessing, or just paying their respects.

And so, His Holiness' Dharma activities in Taiwan were ceaseless - His Holiness only had one day's rest over the whole of His stay in Taiwan. Visits to other centres, teachings and initiations kept His Holiness tied to a constant labour of love.

His Holiness was assisted throughout the totality



Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche



His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche consulting on a text

of His journey by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche whose filial love, deep respect and veneration toward His Holiness is a sublime example of guru devotion. This, coupled with Rinpoche's gregarious and joyful disposition won everyone's heart. Rinpoche also showed his meté as a great master during the several empowerments that he bestowed.

Although essentially Chinese in its overwhelming majority, the group that attended the teachings had an eclectic makeup to it, crossing social, cultural, religious and national boundaries. The occasion was not only blessed by the presence of His Holiness and His family, but also by that of eminent masters



Gyana Vajra Rinpoche at his birthday celebration

who attended some or all of the ceremonies. H.E. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche graced the Ushnisha Vijaya initiation with his participation, while Zimwock Rinpoche travelled from Australia for the entire



Students from many different traditions attended the teachings



Their Eminences Gyalum Chenmo and Dagmo Sonam Sakya at the Fire Puja



H.E. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Phula Rinpoche at the Ushnisha Vijaya initiation

event. Phula Rinpoche was also present, generously giving his time and effort to provide a translation into Chinese for some of the proceedings.

And so the Lamdre in Taiwan drew to a close. A magical time for everyone who partook. The sadness that came with the thought that His Holiness and

Gyana Vajra Rinpoche were leaving was compensated by the ocean of blessings that their presence over the past two months had brought. Another consolation came with the expectation of Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche's visit to Taiwan next year for the conferral of the Lamdre Re-Teaching.



His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche with Lamdre students



Prison in Ju-Tien where He gave a poignant talk on the law of karma that left the four hundred inmates visibly moved. A window of opportunity seemed to open for them as His Holiness explained how it laid in their own hands to change their karma and to attain happiness. His Holiness also visited the National Cheng Kung University Hospital in Tainan, where He spent time with patients on their deathbeds, bringing solace to them and to their relatives. His Holiness commended the hospital staff on their practice of ‘compassion in action’.

With the Lamdre concluded, His Holiness and His party took the opportunity to visit other cities in the island, where halls filled to receive teachings and empowerments both from His Holiness and from Gyana Vajra Rinpoche.

His Holiness also took time to visit Pingtung

His Holiness’ trip to Taiwan did not go without its lighter moments. He and His party had a brief but refreshing opportunity to breathe the sea air at the beautiful Whalien beach, where some of the bolder members among the group had a swim in the brisk Pacific waters.

Then it was back to Taipei and to the next stop on His Holiness and Rinpoche's teaching tour. On 30th July, they left for Manila, in the Philippines.



His Holiness and entourage enjoying the beach at Whalien

His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in the Philippines

On 30th July, His Holiness and His entourage arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, where they were given a warm welcome by local officials and sangha members. His Holiness spent the following day meeting with dignitaries, including the country's Vice-President Jejomar Binay and Manila Mayor Alfredo Siojo Lim, who offered His Holiness the Manila City Key. An official welcome reception followed the next day at the Manila Sakya Monastery headed by Ponlob Rinpoche and Master Shei Bei Yao. In all, His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche spent six days in Manila, giving initiations and Dharma talks to large audiences of eager students.

On 5th August, His Holiness and His party left for Cebu, where they were to spend the remainder of their stay in the Philippines. They were there by invitation of the Cebu Sakya Monastery, also headed by Ponlob



His Holiness, Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and Gyalum Chenmo with Mayor Lim at Manila City Hall

Rinpoche and Master Shei Bei Yao. After spending two days giving teachings and initiations, His Holiness and entourage took a short break to enjoy the Cebu Sea Resort, where they were able to relax before leaving for Malaysia, the last call on their extensive journey.



His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche in Malaysia



Inauguration of the new centre



His Holiness bestowing the Kurukulle initiation

enough to accommodate well over a thousand people, the venue was impressive in itself. As His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche imparted their initiations, a sense of openness and spaciousness prevailed, as the hall filled with students each in their own way devoted to the Buddha and to His message of wisdom and compassion. The occasion was enriched by a teaching given by Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche,

His Holiness and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche arrived in Kuala Lumpur on the 9th of August. They had been invited by the Hai Tao Foundation to inaugurate the Foundation's new Sakya Centre as well as to impart various teachings and empowerments over the space of the following six days. The Foundation is committed to a Rime approach to Buddhism and invites teachers from various different traditions to share their wisdom with its members.

Dominated by large statues of the Buddha and vast



Gyana Vajra Rinpoche giving the Tara initiation



Ratna Vajra Rinpoche giving a teaching on the Tara initiation



His Holiness, Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and Gyalyum Chenmo with the Sibú sangha

who briefly suspended his programme in Singapore in order to join his family in Kuala Lumpur.

On the 16th, His Holiness and entourage left for East Malaysia, where He and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche visited centres in Sibú, Kapit and Kuching. This was to be the last leg of their East Asia Teaching Tour, and such a rare visit to this relatively remote region left disciples beyond joy to be in the presence of their Teachers and to receive from them such invaluable Dharma treasures.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony at Sakya Osel Ling in Kapit

And so, on 23rd August, the 2012 East Asia Teaching Tour of His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche came to a conclusion, as they and their entourage flew back to Delhi and then on to the Sakya Dolma Phodrang in Dehradun on time to celebrate the Annual Vajrakilaya Puja at the Sakya Centre.



His Holiness, Gyana Vajra Rinpoche and Gyalyum Chenmo are given a hearty welcome in Kuching



Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche in Europe



On the 25th of May, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche arrived at Sakya Tsechen Ling in Kuttolsheim. This was to be Rinpoche's first stop in a European tour that would take him to France, Italy, Spain and Germany and would last until the 15th of July.

Tsechen Ling members were blessed with the bestowal by Rinpoche of a combined Manjushri and Sakya Pandita initiation, followed by two days of teachings on the meaning of the empowerment. Bernard Altschuh, Vice -President of the Kuttolsheim centre speaks for all sangha members as he writes:

“How pure, rare and precious these shared moments are! A single glance at our tormented world highlights the aspiration that gives birth to these moments of deep listening, reflection and meditation, the sublime privilege of having access to them, the responsibility that this entails and the determination to share its merits with all beings.

Short of being able to build a temple vast enough to contain every single being in this infinite world,

may we invite them all in our hearts and, as we sit in a sacred temple, may we embrace them in our practice, so that good health, happiness and peace can grow like the luminosity of the waxing moon.”



Rinpoche with the Sakya Tsechen Ling sangha

Rinpoche's second teaching engagement was in Trieste, Italy, where he was received on the 12th of June by the Venerable Ani Malvina and the Centro Buddhista Tibetano Sakya Kunga Choling.

Rinpoche gave a lecture on Interreligious Dialogue at a conference organised by 'Religions for Peace in the World'. He spent the remainder of his time in Trieste bestowing a teaching on “Parting from the Four Attachments”, as well as initiations in Manjushri, Saraswati and Kurukulli.



Rinpoche at the Interreligious Dialogue



Rinpoche addressing the audience at the Conference



Rinpoche found time between his teaching engagements to visit the beautiful Italian city.



In gratitude, Rinpoche was offered a musical performance at the conclusion of the teaching.



Rinpoche in a Greek Orthodox Church in Trieste

The next stop in Rinpoche's European tour was in Alicante, Spain where he was invited first by the Sakya Drogon Ling centre to give a public talk on 'How to be happy in difficult times', and to impart a two-day Medicine Buddha initiation.

Juan Vidal, the centre's president, writes of the occasion:

"As our small centre couldn't accommodate the

high number of participants, the event was held in the beautiful and charming Chamarel Hotel, a 19th century manor house, which lent to the occasion a beautiful and intimate touch. In spite of the teachings lasting only two days, everyone kept commenting on how extraordinary it was, how magical and wonderful, and how at certain moments one could actually feel as



Rinpoche at Sakya Drogon Ling

if one were in the pure land of the Medicine Buddha. His Eminence Ratna Vajra Rinpoche's presence and the hard work of the organisers created for all those present a unique opportunity to feel part of a greater family."

In Alicante, Rinpoche also visited the Fundación Sakya de Pedreguer, where he gave general instructions on the significance of initiations and of the guru-disciple relationship. He also gave, for the first time in Spain, the Kalachakra initiation according to the Vajramala tradition. A sangha member writes: *"It was a wonderful encounter, where nearly a hundred people from different cities in Spain were able to come together to be in the presence of an extraordinary being full of wisdom and kindness and to receive teachings from him. At the end of the program, each one of us returned to our respective homes with our hearts bursting with love and inspiration."*

Next on Rinpoche's itinerary was the Anandakara Centre in Audenge-Arcachon, near Bordeaux in France. Rinpoche was there on the invitation of Mogchok Rinpoche, uncle to His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, who has a Rime centre in Marseilles. Here, Rinpoche gave the Dragpo Sumdril initiation, a transmission given directly to the great Mahasiddha Lhodrag Drubchen Lekyi Dorje by Vajrapani himself, that is very powerful in purifying beings of their

ignorance, hatred and desire and in averting obstacles and illnesses.

Rinpoche then travelled to Paris, where he spent a weekend at the Rigpa Centre near Paris, giving initiations. He also gave a public talk on 'How to practice and find internal peace in our modern world.'



Rinpoche with the Paris Sangha

Rinpoche concluded his European tour with a stop in Frankfurt, where he spent a week at the Sakya Kalden Ling centre. Between the 7th and the 15th of July, Rinpoche held an intensive program of initiations, some of them given for the first time in Europe by Rinpoche. These included Hevajra, two Vajrayogini initiations according to two different traditions and the "Three Great Reds". Rinpoche



Rinpoche at Fundación Sakya de Pedreguer



also gave teachings on the ‘Verses of Guru Devotion’ and on ‘Keeping Samayas’. Dagobert Ossa of Sakya Kalden Ling writes: *”Participants came from Canada, Australia, Great Britain, Italy, Poland, Russia and many parts of Germany. There was an amazing atmosphere in the gompa and a blessing for all of us.”*

And so ended Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche’s European tour. Rinpoche left behind him hundreds of grateful students eager for his return.



Rinpoche at Sakya Kalden Ling



Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche Visits Mongolia

On 18th July, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche arrived in Mongolia, where he was to spend the following thirteen days teaching in various Sakya monasteries across the country.

One of the key events overseen by Rinpoche was the inauguration on 22nd August of the Sakya Pandita Dharma Chakra Monastery in Ulaan Baatar. The occasion was the culmination of several years’ efforts to play a part in the revival of Buddhism currently taking place in Mongolia, while rekindling the bond that had been forged between the nation and the Sakya School when, in the 13th century, the great Sakya Pandita was summoned by the Mongolian Emperor to give Buddhist teachings at his court. This bond had been reinforced by the intense teacher-disciple relationship that burgeoned between their respective successors, Emperor Kublai Khan and Sakya Founding Master Chögyal Phagpa, prompting the Emperor to issue a decree establishing Buddhism as the official religion of Mongolia.



Rinpoche paying his respects at an ancient Sakya Temple, a UNESCO site.



Rinpoche inaugurating the Sakya Pandita Dharma Chakra Monastery in Ulaanbaatar

And so it remained until the 20th century, when religious practice was suppressed by the ruling communist government, resulting in the number of Buddhist monastics dropping from 100,000 to little over 100. The fall of communism in 1991 allowed Buddhism to thrive anew in the country, leading it to once again becoming the predominant religion.



Rinpoche inaugurating the new temple at Khor Horon

Covered by steppes, Mongolia is the most sparsely populated country in the world, with nomads forming a substantial part of its population. And so, as Rinpoche visited centres scattered across the land, he had the occasion to appreciate the nomadic way of life and admire the majestic Mongolian landscape.



Rinpoche and attendants on their way to Darkhan



Rinpoche and monks at the inauguration of new temple in Kharkhorin

As His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and Ratna Vajra Rinpoche become increasingly involved in the renaissance of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia, the renewed presence of the Sakya tradition in the region invites us to draw a parallel with the pivotal role that their forebears played in sowing the seed of the Dharma in this fertile land and to pray that their activities may bring a bountiful harvest of fulfillment to a people that so thirsts for it.

Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche in Singapore



On the 3rd of August, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche arrived in Singapore, where he was to spend the following three weeks imparting teachings and initiations. A representative of the Sakya Tenphel Ling 42nd Executive Committee keenly remembers Rinpoche's visit:

“On 3 August 2012 H.E. Khöndung Ratna Vajra Sakya Rinpoche and his entourage arrived in Singapore from Hainan, China after his tour of Mongolia. Sakya Tenphel Ling Singapore was extremely fortunate to have His Eminence's presence and participation in our centre's 3rd major event of the year. This series of empowerment, rituals and teachings was themed “Time before Rebirth”.

Sakya Tenphel Lings' 3rd major event is typically held during the 7th Lunar Month, the month when many Chinese Buddhists and Taoists perform rituals to transmute and absolve the sufferings of our deceased loved ones. From 16th to the 19 August, His Eminence graced this major event by personally attending and performing the Mahavairocana

Changchog to lead the deceased to a better life and also to purify the living through the Sohnhok practice. During the ritual, many participated in the prostrations and the burning of name-purification paper (Mingjiang) sessions with Rinpoche leading.

Death is certain but the time of death is uncertain. Death comes to every one of us, and with it suffering, lamentations, grief and sorrow, and finally only memories. In this very present existence, we should not indulge in sadness and grief over the loss of our dear ones, but instead seek actively to bestow blessings on them for a better life. It is with this thought that the centre organized the Changchog for our members to create meritorious activities for their deceased loved ones, to help alleviate their dear ones to better rebirth and happiness.”



Changchok tablets for the ritual

During this visit, His Eminence also bestowed the Chenrezig Initiation in the King's Tradition and the Gelongma Palmo 1000-Armed Chenrezig Jehnang to reinforce and enhance the compassionate

activities of our centre and participants. Subsequent activities included Sakya Pandita-Manjushri Guru Yoga Chin-lab and teachings, Sakya Nyung-nay text explanation to make aware the needs and benefits of this purification ritual retreat, and the 18-Jambhala Boom Drup, Water Offering and Tshok for the centre's Wealth Vase. On 22 August, His Eminence concluded His visit by giving an evening talk at Nanyang Technology University (NTU) Singapore on the invitation of the N.T.U. Buddhist Society.



Rinpoche with the Singapore sangha



On the way to the Naga offering

Besides the above-planned programs, His Eminence also took time off to grace our centre's monthly Naga Puja held on the 18th of August. The Naga Puja started in our centre in the morning and the offerings to the Nagas were later done in the open sea. A total of about 80 devotees boarded 7

boats at Changi Jetty and we headed for the deeper eastern waters to conduct our offerings and prayers. We anchored in the open sea and as soon as His Eminence and entourage started chanting some devotees spotted a faint round rainbow forming around the bright morning sun. As the puja progressed the round rainbow became more and more distinct with all the awe of its magnificent colours; indeed it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many of us, as sighting rainbows in Singapore is very rare, let alone a circular rainbow encompassing the sun. Everybody felt the presence of the Buddhas and the blessings being showered. What an extraordinary day it was. Rejoice!!! For many of us it was an unforgettable time being able to be with His Eminence out in the open sea to witness this Auspicious Naga Puja.



A blessing from the sky

The talk at NTU was the most memorable. The undergraduates who attended were of various disciplines, backgrounds and religions. The title of the talk was “Time before Birth “; though a serious topic on the Bardo intermediate state, there was a very lively Q&A session that ensued. Some questions raised were: “Can we purify all our negative karma in one lifetime?”; “What is soul, ghost? Are they the same as bardo beings?”: “The world’s population grew from 3 to 7 billion, where did these “minds” come from?”; “Is Bardo exclusive to Buddhists?”

etc. To each question, His Eminence further engaged the students with interesting answers. At the end of the talk, there was a group picture taken. We thanked NTU for the invitation and rejoiced at the success of the talk. It created an opportunity for His Eminence to engage with the younger minds of Singapore and we look forward to holding more of such events in the future.

With much reluctance, we bade His Eminence farewell on the 23rd of August. “



Vajrakilaya at the Sakya Centre



This year the Vajrakilaya puja that is held annually at the Sakya Centre in Rajpur took place from the 27th of August until the 6th of September. Officiating were His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche acting as Vajra Master, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, and Phuntsok Phodrang Dhungseys H.E. Avikrita Rinpoche and H.E. Abhaya Rinpoche.

Two revered Nyingmapa masters, H.E. Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and H.E. Pema Wangyal Rinpoche



Their Eminences Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Pema Wangyal Rinpoche

also graced the occasion with their presence.

Very special to the Khön family, Vajrakilaya embodies the enlightened activities of all the Buddhas, and its practice is known to be particularly powerful in purifying the mind and removing obstacles. His Holiness the Sakya Trizin says of it:

“Of the profound and inexhaustible ocean of teachings that Guru Padmasambhava possessed,

Vajrakilaya is one of the most important. Its empowerment, teachings and pith instructions were given to one of his most important spiritual disciples, Khön Nagendra Rakshita, who then practised it until he achieved both ordinary and supreme siddhis. As a sign of his great attainment, he managed to display the great miracle of keeping his vajra and bell suspended in space. Guru Padmasambhava himself declared that Nagendrarakshita had attained the eighth stage of the great Bodhisattva path.

The Vajrakilaya empowerment, teachings and pith instructions were then passed down from Nagendra Rakshita to his own nephews, as they were appointed as the holders of the Khön lineage; and ever since then, they have been passed down through this lineage, which includes the five Sakya Founding Masters.

So this is a very rare teaching that has not only continued through an unbroken lineage from the primordial Buddha, but has also been passed down through the hereditary lineage. Each of these masters, from Guru Padmasambhava to those of the present, has achieved great realisation, and as a result has performed great miracles. I myself received this from my own father, as well as from one of my most important root gurus, both of whom attained great realisation through the Vajrakilaya practice, and showed many significant miracles.”

Music is a central part of the Vajrakilaya puja, and it is overwhelmingly compelling. It is through music that the deities are conjured, and much of the cleansing process that is accomplished by the ritual is done so through its notes, as they penetrate, permeate and purify all that they touch. There is a famous story



The music of Vajrakilaya

about the power of invocation music: a great master was renowned to be able to visualise all the deities of the Vajrakilaya mandala so clearly that they actually presented themselves before him. He was very pleased with himself, until one day, to his dismay, as the invocation music sounded from a nearby temple, all the deities spontaneously upped and rushed to its source, acceding to its spellbinding invitation, and leaving the great master distraught and quite alone.

Every year a group of Sakya Centre monks takes it in turns to recite the entire puja by memory, a gruelling examination that brings to a conclusion an entire year of intense preparation.

On the last day of the ritual, it is customary for the Tibetan community to throng the temple grounds. Most of the puja is held in the temple, but a section of it is held outside, and so the crowd needs to make



Part of the puja takes place in the temple courtyard

space for the officiants as they come down the stairs to the courtyard and proceed with the ritual. This is a climactic moment for the mass of devotees for whom there is no room in the temple, a chance to spend a few moments in the proximity of their gurus.

Near the end of the ceremony, the mandala is dismantled as, piece by piece, the phurbas representing Vajrakilaya and his retinue are removed by His Holiness and the Dhungseys. And then, after touching the head of every member of the congregation with each one of the phurbas, attendant monks place these on a high-arched table stood on the parvis.

And so, as the ritual is brought to a close and His Holiness and the Dhungseys withdraw to their private quarters above the shrine room, there begins the yearly custom of every member of the crowd climbing up the temple stairs and touching with their forehead the table holding the phurbas in order to catch their blessings, before receiving their bag of tsok. The logistics involved in managing thousands of eager followers queuing up and down the Centre staircase, are gargantuan, but no one is left without their blessing or their tsok.



Ngyakdö Tulku with his fellow examinees



Devotees paying their respects to the Phurbas



H.H. the Gyalwang Karmapa in Dehradun



On the 30th of August, His Holiness the Gyalwang Karmapa arrived in Dehradun, where he was to spend the following three days. Invited by the Milarepa Preservation Committee to give teachings in the Tibetan settlement of Dekyiling, His Holiness was hosted during His stay by Sakya Rinchen Choling Nunnery.

His Holiness also graced the Sakya Centre with His presence, at which time Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche presented Him with a mandala offering.

His Holiness the Karmapa then had lunch with His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, His sons and H.E. Abhaya Rinpoche before leaving for Dharamsala.



H.H. Gyalwang Karmapa arrives at the Sakya Centre



H.H. the Karmapa is bid farewell by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, H.E. Abhaya Rinpoche and H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Visits Dehradun



On the 13th of September, His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrived at the Jolly Grant airport in Dehradun, where He was greeted by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and representatives of local monasteries and institutions.

His Holiness was to spend the five following days imparting teachings and initiations, beginning with a Dharma talk on Nagarjuna's 'Precious Garland' at the Dikyiling Settlement to a throng oblivious to the pouring rain that accompanied the teachings.

Throughout His visit, His Holiness visited several monasteries and schools, attracting large crowds of devotees.

On the 15th, His Holiness was welcomed at the Sakya Nunnery by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche. After spending the night there, His Holiness presided over a heated debate session conducted by students of the Sakya College for Nuns.



Arrival at Sakya Nunnery



Watching the nuns debate



H.H. the Dalai Lama and H.H. the Sakya Trizin with H.E. Luding Khenchen Rinpoche, H.E. Thartse Rinpoche and H.E. Khar Shabdrung Rinpoche



H.H. the Dalai Lama with H.H. the Sakya Trizin and family

His Holiness then visited the Sakya Centre, where He was presented with a mandala offering by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin. He also gave a short talk on the importance of deepening the meaning of the Dharma.

This was followed by lunch at the monastery with His Holiness, where they were joined by Khöndung

Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, H.E. Luding Khenchen Rinpoche, H.E. Thartse Rinpoche and H.E. Khar Shabdrung Rinpoche.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama then left for Mussoorie, where He spent the two following days visiting schools and other institutions before returning to Dharamsala.



Group photo at the Sakya Centre

In Memoriam



DRAKPA ZAMPO
(1937-2012)

Early in the morning of the 29th of August, Drakpa Zampo, affectionately known as Drakpa la to those close to him, passed away at the age of 75 at the Sakya Dolma Phodrang in Rajpur. Drakpa la was one of the three elders among the Sakya Dolma Phodrang staff. He had seen the birth of three generations of the Khön family.

Drakpa la was the longest-standing attendant at the Phodrang, He was already part of the palace staff in Sakya, Tibet, when His Holiness the Sakya Trizin was born and he was assigned the role of companion to the young throne-holder. In his twenties, he was among the small party that accompanied His Holiness and His elder sister H.E. Jetsun Kushok across the mountains in their escape from Tibet into Sikkim. He

never left His Holiness' side until his recent demise.

His passing was swift and it was auspicious that it happened a few days after His Holiness' return from His Asian tour, and that He and both Dungseys were in residence at the Phodrang to perform Drakpa la's last rites.

He will be sorely missed not only by the family, but also by anyone who has visited the Phodrang, has tasted his food and has been exposed to his jocular sense of humour, which had the singular quality of transcending linguistic barriers.

All at the Phodrang pray that he may have a fortunate rebirth where he may once again be at his gurus' side.

Annual Grand Pujas at The Sakya Centre (January – April)

- **Annual Döchen Puja** - 23rd of the 11th month for 7 days. (Jan 4th-10th)
- **Annual Vajrayogini Puja** - 8th of the 1st month for three days (Feb 18th- Feb 20th).
- **Annual Vajrakilaya Puja** - 8th of 2nd month for 6 days (March 20th – March 26th)

Great Festivals

- **Saka Dawa Duchen** – 15th of the 4th month (Jun 4)
- **Chokhor Duchen** – 4th of the 6th month (July 23)

Important Dates

Birthdays - Tibetan / Western

Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter Sakya- Tibetan Birthday – 14th of the 11th (Dec 27)
Western Birthday– January 2

Khöndung Akasha Vajra Rinpoche- Tibetan Birthday– 12th of the 2nd month (Mar 24)
Western Birthday–March 27

Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya- Tibetan Birthday–29th of the 1st month (Mar 10)
Western Birthday– April 2

- **Gu-Tor** -23rd day of the 12th month (Feb 3rd)
- **Losar**- 1st day of the 1st month (Feb 11th)
- **Chotrul Duchen**- “**Day of Miracles**” -15th of the 1st month (Feb 25th)

Holy days

- **Parinivarna of Dagshul Thinley Rinchen**- 3rd of the 1st month (Feb 13th)
- **Parinivarna of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Kunkhyen Gorampa Sonam**- 21st day of the 1st month (March 3rd)
- **Parinivarna of Yabje Kunga Rinchen**- 8th of the 2nd month (March 19th)
- **Parinivarna of Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen and Khangsar Shabdrung Ngawang Lodroe Tenzin Nyingpo**- 13th day of the 2nd month (March 25th)
- **Parinivarna of Khenchen Dorje Chang Jampa Jampal Sangpo**- 23rd of the 2nd month (April 3rd)
- **Parinivarna of Khuwo Rinpoche Kunga Gyaltsen**- 26th of the 2nd month (April 6th)
- **Parinivarna of Jamgon Loter Wangpo** – 30th day of the 2nd month (April 10th)
- **Parinivarna of Phende Khenchen Ngawang Khedup Gyatso**- 15th day of the 3rd month (April 25th)
- **Parinivarna of Dezhung Tulku Kunga Tenpei Nyima**- 18th day of the 3rd month (April 28th)

✿ Lamp offerings for the monastery and food offerings for the lamas are welcome during all important pujas and ceremonies. Kindly contact the Sakya Centre in Rajpur if you wish to make an offering: shrisakya@yahoo.co.in



Vajrayana Sakya Manjushri Center, Taiwan

Lam Dre Re-teaching 2013

(Including Lamdre Yoga)
(Apr 2- Apr 21)

In June, 2012, His Holiness Sakya Trizin bestowed the profound Lam Dre at Taipei. In 2013, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche has kindly agreed to bestow the Lam Dre Re-Teachings and to lead the students in meditating on its visualisations. In addition, Ratna Vajra Rinpoche will also bestow the precious Lam Dre Yoga teachings. Receiving the Lam Dre is of immense benefit both in this life and in future lives.

(Restricted to students who have already received the entire Lam Dre teachings).

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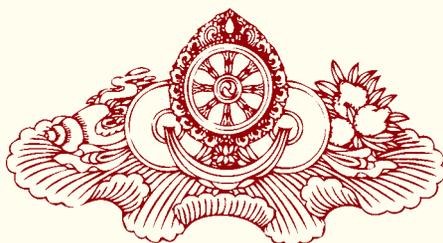
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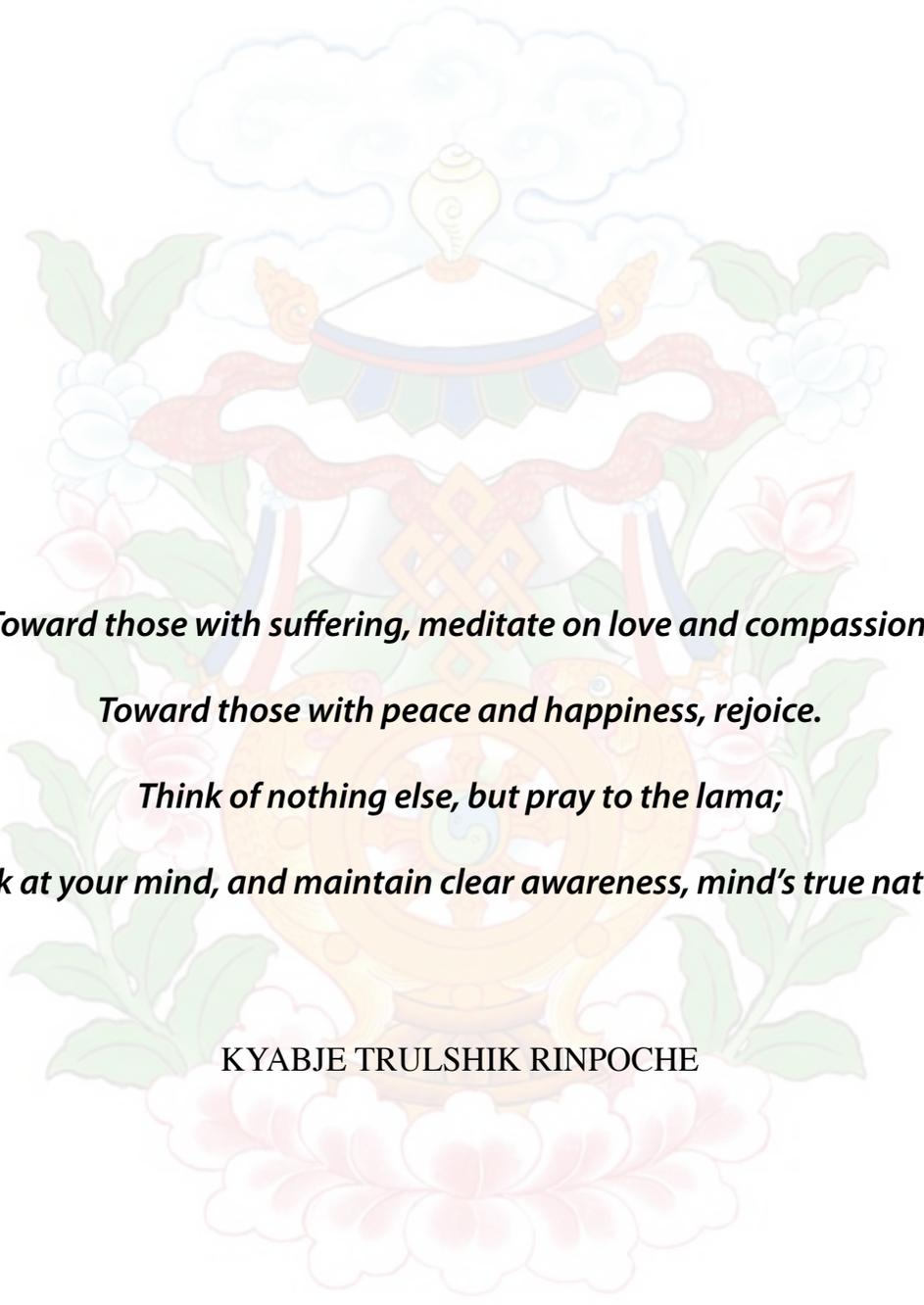
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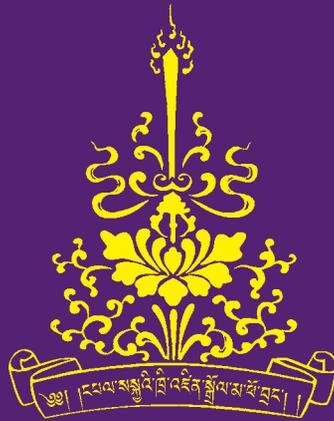
Toward those with suffering, meditate on love and compassion;

Toward those with peace and happiness, rejoice.

Think of nothing else, but pray to the lama;

Look at your mind, and maintain clear awareness, mind's true nature.

KYABJE TRULSHIK RINPOCHE



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