

Melody of Dharma

❁ What is the Sakya Tradition?
A teaching by H.H. Gongma Trichen Rinpoche

❁ Remembering Great Masters –
Guru Rinpoche

❁ The Holy Lamdre in Walden, NY

❁ 26th Sakya Monlam in Bodh
Gaya



*A Publication of the Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang
Dedicated to the Dharma Activities of*

**HIS HOLINESS SAKYA GONGMA TRICHEN RINPOCHE
AND HIS NOBLE FAMILY**

CONTENTS



/ Remembering Great Masters – Padmasambhava

6 Advice to Lady Yeshe Tsogyal from Guru Rinpoche

8 What is the Sakya Tradition?

– A teaching by H.H. Gongma Trichen Rinpoche

17 The Sage’s Intent

– A teaching by H.H. Gongma Trizin Rinpoche

21 The Importance of Spiritual Practice

– A teaching by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche

24 The Quintessence of the Secret Jewel Oral Teaching

– A Teaching by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche

30 Dharma Activities

32 • The Holy Lamdre at Tsechen Kunchab Ling

32 • H.H. Gongma Trichen Rinpoche – U.S.A. teaching tour

41 • H.H. Gongma Trizin Rinpoche in Mustang

47 • Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche – Phurdup tour

54 • Monlam Prayer Festival in Bodh Gaya



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Publisher: The Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang

Executive Editor: Ani Jamyang Wangmo

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Photographs: Cristina Vanza; Dawa Dolma; Bella Chao; Kurt Smith; and all our generous contributors

Photo Editor: Danijela Piana

Cover photo: Guru Rinpoche statue at Tso Pema
(Photo: Maria Cristina Vanza)

Remembering Great Masters

Padmasambhava



Hung! On the northwest border of the country Oddiyāna,
On the pollen heart of a lotus flower,
The marvellous, supreme accomplishment has been attained.
You are renowned as the Lotus-Born,
Surrounded by a retinue of many Dākinīs.
Following you to be like you,
I beseech you to come and bless me.
Guru Padma Siddhi Hung.

There exist several hagiographies of Guru Rinpoche, all varying in length and content. One element that these share is that he was, and still is, a fully enlightened Buddha.

According to the sutras, the Lord Shakyamuni Buddha prophesied that Guru Rinpoche would be the second Buddha of our epoch, that he would be miraculously born on a lotus flower, and that he would accomplish countless activities for the sake of beings. There are innumerable stories telling of the miraculous accomplishments of Guru Rinpoche, not even a fraction of which, for want of space, can be narrated here.

Most accounts of Guru Rinpoche's life concur in that he had a miraculous birth in the Kingdom of Oddiyana, in what is thought to be in today's Swat Valley of Pakistan. The ruler of Oddiyana was, at that time, King Indrabodhi. He was a just and equitable ruler, a Dharma king who, in spite of having a great number of queens, found himself without an heir. This worried him deeply, as he was getting on in years and there would be no one to take his place in administering to the needs of his people.

Following his counsellors' advice, he spent many years distributing alms to the poor in order to accumulate the necessary merit to engender an heir. But unfortunately, this only led to the royal coffins finding themselves depleted, with no sign of the desired result. In desperation, the king set sail for a treasure island, which one of his priests had seen in a dream. The island did materialise, and the king returned home, his ship laden with precious jewels.

On their way back to the palace, the king and his courtiers fell upon a wondrous stretch of land that no one had ever seen before. It was of extraordinary beauty, and in it lied a lake of crystal-

line water, in the middle of which rose a dazzling lotus in full bloom. In the centre of the lotus sat a young boy, surrounded by goddesses and Dakinis lavishing him with offerings and melodious songs of praise. The lake came to be known as Danakosha, and the young boy was Guru Padmasambhava, a heart emanation of Buddha Amitabha miraculously born from the syllable HRIH.

Bewildered, the king and his courtiers asked the prodigious boy who he was, where he came from, who his parents were, and what was his clan. In response, Guru Rinpoche said:

"My father is pure awareness, Samantabhadra.

My mother is the space of reality, Samantabhadri.

My caste is the union of primordial wisdom and the dharmadhatu.

My name is the glorious lotus-born, Padmasambhava."

Beside himself with exaltation, the king offered the boy all his newly-found riches, bade him come live at the palace and enthroned him as crown prince. Padmasambhava married the dakini Prabhavati and brought peace and wellbeing to the land. After some years of leading an idyllic life, he came to realise the limitations of his position – he could not benefit beings outside of his own land. He tried to abdicate but his initiative was met with fierce opposition. And so he used a ruse to get himself banished from the kingdom. Successful, he was expelled from the palace and began to roam charnel grounds, whose resident dakinis he tamed, receiving numerous blessings and empowerments from them.

He subsequently returned to the lake of his

birth where, invested with supernatural powers, he learned the language of its dakinis, whom he also brought under his control, as he did all the nagas of the surrounding waters as well as all the planetary spirits.

Padmasambhava next journeyed to Bodh Gaya where, although he performed many miracles, people didn't develop faith in him. And so, although he was already a fully enlightened Buddha, he decided to travel to the Kingdom of Zahor in order to study all the sutras, tantras and sciences under the most learned and accomplished masters of the times. This he did in order to gain the confidence of disciples blind to his realization, and to tame their minds.

It was in Zahor that he took King Vihardhara's daughter, the dakini Mandarava, as his tantric consort. Retreating to a cave called Maratika, the couple received empowerments and blessings from the Buddha Amitayus himself, and together obtained the Vajra body beyond birth and death. But their secret practices attracted the unwanted attention of the local populace. On their return to Zahor, they were apprehended and Princess Mandarava was thrown into a pit of thorns, while Guru Rinpoche was condemned to be burned at the stake.

After several days of the flames raging, the king and his courtiers came to the site where the punishment had been meted out, only to find Padmasambhava miraculously sitting on a fresh lotus in the middle of a beautiful lake, in resplendent magnificence. To this day, Lake Tso Pema remains one of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites and boasts a number of monasteries, temples and holy caves that attract practitioners from the world over. The king, realising his ignorance, asked for forgiveness and showered

Guru Rinpoche with lavish offerings, begging him to accept him as his disciple. The king, his queen and courtiers, and a great number of his subjects took refuge in the Dharma and received many teachings and empowerments from Guru Rinpoche.

Padmasambhava next travelled to Nepal, where he dwelt in the Yanglesho Cave near Kathmandu, in what is today called Pharping. There he meditated on the teachings that he had received, and attained the perfect realisation of Mahamudra. At that time, Nepal was being plagued by negative circumstances caused by destructive local spirits. In order to subdue these, Padmasambhava decided to supplement his practice with that of Vajrakilaya. He sent emissaries to his Indian teacher Shri Hungkara, requesting to send him the text of the "Vajra Kilabitutara Tantra". The mere presence of this sacred text in the country served to abate the negative forces that were afflicting it. Some of the most powerful spirits, however, continued to counter the Dharma. As a result, Padmasambhava moved to the nearby Asura cave and meditated on the Vajrakilaya text. Fiercest among these malevolent spirits were the three sisters of Rimache, who weaved what magic they could muster to obstruct Guru Rinpoche's meditation. But they were also defeated and brought under his sway. They have, since that time, been protectors of the Vajrakilaya practice.

While in the Asura cave, Guru Rinpoche perceived that the seat of the Buddha's enlightenment at Bodh Gaya was at risk of being overtaken by heretic scholars who were trying to chase away Buddhist monks and nuns from the sacred site. The heretics were about to defeat the weaker monks and nuns in debate, which according to custom, would have forced the losers to convert

to the heretics' belief system. Guru Rinpoche sent an emanation of himself to Bodh Gaya and won the debate, pushing the heretics to resort to magic. Guru Rinpoche then sent a fierce emanation to counter their magic, thus securing the Vajrasana as the holiest site of Buddhism, a position it holds until today.

It was now the turn of Tibet to benefit from the power and wisdom of Guru Rinpoche. In spite of his young years, it had long been an aspiration for the king of Tibet, Trisong Detsen, to establish the Dharma in his land. He asked his ministers to find the most accomplished bodhisattva in India and to bring him back to Tibet. His envoys reported that the greatest bodhisattva was Shantarakshita, and so King Trisong Detsen invited him to come to Tibet. Shantarakshita had in the past received several predictions that he would bring the Dharma to the Land of the Snows, and so he readily accepted the king's invitation. In fact, a strong karmic link existed between Guru Rinpoche, Shantarakshita and King Trisong Detsen.

As Shantarakshita began to give Buddhist teachings, the king shared with him his highest aspiration – he wanted to build the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet, and could the great master help him? And thus began the construction of the monastery at Samye. Unfortunately, whatever progress was made on the construction of the monastery during the day, malevolent spirits would undo during the night. Shantarakshita told the king that, however learned and suited he was to teach the Dharma, he himself could not overcome these evil spirits. There was, however, one powerful master who could subdue the land's demons, and this was Padmasambhava. The king immediately sent emissaries to Guru Rinpoche

requesting him to help build the Samye monastery and spread the Dharma in Tibet.

In his omniscience, Guru Rinpoche knew of the situation and had already set out north. He had passed the border into Tibet when he met the king's emissaries. From the moment he stepped into the Land of Snows, Guru Rinpoche encountered, vanquished and pacified demonic forces, and turned them into devoted protectors and champions of the Dharma.

The evil spirits who were obstructing the construction of the temple were now contributing to it, doing their work during the night while the human builders were sleeping. Once completed, the monastery took the form of a mandala and consisted of seventeen temples. Its inauguration was attended by thousands of people, as well as dakas, dakinis and deities showering flowers from the sky, singing harmonious songs and lavishing blessings all around.

Thus came the dawn of the Buddha Dharma in Tibet. It was to spread throughout the Land of Snows to such an extent that it would come to constitute its very essence, penetrating every aspect of its existence throughout the centuries to come.

The challenge was now to train young boys as translators of the Indian Dharma texts. Only three were found that had the necessary skills to take up the challenge. The three were reincarnations of Ananda, Maudgalyayana and Shariputra, and their names were Vairocana, Kawa Paltsek and Chokro Lui Gyaltsen. They were the first of the 108 great translators. They were sent to India to study the languages of the texts, as well as their profound meaning. They spent 13 years there, studying under the very same masters who had taught Guru Rinpoche and Shantarakshita.

When they returned to Tibet, they undertook the mammoth task of translating the original texts. Alongside this, they trained other young men to follow in their footsteps. The first project that came to completion was the translation of the *Kangyur*, the words of the Buddha – some one thousand books in all. Next came the translation of the *Tengyur*, a compendium of commentaries on the words of the Buddha, as well as the study of the different branches of science – consisting of some 3,500 books. It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of this undertaking, especially considering that all the original texts were destroyed in the twelfth century when India was invaded by Turkish Muslim forces. Had it not been for this translation work, the Buddha's words would have disappeared from our world.

Both Guru Rinpoche and Shantarakshita continued to spread Buddhism in Tibet, the former for a very long time and the latter for the rest of his life. It is impossible to know how many students received empowerment from Guru Rinpoche, but we do know that he had 25 close disciples and that nearly three hundred of his students achieved high realisation. The first seven Tibetan monks were ordained by Shantarakshita, a test to see whether they could keep the vows. Among these was Khön Nagendrakshita, who attained the eighth stage of the Bodhisattva path.

Among Guru Rinpoche's 25 closest disciples was a young princess from Karchen by the name of Yeshe Tsogyal. She was betrothed to the king who, in an act of selfless devotion, offered her to Guru Rinpoche. She was to become his principal consort and was responsible for hiding innumerable *Termas* in every recess of the Himalayas. These treasure texts of Guru Rinpoche's Secret Mantra teachings would, when the time was ripe,

be discovered by a *Tertön*, a future incarnation of one of his main disciples.

After long years of bringing the light of Dharma to the Tibetan plateau, the time came for Guru Rinpoche to leave. One of his biographies describes his departure:

“Padmasambhava mounted a beam of sunlight and in the flicker of a moment soared away into the open sky. From the direction of the southwest, he turned his face to look back, and sent forth a light ray of immeasurable loving kindness that established the disciples in the state of non-return. Accompanied by a cloud-like throng of dakinis, outer and inner, and amid the sound of the music they were offering, he went to the south-western continent of Ngayab.”

Guru Rinpoche left for Zangdopalri, known as the Copper-Coloured Mountain, where he liberated the king of the Rakshas and assumed his form. He reigns as king in the dazzling Palace of Lotus Light, which he himself spontaneously created, and continues to benefit countless beings in myriads of ways. He is the object of unimaginable devotion among the people of the Himalayas, and his Seven-Line prayer, born of the supplication of the dakinis for him to take birth, is extremely powerful in invoking his presence. These are Guru Rinpoche's very words:

“When a disciple calls upon me with yearning devotion,

And with the melodious song of the Seven-Line Prayer,

*I shall come straightaway from Zangdopalri,
Like a mother who cannot resist the call of her child.”*

Guru Rinpoche's Instructions to Lady Yeshe Tsogyal on the Practice of Austerities



On one occasion, Yeshe Tsogyal expressed to Guru Rinpoche her desire to practice austerities. The master replied to her in this manner:

“Éma!

Goddess, Lady Tsogyal, listen!

Listen undistracted, you who are so beautiful to see!

This precious human body is a stem of gold.

If you have gained it and are wise to use it,

You will find continuous subsistence.

Those without this knowledge

Lack provisions for a single day—

Those who do not know will die of hunger!

And therefore it is good to pledge yourself as follows.

Practice the austerity of nourishment

And take as sustenance essential sap

Of stones and healing plants, and let

The air itself be food for you.

Practice the austerity of clothing,

Wearing nothing but a simple cotton cloth,

Then ornaments of bone, and afterwards go naked,

Trusting to the inner heat of tummo.

Practice the austerity of speech:

The stages of approach and of accomplishment
Of sadhanas, your prayers and mantras.
Perform the yoga of the energies
In silence, giving up all useless talk.

Practice the austerity of body:
Prostration, circumambulation, and the cleansing of
your form.
Sit in vajra posture,
And remain in meditation.

Practice the austerity of mind,
And train in stages of creation and perfection.
Cultivate the essence-drop, both bliss and voidness.
Remain absorbed in these two unified.

Practice the austerity of doctrine
And be holder of the Buddhadharma.
Perform the sacred task of guarding it
Through teaching, composition, debate, and all the
rest.

Practice the austerity of selfless kindness,
Acting for the sake of others.
Help them, pray for them, as Mahayana teaches,
Without a thought for life and limb.

Practice the austerity of compassion,
With equal love for both your child and your enemy,
For gold and clods of earth-
Regarding others dearer than yourself.

Thus you will embody all the Buddha's Teaching.
Highest wonder of Great Bliss you will attain.
Acting otherwise, you'll be a false ascetic,
No different from those Indian fanatics.
Understand this well, O girl of Kharchen."

In response, Yeshe Tsogyal pledged to relentlessly

practise these eight great precepts:

"Kyema Ho!
The Buddha's law has come into this land of
wickedness,
The gleaming fiery crystal lamp into this land of
gloom,
The sacred Lord of Orgyen to Tibet, the land of ogres,
Upon unholy beings letting fall a rain of Dharma,
Showing the forlorn the upward path of fortune.
I know of no such actions even at the Diamond Throne
When Buddha was alive and present in this world.

Thus the Guru's kindness is beyond repayment.
The mandala, most secret, of the Secret Mantra
I, the woman Yeshe Tsogyal, have now entered
And will die before I break a jot or tittle
Of the Guru's precepts.

The eight great teachings hard to practice
I have now received. Without a thought
For life, for body, or for worldly power,
I will keep the precepts of my Lord and Teacher,
And will die before I break my sacred pledge.

The three austerities of clothing, food, and
nourishment
The three of body, speech, and mind,
Hardships for the sake of Buddha's Doctrine
And all wandering sentient beings,

The burden of compassion,
Of holding others dearer than myself:
These eight will be my practice
Unalloyed, sincere, and single-minded."

*(From "Lady of the Lotus-Born – The Life and Enlightenment of
Yeshe Tsogyal", by Gyalwa Changchug and Namkhai Nyingpo.
Published by Shambhala. Translation by the Padmakara
Translation Group.)*

What Is The Sakya Tradition?

A teaching by His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche



The world in which we live is very vast and has many different cultures, religions, ideas and traditions, and so on. But one thing that everyone has in common is that they are longing to attain happiness and longing to eliminate suffering. Every individual, every organization, every country is striving to achieve this.

We made so much effort to find happiness during the last century that huge progress was made in terms of technology and science, helping to solve many existing problems. For example, many of the diseases that could not be cured for centuries, can now be cured easily; many of the places that we could not reach, we can now reach within hours, in any part of the world, and so on.

But at the same time, we cannot find real happiness; no matter how much material progress we

make, we cannot find real happiness. This is because we lack spiritual practice. Spiritual practice and spiritual progress are very important. However, the spiritual progress that we make is not something that happens quickly. It takes time. And the spiritual progress that we make is not something that is visible straight away. On the other hand, the signs of the progress that we make in technology appear very fast, and we can see them very clearly.

It used to be that in many parts of the world, it was thought that spiritual practice was something kind of old fashioned, and that technology and science yielded very fast results, that they were the real thing, and that everyone should put them first. So many people lost their interest in spiritual pursuit and, in fact, in some countries people are deliberately encouraged not to engage in spiritual practice.

But as time goes on, it is becoming clear that, no matter how much material progress we make, we cannot find real happiness. No matter where we go, whomever we associate with, what we own, how wealthy we are, how famous we become, how powerful we become, we cannot find real happiness. Real happiness we have to find through spiritual practice. Even in the countries whose citizens were discouraged from practising religion, so many people are now interested in doing so. This shows that without spiritual assistance we cannot find real happiness.

There are many spiritual traditions, many different traditions, and I personally believe that every spiritual tradition has its own beauty, its own way to help mankind. I respect every spiritual tradition. Every spiritual tradition is necessary because we are all different and everybody has their own tastes, their own ideas, their own mentalities, their own propensities and so on. So therefore one kind of spiritual tradition is not enough.

In the same way, there is not one single medicine that can cure all diseases, we need different medicines to cure different diseases. Not only that, but we need different protocols, different traditions, to cure different diseases. Similarly, a variety of spiritual practices is very important. For some people Hinduism is more suitable, for some Christianity is more suitable, for others Islam is more suitable, and for yet others Buddhism is more suitable. We must respect every spiritual tradition, and then choose which one suits us by using our own wisdom, our own intuition. Then whatever spiritual path we practise, we must practise it diligently, according to its teachings.

According to Buddhism, the reason we need to practise Dharma is because in every sentient being, the true nature of the mind is pure. The true nature of the mind is never stained with obscurations and it is what we call Buddha Nature, it is natural purity, it is never stained with obscurations. But at the moment

we cannot recognize this, and we cannot see the true nature of the mind because it is completely covered with obscurations. As long as we have obscurations, such as the obscuration of the defilements, and the obscuration of phenomena, as long as our view is obstructed by these obscurations, we are in samsara, which means the cycle of existence. And as long as we are here, we are not free from suffering. So that's why no matter how much effort we make, how much material progress we make, where we go, whom we associate with, we cannot find real peace, real happiness.

Because the true nature of our minds is completely covered with obscurations, we must engage in spiritual practice. Dharma practice is very important. Although every sentient being has Buddha Nature, every living being has the opportunity to become a fully-enlightened Buddha, human beings have the best chance to do so. Because the human mind is very sharp, very intelligent in comparison with that of other living beings, like animals, human beings have the best chance to become enlightened. And so therefore spiritual practice is very important.

Let us speak of spiritual practice from a Buddhist point of view. Buddhism, as we know, originated in India and then spread to many countries. It is through the kindness of the Tibetan Dharma kings, through the great blessing of the Indian masters, and through the hardship of the Tibetan translators that Buddhism was fully brought into Tibet, where we have Mahayana, Theravada, Vajrayana, as well as all the religious sciences. So it is that in Tibet we have the full range of Buddhist teachings and their practice, not only their study but also their practice. And so although the origins of Buddhism were in India, it became as strongly established in Tibet as it had been in India, and it is thanks to this that we are able to have this talk today.

Buddhism came to Tibet in two periods of time.

The first one was during the time of Guru Padmasambhava, the great abbot Shantarakshita and the Tibetan Dharma king Trisong Detsen. Thanks to them, Buddhism was fully established in Tibet. When the great abbot Shantarakshita came to Tibet, he started to build temples and establish monasteries. Tibet had a lot of local deities that were very powerful, and they created huge disturbances. During the daytime, the human builders did a tremendous amount of work, but during the night all their work was dismantled, through storms and lightning and all kinds of problems.

The great Shantarakshita was unable to counter the power of the local deities and he resolved that the only way to overcome them was to invite Guru Padmasambhava, who had the power to subdue them. And so they sent messengers to India. In his omniscience, Guru Padmasambhava already knew this and he himself had already set out for Tibet, and met the messengers on the road. He eventually arrived in Tibet and destroyed all the evil spirits and converted the helpful ones to Buddhism, exacting from them a pledge to protect the Dharma and to become Dharma protectors. They were then able to build temples and establish monastic institutions.

So it was that at that time no Tibetan had ever received Buddhist ordination. It wasn't known whether Tibetans would be able to keep Buddhist monks' vows or not. And so seven persons were chosen to be given the full-fledged Bhikkshu vows by Shantarakshita. Of the seven, three were older men, three were younger and one was middle-aged. Among the younger ones was a member of the Khön family.

The Khöns were originally believed to be the direct descendants of celestial beings from a realm called the Rupadhatu. From the Rupadhatu they came down to the high mountains of Tibet, where they set-

tled. While the rest of them went back to the celestial realms, one of them stayed in Tibet and his hereditary lineage was established in this land. And at that time there was no Buddhism, there was only the Bon religion.

The Khöns were Bonpos. But when Padmasambhava and Shantarakshita came and established Buddhism, they became Buddhists. One of those chosen to take the vows was a Khön family member, Khön Nagendarakshita. And so Buddhism was established in Tibet and all the words of the Buddha and their commentaries were translated. He was also one of the translators. With his younger brother, called Dorje Rinchen, who was not a monk but a householder, they received many important empowerments and teachings from Guru Padmasambhava, and they did a lot of practice and attained very high realizations.

At that time the two main deities were Vajrakilaya and Yandak Heruka. Through these two deities they had very high realizations as did many generations of Khön after them. Some thirteen generations down the line, there were two brothers called Sherab Zozem and Konchok Gyalpo. During Sherab Zozem's time, one day there was a big gathering, where there was dancing and all kinds of games, and all kinds of shows. His younger brother went there to see and when he came back, the elder brother asked what the gathering was like.

He said there were many people, much dancing, and also all kinds of sports. But the most impressive one was the secret dance that was performed. He felt this was not right because the secret dances are very holy and they should not be displayed in public. They should only be performed in secluded places, with a limited audience. The elder brother said: "Now I'm old and I won't be able to learn anything new, but you are young, so you can learn the new teachings. The

time has come to conceal all our old teachings and found a separate school.

At that time, the most famous lama was Drogmi Sakya Yeshe. He was very famous, so the Khöns sent for him. But he was very strict. He didn't give teachings to more than one person at a time. At the beginning Konchok Gyalpo had difficulty learning, but he eventually succeeded.

When Drogmi gave a blessing on top of Konchok Gyalpo's head, he said: "Touching your head, I can feel that your lineage has a special kind of quality that will benefit the teachings, spread the teachings. And so he gave him the teachings. And with that, Konchok Gyalpo established the Sakya Order.

The first Sakya monastery was built in 1073. This is more than 900 years ago. In Tibet we have the four major schools. The Nyingmapas, who were the original school, the ancient school. The new schools are the Kagyupas, the Sakyapas and the Gelukpas. These were the four major schools.

So now, what is the Sakyapa? What is the meaning of Sakya? Sakya means "Grey Earth". As the town is called Sakya, the school is also called Sakya. It has a mountain that is in the shape of an elephant. And in the centre of it is a patch of grey earth. And this has three specialties. The first is that long before the school was founded, Guru Padmasambhava came there and predicted that in the future a great monastery would be established on that spot and that it would spread the Dharma in every direction, and also benefit an immense number of sentient beings.

And he erected four stupas, one in each direction, and blessed the earth. So the first monastery's earth was blessed by Guru Padmasambhava. And that is the number one specialty.

The second specialty is that Palden Atisha once had made prostrations in an empty countryside. His

attendants asked why he was doing prostrations and making offerings in that empty space. And he said 'don't you see, on this grey earth, there are seven syllables of DHIH, one syllable of HRIH, and one syllable of HUNG. This means there will be seven emanations of Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, one emanation of Avalokiteshvara, the Buddha of Compassion and one emanation of Vajrapani, the Buddha of Power. And also in the future there will be many emanations of these Bodhisattvas who will benefit immensely all sentient beings. And so this is why I'm making prostrations. So that is the second specialty.

The third specialty is that Khön Konchok Gyalpo, founder of the school, had a son when he was very young. He was called Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, was trained as a Lama and received many teachings. One day, his tutor advised him: 'You are the son of a great Lama, so you need to study. And in order to study, you need wisdom. And to acquire wisdom, you need to practise Manjushri. And so he received the initiations and their related teachings and then practised Manjushri in retreat. One day, in his pure vision he saw many rainbows and flowers, and in the middle of this, was Manjushri sitting on a throne as if sitting on a chair, with two legs down, one Bodhisattva on either side. And Manjushri said "If you have attachment to this life, you are not a religious person. If you have attachment to the realm of existence, you do not have the proper renunciation. If you have attachment to self-purpose, you do not have bodhicitta, or enlightenment mind. And if grasping arises, you do not have the View."

These four lines actually contain the entire Mahayana teaching. He got a very high realization from this teaching and he passed it on to his sons; it has continued up until now as a preliminary teaching of mind training. And not only in the Sakya school, but

the other schools also consider this as a very authentic and pure mind-training teaching.

And then Konchok Gyalpo received the Lamdre teaching from his Guru. Lamdre means - Lam means path and Dre means result. That is actually a short way of saying it. But actually it means 'base, path and result all together'. If the base and the result are separate, then it is not possible to accomplish (it). They have to be all together. They have to be linked. And so he received this from his Guru for many years and after fully transmitting the teaching to him, the Guru advised him that for 18 years he should not give this teaching to anybody, not to even mention its name.

And then after a few years, he should either teach it to other people or write it down. Previous to this, the Lamdre had no written teachings, it was all oral teachings. But after eighteen years, he should write it down or teach it; in any case, he was now the owner of this teaching. So he practised for eighteen long years. One time, he became very ill and had to take strong medicines, and due to these medicines, he forgot many of the teachings. He became very sad and felt desperate because his teacher was no longer alive, and there were no other Dharma brothers or sisters with whom he could discuss. And even if he did go to India, which meant a very arduous trip, things were kept so secretly that he might not be able to find out anything. So what to do? He prayed to his Guru and his Guru appeared in his dream and gave him the teachings. And so he was able to revive many teachings. Then again, he prayed and prayed and prayed. His Guru appeared in person and gave him more teachings, and most of them he could revive. Again he prayed and prayed, and then one day, Mahasiddha Virupa himself appeared.

Mahasiddha Virupa was actually from Nalanda. He was the abbot of Nalanda. He later became a Mahasiddha, and he is the original Guru of Lamdre.

Lamdre has 5 Indian Gurus. He was the first one. So five Indian Gurus, then the Tibetan translators. Virupa appeared and covered the mountain, leaning towards the grey earth. The whole mountain was covered with his body and he said: "This earth belongs to me." So this was the third specialty. The first specialty was that Guru Padmasambhava blessed the land, the second specialty was that Palden Atisha gave the prophecy, and the third specialty was that Mahasiddha Virupa himself appeared and blessed the area and said "This earth belongs to me." So Sakya has three specialties.

So now, what is Sakyapa? Sakyapa actually means one who holds the lineage of the four great translators. Buddhism first came from India, where it originated, through the translators. So the teachings that came through the translators are considered to be very authentic and very pure. There were four translators. The first one was Bari Lotsawa. Lotsawa means translator. Bari, I think, was his clan. His personal name was Rinchen Drakpa. He went from Tibet through Nepal to India and stayed years studying under the guidance of Indian masters. He received many teachings and collected them all together. There is one book called 'The Collection of Sadhanas'. He brought that as well as many other teachings. Bari Lotsawa was teacher to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo.

The second translator was Drogmi Lotsawa. As was just mentioned, Konchok Gyalpo consulted him and, with great difficulty, persuaded him to teach him. His personal name was Sakya Yeshe. He was the first Tibetan Lama to receive the Lamdre teachings. He gave to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's father many teachings, especially the Hevajra Tantra but he did not give him the Lamdre teaching. He chose another disciple, because he did not give the different types of teachings to a single disciple. Lamdre belongs to what is known as a 'pith instruction'. So he did not give pith

instructions to those to whom he gave Tantra teachings. When he gave Tantra, he did not give pith instructions, and when he gave pith instructions he did not give Tantra.

He introduced his best disciple to the pith instructions, and it is from him that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo received them. In this way, the Lamdre became the main teaching of the Sakyapas. Most importantly, Lamdre means the path and the result, but it has everything. It has the Sutrayana path – the preliminary part is the Sutrayana path – and the main part is the Vajrayana path. It is a complete teaching, starting from the refuge up to enlightenment. And so in this way, it is a complete teaching.

And so this was the second translator. And then the third one was Mal Lotsawa, and his name was Lodoe Drakpa. He also received an enormous amount of teachings, especially Chakrasambara and Mahakala, etc. and gave them to Lama Sakyapa (Sachen Kunga Nyingpo).

The fourth one was Lotsawa Rinchen Sangpo. He was the most important translator during this new translation period. Through him also we got many, many teachings. So Sakyapa teachings all came through these four translators.

The Sakya monastery was first established in 1070 by Khön Konchok Gyalpo and then his son Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, as I said, received teachings directly from Manjushri and also from Virupa, as well as many other teachings during a period of one full month.

Kunga Nyingpo had four sons. The first son was called Kunga Bar. He went to India to study and passed away there. His second son was Loppön Sonam Tsemo, who was a very great scholar. His fame reached as far as the river Ganges. He wrote many books on Sutrayana, as well as Mantrayana and many

rituals as well. And then the third son was Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen. He was a very great master. Especially for the Lamdre teachings. In terms of the Lamdre teachings, he is the most important Lama because Lamdre is a pith instruction and it has many hidden words, so it needs many explanations, detailed explanations, which he gave readily. He is the real owner of all the secret teachings.

The fourth son was called Pachen Yopo, and he had a son called Sakya Pandita, who is very well known. He was the first Tibetan to receive the full Pandita title. He also wrote many treatises and many commentaries, especially on the Parmana, or Buddhist Logic. Many books have been translated from the Indian text, from Sanskrit into Tibetan, of course, as every teaching had to be translated into Tibetan.

Sakya Pandita was unique in that he was the only Tibetan master whose works were translated into Sanskrit. Sakya Pandita wrote the Parmana in Tibetan, and it was so complete, so authentic, so great that it was translated back from Tibetan into Sanskrit. Sakya Pandita's younger brother was Sangsar Sonam Gyaltsen. Sonam Gyaltsen had two official sons, one was Drogon Chogyal Phagpa and his brother was Drogon Chana. They became the royal priests of the Mongolian emperors. Drogon Chogyal Phagpa, especially, went twice to Mongolia. At that time, the Mongols had conquered China and so the Mongolian emperors were also the Chinese emperors.

They were invited to China and, for the first time, Vajrayana teachings were spread into China and Mongolia. Moreover, Drogon Chogyal Phagpa is the one who devised the Mongolian script. The Mongolians did not have a script at that time, so he created the Mongolian script.

These were called the Five Great Masters: Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, Loppön Sonam Tsemo, Jetsun

Dragpa Gyaltsen, Sakya Pandita and Drogon Chogyal Phagpa. Chogyal Phagpa later became the ruler of Tibet. The Mongols gave all three provinces to Drogon Chogyal Phagpa as an offering. And so he became the first Lama King of Tibet.

And also, the Sakyapas had many very great scholars. There were nine great scholars. Three great scholars who were very capable in the explanation of the Sutrayana path. Yangtön Sangyepa. He was actually considered as an emanation of Lord Maitreya, the coming Buddha. He wrote a lot of commentaries on the Lord Maitreya's teachings. The second one was Rongton Sheja Kunrig, another very brilliant scholar who wrote many books. It is said that whenever he gave teachings, fragrance prevailed and there fell a shower of flowers and rainbows appeared. The third one was Rendawa Shönu Lodrö. He was also a great scholar, and his specialty was Madhyamika philosophy, the Middle Way philosophy. He wrote special books explaining the Middle Way school of thought. So these were the three great scholars who explained the Sutrayana. The last one, Rendawa Shönu Lodrö was also the main teacher of Lama Tsonkapa, who is the father of the Geluk tradition. His main teacher was Rendawa Shönu Lodrö. He studied under him for many years. And then there were three great scholars who specialised in the Mantrayana. They were Ngorchén Dorje Chang Kunga Sangpo, who was the founder of the Ngor sub-school of Sakya. Sakya has three sub-schools – one of them is the Ngorpa school, founded by Ngorchén Kunga Sangpo. He was a truly great master. The Buddha himself in many sutras mentions his name very clearly. He says that at one point in time there would be a bhikkshu called Kunga Sangpo who would be able to spread the teachings of the Buddha, and that he would have great discipline in keeping the vinaya rules, etc.

Another great Lama was Tsarchen Losal Gyatso, founder of the Tsarpa sub-school of the Sakya Order. He was also a great master. From a very young age, he had a great specialty, he gave enormous amount of teachings, wrote many commentaries, and specially the most uncommon teachings, not only Sakyapa but from all the traditions. He was the owner of the most uncommon teachings. So he was a very great master.

And the third one was Dorje Dempa Kunga Namgyal. He was the founder of the Dzongpa sub-school of the Sakya. He was also a very great scholar. The specialty of these three was the Mantrayana tradition.

Then there were three more great masters, and their specialty was both Sutrayana and Mantrayana. One of them was Gorampa Sonam Sangye. He was from a very young age a very great scholar and he wrote many books, and today in most of our philosophical colleges, we use his texts. He was excellent in the very detailed explanation of Sutrayana teachings, as well as Mantrayana teachings.

And then another one was Shakya Chogden. He was also very special, a great master. He wrote a great number of books and had a very special sharp mind in explaining in great detail the most authentic details of the very profound teachings. And the third one was Taksang Lotsawa. He was a great scholar and also a translator. He translated many important texts. He also wrote many important commentaries.

So through these great masters so many teachings came down to the Sakyapas. And not only is Sakyapa considered great by the Sakyapas themselves, but it is also praised by masters of the other schools. For example the 5th Dalai Lama wrote a poem that said that Tibet had many great scholars and practitioners, just like the sun and the moon, but the only ones who explained fully the Sutra, Mantra, as well as all the religious sciences, were born in the

Khön lineage, such as Sakya Pandita. There are many great scholars who can explain part of the teachings – some can explain Sutrayana, some can explain Mantrayana, some can explain other religious sciences, but there is no one who fully masters complete teachings, apart from the ones born in the Khön lineage, specially Sakya Pandita.

So this was a brief explanation of the Sakya Tradition. But I feel that all the traditions that exist today, in terms of their first motivation of the enlightenment mind, and the main practice of the combination of Sutra and Mantra together, the final accomplishment of complete enlightenment, there is no difference between them. All are exactly the same. The only difference is that the lineage is different. It depends on who the original Guru from India was, how the lineage was passed down through the different translators, how the teachings came down through the lineage, etc. This is the difference. Due to this difference, there is a distinction in emphasis with each school. Some schools emphasize the practice of meditation, some emphasize study, and others emphasize both, and so on, but otherwise, there is no difference. All are the same.

In the same way, for example, all the deities are the same. All the Buddhas are the same, in terms of their compassion, in terms of their wisdom, in terms of their power, there is no difference between them. But due to our own karmic connection, there are certain deities who can help us accomplish more quickly, certain deities who take longer. This is because of our own karmic connection. If we don't have a karmic connection with a deity, then it will take a longer time to achieve accomplishment.

The deity with whom we have a karmic connection will help us to attain swift accomplishment. So it is all due to our own affinities, our own karmic

connections that there is a difference. Buddha also manifested in many different forms. There are many deities, some are very peaceful, some are very wrathful, some are very passionate, some have a consort and so on; some deities are very simple with one face, two hands, some deities are very elaborate with many faces, many hands, and so on. But they are all the same. There is no difference. If there were only one, we could say that one Buddha is enough. But it is not. Because of our own personalities, our own affinities and our own karmic connections, we have different needs. And so therefore there are so many different deities.

Similarly, the variety of different schools is necessary. We have Nyingmapas, Kagyupas, Sakyapas, Gelukpas – for certain people this school is more suitable, for certain people that school is more suitable, for certain people yet another school is more suitable. All are the same but it all depends on our propensities. One might ask 'If they're all the same, then why do we need so many of them?'

This is necessary because the approach is different with each school. The final accomplishment is the same, but the approach is different. So when we have different approaches, discrepancies also arise. Sometimes there is debate also. But this is only because the ultimate truth is so subtle and so difficult to comprehend that debate helps to throw light on it. So you have to explain in many ways with many examples, many logical reasons, in many ways. But the final conclusion, the final accomplishment, all are the same, all are the Buddha's activities, all are the same, but due to our own affinities and so on, we need different schools.

A great master, who lived recently, wrote a book called 'The Mirror of Jewels'. This book explains the Sakyapas' view. The author clearly mentions that,

although Tibet had many different schools, major schools, minor schools, all different kinds of schools, and although the four major schools use different terms, different approaches, the final approach, the final accomplishment are all the same. These schools debate among themselves, in order to comprehend, to understand better – because ultimate truth is so difficult to comprehend, so difficult to understand, it has to be presented in many ways – one way is through debate.

But he said that the final accomplishment is the same in all the schools. Every school has great masters, not only great scholars but also highly realized masters. If something were faulty in the tenets of their school, then they could not get high realization. Since every school produces greatly realized masters, it shows that every school is authentic, and every school is the same in terms of final accomplishment, it is all the same. But as said earlier, our karmic connections are what makes the difference.

Buddha himself said ‘my teachings should not be taken by faith, but by reason.’ You use your own intelligence and you test. Just like if you want to buy gold, you make sure that it is genuine gold. You test, you burn and you cut and you scratch, until you are convinced that it is genuine gold. Then similarly, the Buddha said that ‘My teachings you should test, you should analyse’ as when you buy gold. And so Buddha is the only one, I think no other founders of a tradition ever said this. Everyone says I bless you, I save you, but no one says ‘You should test my teachings’. In Buddhism, our own wisdom, our own mind, our own intelligence are important. So we should test ourselves, we should examine ourselves and test ourselves. And when we’re convinced that it is a genuine teaching, then we choose to follow it.

And then we act according to that. At the same

time, we respect all the traditions because every they’re all helping mankind.

In our Sakya teachings, the main teaching is the Lamdre. It is the most important teaching. It is taught through the four authenticities. Authentic teacher, authentic text of the Buddha’s words, authentic commentaries/teachings, and authentic experience. It is taught through that. The main way of learning is that we receive the teachings from our teacher, then we study, contemplate, meditate, and through meditation we gain experience, special experience. When we gain this special experience, we’re convinced that our teacher is authentic. Because if our teacher is not authentic, we cannot have such experience, such wonderful experience. So we establish that our teacher is authentic. And the teaching he gave is also authentic because it’s the commentaries that Mahasiddha Virupa and many ancient masters gave, so therefore the commentaries are authentic. And thus we are convinced that the commentaries are authentic. And that also, based on the Buddha’s words. The Buddha’s words are also authentic.

So by gaining authentic experience by ourselves, then we can establish that our Guru is authentic, the teachings are authentic, and the Buddha’s words are authentic. So in this way the four authenticities are established.

So, whatever we choose, we choose ourselves and then we practise. Once we start, we should not jump here and there. We have to continue until we experience, and as we experience, we gain more and more inspiration, more aspiration to do it more because we gain experience.

In this way I have tried to present a brief history of the Sakya School and its teachings.

(Adapted from a talk at the Tibetan House US, New York, April 2018)

The Sage's Intent

by Sakya Pandita



An oral commentary by His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin

(Part 2)

Taking Refuge

Actually, true refuge should come from our own mind. Just our physical body doing prostrations or paying respect is not the actual refuge. Although it is a respectful act, just by doing a respectful act, we cannot say that we are taking refuge in the object of the respectful act. Refuge comes from our mind. Generally speaking, there are two different kinds of refuge, genuine refuge and non-genuine or mundane refuge.

First, we need to know what refuge means. Generally speaking if we have a problem that we can't solve by ourselves, we ask someone for help who is more skilful than us, has more knowledge, more power, who has better techniques than us to solve our problem. When we ask someone to help, we ask someone who is better than ourselves, who can do something that we cannot do by ourselves. So in such a situation, we are kind of taking refuge. This

just refers to a general refuge, which is not quite like the Buddhist refuge, but it does convey the general meaning of refuge.

First, it is important to know why we have to take refuge. If we are Buddhists, then we must take refuge. Rather, if we want to become a Buddhist, then we must take refuge. If we do not take refuge, then from the conduct point of view, we cannot become a Buddhist. And just having faith, just believing in the Buddha, will not make us a Buddhist. Just being born in a Buddhist family will not make us a Buddhist. Just studying the Buddha's teachings or meditating on them will not make us a Buddhist. Just believing in the law of karma or in rebirth will not make us a Buddhist. Just developing loving kindness and compassion for all beings will not make us a Buddhist. To become a Buddhist, we must take the refuge vow, we must take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha through proper rituals and with proper motivation. If we take proper refuge, then at that time we become a genuine Buddhist from the conduct point of view.

So we need to know why this refuge is important. Actually, we can also develop the wish to attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings but by just having this wish or thought, one cannot become a real Buddhist or Mahayana Buddhist. Developing such a wish before receiving the Bodhicitta vow, is what we call in Tibetan *momba tsam*, which means making a mere wish. Likewise, just doing prostrations to the Buddha, just making offerings such as flowers to the Buddha will not make us a real Buddhist. Just by doing this is not the real way to become a Buddhist.

We must take the refuge vow. Those who wish to become Buddhists must take the refuge vow. I think

the literal meaning for the Tibetan term *gyap dro* means 'go for refuge'. *Gyap* means 'refuge' and *dro* means 'go toward'. We speak of refuge because if we see this object as a refuge, we are confident that it will rescue us from suffering, from harm and from other problems. And by recognising this object as a refuge, we go toward it and adopt it as a refuge.

Who goes for refuge? Not only our body or our words go for refuge. Our mind also needs to go for refuge. For example, if we are outside walking and suddenly it begins to rain and we say the words 'umbrella, umbrella, umbrella', just these words won't keep us from getting wet. So without mind, mere words won't save us from getting wet. We have to do something, we have to get an umbrella or take shelter in a house or a cave, somewhere where we are protected from the rain. Just saying the words of taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is not that effective. Mind should be going for refuge. We should go for refuge not only with our words, but our mind itself should go for refuge. When we say that the mind should go for refuge, it means we are not only saying the words, but that we are really visualising, we are really reflecting, really meditating on this. We are really taking refuge wholeheartedly, from the bottom of our heart.

Generally speaking there are many kinds of refuge, Buddhist refuge, non-Buddhist refuge. Non-Buddhist refuge has two aspects - non-Buddhist objects of refuge and non-Buddhist mind of refuge. If we take refuge in the fire gods or the earth gods, then this is a non-Buddhist refuge. Then the next one, even if we go for refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, which is the Buddhist refuge but at the same time we are taking refuge for the sake of ourselves

or our loved ones, then although we have the correct Buddhist object of refuge, we don't have the Buddhist mind or motivation. So even if we take refuge in the proper objects of refuge, if our motivation is mundane, then our refuge is not the real Buddhist refuge.

Also within the Buddhist refuge, there is the Sravakaya refuge, the Pratiekabuddha refuge and the Mahayana refuge, and within the Mahayana there is the cause Paramitayana refuge and the Vajrayana refuge. These four all take the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha as object of refuge, but their adherence to the three gems is different.

Sravakas take refuge in the Triple Gem, but mainly in the Sangha. Pratiekabuddhas take refuge in the Dharma, and Paramitayana take refuge in the Triple Gem but mainly in the Buddha. Although both Paramitayana and Vajrayana both take refuge in the Buddha, still their adherence is different. In the Paramitayana, the 11th Bhumi is the Buddha state, but according to Vajrayana it is not the Buddha state – it is still a state of learning, a state of Bodhisattvahood. In the Vajrayana, Buddhahood is only attained in the 13th Bhumi. So although both Paramitayana and Vajrayana take refuge in the Buddha, there is a difference in their understanding of Buddhahood.

Here, the main topic is the refuge of Paramitayana because this text is based on Paramitayana teachings. Normally we say the Paramitayana or general Mahayana refuge has four special qualities. Firstly, the quality of cause. The Sravakas and Pratiekabuddhas have two causes for refuge, which are fear and faith. They don't have great compassion as a cause of refuge. In Mahayana they have a third cause, which is great compassion, which is the uncommon Mahayana

cause of refuge. The first two causes, fear and faith, are common with Sravakas and Pratiekabuddhas as causes of refuge, but great compassion is the uncommon Mahayana cause of refuge. This is the special quality of the cause.

The second special quality is the quality of object. Generally the main object of the Mahayana refuge is the Buddha, which is not the same for the Sravakas and Pratiekabuddhas.

The third special quality is the duration. In the Mahayana we take refuge from the time of taking the refuge vows until the time when we attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.

The fourth special quality is the purpose. Mahayana takes refuge in the Triple Gem for the sake of all sentient beings. The purpose of taking refuge is for the sake of all beings. This is the special quality of the purpose of the Mahayana refuge.

Because of these four qualities, this refuge is different from other refuges. In the Paramitayana or Mahayana, we take refuge in the Triple Gem, but how we visualize them is special. In front of us, we visualize a jeweled throne, on top of that a moon disk, on top of that a lotus, and on top of that the real Shakyamuni in the nature of light, and behind this we can visualize piles of Dharma books, ornately decorated, and then we can visualize the Noble Sangha like Arya Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, Vajrapani and others, who are also surrounding the Buddha and the Dharma books. This kind of visualization is the refuge field according to the general Mahayana or the Cause Paramitayana tradition.

So when we take refuge in the Buddha, we focus on Buddha Shakyamuni and we think that he is the one who will show us the path to Buddhahood. When we take refuge in the Dharma, we focus on the Dharma books and think that they are the actual path. While focusing on the Dharma books, we can also think that this is the realization of Buddha Shakyamuni in the form of Dharma texts. When we take refuge in the Noble Assembly that is surrounding the Buddha and the Dharma texts, we think that these are our spiritual companions.

Also now we will talk about precepts. There are general precepts and specific precepts. Within the general precepts, there are two kinds - adopting precepts and abandoning precepts.

Examples of general adopting precepts are sitting next to qualified master of general Mahayana teachings and also receiving precious Dharma from this authentic master or qualified master. Then practising according to the teachings of our master.

General abandoning precepts means that we should not abandon the Triple Gem for the sake of material gains. In other words, we should not abandon the Triple Gem at any cost. Pleasant reward or fearful punishment, whatever fate we may face, we should never give up, we should never veer away from taking refuge toward mundane goals.

As for the particular precepts, once we have taken refuge in the Buddha we should never take refuge in mundane gods. After taking refuge in the Dharma, we should never harm other beings. And after taking refuge in the Sangha, we shouldn't make non-Buddhists our spiritual companions.

This doesn't mean that we should not talk with non-Buddhists or make any contacts or friendship with non-Buddhists. We can make relationships with anybody, socialise with them, but not make them our spiritual companions.

Another topic is the benefits of taking refuge, of which there are two kinds: one is the benefits that we receive before becoming Buddhas, and the other is the benefits that we receive once we attain Buddhahood.

First, the benefits that we receive before becoming a Buddha, or the temporal benefits. This means that by taking proper refuge, we can purify the faults of our negative actions and also we can be protected from the harmful actions of our fellow humans and of non-humans. And also we can reduce our physical pain and mental suffering in this very life. Other temporal benefits are that we will change our name from non-Buddhist to Buddhist, we become Buddhist followers. In this way, we should have the confidence not to be separated from the Buddha in life after life, in all our lifetimes.

Then there are the benefits of taking refuge after attaining Buddhahood, which means that we can turn the wheel of Dharma unceasingly for infinite human beings, and also we can have infinite followers whom we can help. Also, we can guide infinite beings on the path of the Buddha and enable them to also attain the qualities of the Triple Gem in the future.

The Importance Of Spiritual Practice

A Teaching by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche



Vajrakilaya is the main practice of Sakya monasteries – it is the main annual puja held at our Sakya Monastery in Tibet as well as at our Sakya Centre in Rajpur, Northern India, where I grew up.

Today we are receiving the Vajrakilaya initiation, which carries with it an enormous amount of blessings. I would like to pass these blessings on to you. I don't consider myself a teacher, or a master by any matter of means, but I did receive this precious initiation from very great masters, and it is through them that I have received the blessings of the Vajrakilaya initiation, and now I'm very happy that I can pass on these very same blessings to you.

One of the reasons why Vajrakilaya is such an

important practice in our tradition is that it is one of the very few ancient lineages that have survived the centuries right down to today. In the past there were many lineages, but most of them disappeared, only very few survived. And so Vajrakilaya belongs to an unbroken lineage that goes back hundreds and hundreds of years. This means that hundreds of years of dedication, hundreds of years of practice, have gone into this Vajrakilaya blessing. And so I'm truly happy that I can pass it on to you.

At the same time, it's very important to realise that although we place so much emphasis on the practice of Vajrakilaya, all the other deities are equally as important. Whether it be Vajrakilaya, Mahakala, Hevajra, Vajrayogini, Tara, Padmasambhava or

Avalokiteshvara, they're all the same. There is no difference between them in terms of importance. All these deities are the Buddha. And so it's important that we don't become attached to one deity above the others.

Many practitioners are attached to a particular deity and say "Oh, my deity is Wrathful Mahakala, or Hevajra, or Vajrakilaya". This is not right, it's almost like taking sides. There are no sides to be taken in the practice of deities. They are all equal, they are all the Buddha.

We should understand this and rectify our attitude. We often have misconceptions about different aspects of the spiritual path. As humans we make mistakes, and it's important that we realise our mistakes. This is the first step that leads us in the right direction. The first step towards enlightenment is to realise our mistakes. Once we know right from wrong, we can progress steadily along the path.

When we receive an initiation or a teaching, it is very important to put it into practice, to practise diligently. Whenever they give initiations or teachings, many lamas give their students commitments that they have to abide by if they want to continue receiving the blessings. For my part, I'm just happy to pass on this teaching to you. The only commitment that I would ask from students is that they practise, whatever their practice is. It doesn't have to be Vajrakilaya.

But whatever practice we do, we need to do it diligently. We need to strive to bring the practice of the Buddha's teachings into our daily lives, into our relationships, with our family, our friends, our neighbours. If it turns out that we haven't changed for

the better, that our relationships haven't improved, then it means that we haven't fully assimilated the meaning of the Buddha's teachings. It is very important to use the full effect of the Buddha's teachings, to listen to them, and to make them our own.

In the same way that we should not consider one deity superior to the others, the same applies to our lamas. Practitioners sometimes say for example "Oh, my master is the best, he's the highest. He's a tulku, or a khenpo". This seems to me a wrong way to see things, a wrong kind of reasoning. If we have a guru, then he is our guru, and there is no such consideration as to whether he's high or not. He's our guru, and our relationship with him has nothing to do with his title or his position.

If we're learning martial arts, then we can say that our guru has more muscle or more efficient techniques. But when it comes to practising Buddhism, there's no such thing as higher or lower. It won't be because a teacher has a higher throne that he will be giving us a better teaching.

What really matters is how it affects our life when we receive a teaching from our guru, how much we open ourselves up to him. If the guru's teaching is not reaching us deeply, it means that the guru/disciple relationship is not working. If we don't understand how he is trying to help us, then it means that we need to rethink the relationship. It doesn't mean that the guru is not a good guru, but it might be a question of karmic connection.

There has to be a karmic connection between a guru and a disciple. Even to be a Buddhist, we need

a karmic connection. To meet our guru, we need a karmic connection. Even in normal life, sometimes when we meet new people or go to new places, we feel naturally happy, without any reason. Sometimes when we meet someone for the first time, we also feel very happy, very close. Even if we've never met them before, we feel as if we'd known them for years and years. This is called karmic connection.

This is what happens when we meet our guru. We feel deep emotions, we feel strong reactions in our body, we feel very close, as if we'd known him or her forever. These are the signs. It's not absolutely necessary that this happens, but these are the signs that we've met our karmic guru.

And when we have met our karmic guru, it becomes especially important that we commit ourselves to our spiritual practise. I always request disciples, sangha members, vajra brothers and sisters, to practise diligently. This is because our guru is here for us. The gurus are not here because they want to be here. They are the Buddha himself, and the only reason why they are here is to help us.

We call this age the Fortunate Eon, because so many Buddhas are taking birth in our world. And we need the Buddhas to stay as long as possible in our world. The only way we can do this is by practising. Neither medicine, nor money, nor luxury can help to prolong our guru's life. Only our practice can we offer to the guru, the most valuable offering of all.

And so, we need to practise diligently. This is not to say that we have to go into retreat, we don't have to cast everything away and become a sort of Citizen Kane or anything of the sort. What this means is that

even if we do five minutes of practice every day, or even two minutes, or even one, we have to make it count. We have to do it with a pure heart, with pure devotion. Then our gurus will live long.

Without our gurus we are nothing, we're just like a baby. When we're born, without the help of our parents, of those who love us, we would die within a few hours, because we don't know how to eat, how to drink, how to do anything. We're just like a crawling piece of meat! In a way, we are still like that. Without the help of our gurus, we are completely helpless.

The Buddhas are everywhere, inside us, outside us, everywhere. But because of our karma, we cannot see them. Thankfully, they show themselves to us in the form of our gurus. We mustn't think that when we are not physically in front of our guru, he cannot see us. With this kind of thinking, we do whatever we want, and then when we go to the guru, we wear nice clothes and tell him how well we're doing. It doesn't work this way. We cannot trick our guru. And if we act in this manner, we are disrespecting the guru and it means we don't trust him.

Actually, when we take a guru, it means that he knows everything about us, our inside, our outside, our past life, this life, our future life. He knows everything. This is what we have to understand and believe. If we're not one hundred per cent transparent with our guru, then the relationship is not as effective as it should be. You may get a certain amount of blessing, but not a full amount of blessing.

And so, if we want our guru to live long, then we need to practice. This is my only request, this is the only commitment that I'm giving to you.

The Quintessence of the Secret Jewel Oral Teaching, Explained in the Form of Requesting Prayers

gsun.ngg.rin.po.che' .khrid.yig.bsdus.pa.ksol. 'deps.zab.don.snin.po.psuks.so.

NAMO GURU RATNA WADAYA

I and all sentient beings of the three Dhatus
who are equal to space, without a single exception,
from this time forth until enlightenment is reach, -
in He who is the body, voice, mind, qualities and activities combined
of all the Sugatas of the ten directions and three times, who is the real living Buddha,
the source of the 84,000 articles of doctrine,
and Master of all the noble assemblies –

--- in the Gurus of root and line,
with great respect of body, voice and mind I take refuge;
in the guide, the Buddha who has abandoned (*what must be abandoned*) and achieved (*what must be achieved*) with great respect of body, voice and mind I take refuge;
In the teaching and realisation of the holy Dharmas,
with great respect of body voice and mind I take refuge;
in the Victorious Sons, the noble Sangha that holds the teaching,
with great respect of body voice and mind I take refuge.

Excellent Lama and Precious Triple Gem
in three parts, I bow down and take refuge in you;
May you bestow blessings on body, voice and mind
of myself and of all sentient beings.

May you bless me that my mind may follow Dharma,
may you bless me with success on the Path of Dharma,
may you bless me to disperse all illusions on the path;
may you bless me to see all illusion as the Dharmadhatu, may you bless me that all non-dharma thoughts
may cease, may you bless me that love and compassion arise.

May you bless me that I practice the two Bodhicitta,
may you bless me to reach enlightenment quickly,
may you bless me with the thought of removing Samsara,
in which the changing suffering, the suffering of suffering and
the suffering of conditional existence are without end.

Having obtained the rare chance of this precious Taljor,
may I be without attachment to the prosperity to this life;
bless me to practice the excellent Dharma from the bottom of my heart,
by the practice of remembering death, which leaves us no time.

Bless me to accept and reject correctly,
and to turn neutral actions into pure actions
by the knowledge that all sufferings originate in non-virtuous actions,
and that all happiness comes from virtuous actions.

May you bless me to practice love,
the wish for all being's happiness,
and compassion, that all beings depart from suffering; for they
have been our mothers since beginningless time
and have benefitted us so much.

By reaching the stage of the fully Enlightened One
who like a sailor helps beings to cross the Ocean of Samsara,
may I then practice the wishing Bodhicitta,
the desire to remove all beings from the Ocean of Samsara.

May you bless me to follow the career of the Bodhisattva
by practising Bodhicitta: first equating myself with all others,
the substituting others for my own self;
in order to destroy the evil of clinging to "self"

- the main source of suffering and obstacle to Bodhi.

Bless me to allay all misery of self-clinging
by practising the combined concentration
in which there is no trace of thought,
and the great wisdom, which is understanding the truth of soulessness.

Bless me to make the endeavour to search out
the short Path, having completed the stages of the Common Path,
by having firm devotion to the deep Path;
and hearing the great qualities of the result,
may I become enthusiastic (*to peruse it*).

Bless me to be able to enter the Path of the Great Secret,
where I can practice the extraordinary Mahayana Refuge,
and create the wishing and enlightenment mind
for the purpose of purifying myself:
which is the only Path
along which the great ones have passed.

In order to remove from samsara all sentient beings
- who are my mothers - I must get enlightenment.
In order to reach enlightenment I must practice
the deep Yoga, which is the Path of all the Buddhas.

On the top of my head is a lotus in which is a moon and sun;
on this mattress is seated the greatly kind One, the Guru Vajradhara;
At the feet of that Lama who is all the Refuges combined, I request:
May you bestow all the Consecrations and Siddhis upon me.

May you bestow the Vase Consecration to my body,
may you bestow the Secret Consecration to my speech,
may you bestow the Wisdom consecration to my mind,
may you bestow the Fourth consecration upon the 'vital airs' in my body.

May you bless me to be able to keep
without any impurity of downfall and with great endeavour
the pledge of meditation, in-between times, eating, protecting and inseparability,

which are received during the pure rituals of consecration.

May you bless me to realise the simultaneously born-non-duality which has three parts:

Cause, which is the complete combination of clear and void;

Path, or the wisdom arising from the practice of the Paths of Emanation and Completion, and Result, which is Nirmanakaya, Dharmakaya and Sambhogakaya.

May you bless me to realise all outside visions as
projections of my own mind, which are created by
my defilements and actions, just as images perceived in dreams,
have no creator other than my own mind.

May you bless me to realise that all perceptions are illusions
created by my own mind, visible, but void;
as a magician may create the appearance of a horse or elephant
where there is really nothing.

May you bless me to realise the deep meaning of the
Law of Interdependent Origination, in which
one sees all dharmas born out of the Birthless Dhatu
as seed does not become shoot, though the shoot rises from it.

May you bless me to understand the true nature of that which is beyond expression,
which can be experienced, but is beyond having and not having,
like the bliss experienced from practising the 'enjoyment waves';
(*that state in which*) mind, Maya and Interdependent Origination
are experienced without contradiction between them.

May you bless me to realise both the inexpressible nature and the voidness of experience,
as, of all things, there is no creator other than our own mind;
our experiences being only the visions of our mind, itself void,
born out of birthless and deathless due to various conditions.

May you bless me to realise the non-dualistic view (*dbyer.met*)
of the 3 lines (*rgyut.gsum*) of cause method and result;
the cause is kun-shi, which includes all samsara and nirvana
the method (*path*) is the combination of ripening and the experiences
the result is that state in which there is no contradiction between the nature and the qualities.

To the Kaya-vajra, who is the nature (*essence-ness*) of the Nirmanakaya,
who cuts all confusions, who is the outer Lama, O Venerable One please bless me:
may you bestow the Vase consecration to my body,
may you bless me to practice the good path of the Process of Emanation,
may you bless me to realise the "three natured view"
and complete the school of the non-differentiation between samsara and nirvana.

If, by any chance I cannot complete the school in this life,
may I rise from height to height by the practice of pho-wa:
and if I cannot do this, may I reach Nirmanakaya
through the stages of 'rik-dzin' and Khechari ,
by the Bardo practice of non-duality of self and deity.

To the Vag Vajra, who is the nature of the Sambhogakaya
who shows us the 'self-arising' who is the inner Lama, Oh Venerable One please bless me.
May you bestow the Secret consecration to my voice
may you bless me to practice the good path of the Inner Heat;
may you bless me to realising the 'four ways of self arising' view
and complete the school of 'all things understood clearly without mixing'.

If by any chance I cannot complete the school in this life
may I be able to practice the pho-wa into the clear light;
and if I cannot do this, may I reach Sambhogakaya
through the stages of re.dzin and Khechari,
by the bardo practice of the 'clear and non-thought'.

To the Citta Vajra, who is the nature of the Dharmakaya
the secret Guru who shows us the simultaneously born,
Oh Venerable One please help me:
may you bestow the Third consecration to my mind,
may you bless me to practice the good path of the messenger;
may you bless me to realise the 'four joys of Sahaja' view
and complete the school of the 'small Bliss-Void'.

If by some chance I cannot complete the school in this life
may I arise from height to height by the practice of the pho-wa of Vajrasattva coming:
and if I cannot do this may I reach the Dharmakaya

through the stages of rig.dzin and Khechari
by the Bardo practice of the "Sahaja Bliss".

To the essence Vajra who is the nature of the Svabhavakaya,
the final Lama, who shows us the 'Thatness'
Oh Venerable Lama please help me:
may you bestow the fourth consecration to my 'vital airs',
may you bless me to be able to practice the good 'Path of Waves',
and to realise the view of great purity
and complete the school of the 'great bliss void'.

In brief all the bases and the supported will be transformed
by the four kayas, into the 'completely combined Vajra Dhara';
may I well attain this and the 'three dignities'.
may I turn the wheel of dharma for all sentient beings as infinite as space;
may all beings have pure renunciation and moral conduct and also love, Bodhicitta and the non-dual
mind; may they get the Kayas, transcendental wisdom and activities
by passing through the process of the Great Secret Path.

*(This text was translated from the Tibetan by the Guru Vajradhara, His Holiness Sakya Trizin,
between October 1972 and February 1973 in the Sakya Centre, Rajpur and Sakya Tibetan Society,
Puruwala. These notes were transcribed by Ngawang Phuntsok; by which merit may all beings reach
enlightenment.)*

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

January

The year of Dharma activities for our Lamas opened on 17th January with His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra Rinpoche bestowing a winter programme of initiations and teachings at the Sakya Centre, Dehradun. Rinpoche's programme lasted nearly a month and was attended by two generations of the Khön family, high lamas and hundreds of monastics. The programme auspiciously coincided with Jetsunma Kunga Chime Wangmo Sakya's Tibetan birthday on 29th January.



This month also saw the 7th Tibetan birthday of Jetsunma Kunga Chime Wangmo Sakya



February

On 25th March, His Holiness the 42nd Trizin embarked on a three-week programme in Taiwan, during which he bestowed numerous teachings and initiations.



His Holiness gave instructions on the Vajrakilaya sadhana to a numerous assembly of monastics and lay followers.



His Holiness conducted the Namgyalma Thousand-offering puja. With a cornucopia of lavish offerings dedicated to the deity, this ritual is known for its bountiful accumulation of merits.

March

Rinpoche's programme in Taiwan was followed by a visit to Kuching, Malaysia.



🕒 This month and the next saw three members of the younger generation of the Khön family celebrate their birthdays.



Dungsey Akasha Vajra Rinpoche



Dungsey Siddharth Vajra Rinpoche



Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya



🕒 His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche began a teaching tour of the USA, with stops in New York, Washington and Seattle, before he began his bestowal of the Holy Lamdre teachings at Tsechen Kunchab Ling in Walden, NY.



A conversation with Richard Gere – “*Wisdom and Compassion for Challenging Times*”; New York



His Holiness gave a Dharma talk at the Tibet House in New York



His Holiness bestowed the Vajrakilaya Empowerment to the Bhutanese community in New York



Interview with Radio Free Asia; Washington, DC



Interview with Voice of America; Washington, DC

His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin conducted Dharma activities in Canada

Toronto



Victoria



Green Tara initiation

Public talk on Buddhism and the environment

Vancouver



Avalokiteshvara initiation



His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin bestowed the Kalachakra initiation in Seattle at the request of Sakya Phuntsok Ling and performed prayers for H.H. Jigdal Dagchen Rinpoche



His Holiness also visited centres in the US and Mexico

San Francisco



Three Wrathful Deities initiation at Pal Tsechen Ling



Long-life initiation to the San Francisco Tibetan Society

Los Angeles



Chime Phakme Nyintik Long-life initiation requested by Tsechen Chokhor Ling

Mexico



Minneapolis



New York



Chime Pakme Nyingtik Long-life initiation



Yellow Zambala



Long-life initiation to the San Francisco Tibetan Society

Holy Lamdre teachings at Tsechen Kunchab Ling, Walden, NY

From the 21st of May until the 11th of July, His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche bestowed the Holy Lamdre teachings at Tsechen Kunchab Ling, Walden, assisted by H.H. the 42nd Sakya Trizin. Also in attendance was H.E. Jetsunma Kunga Palter Sakya.







Bodhicitta Vows on Vesak Day



🕉️ A Long-life ceremony was held at the Sakya Academy, Dehradun, to celebrate the conclusion of Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche's birthday, which coincided with the conclusion of his long Hevajra retreat .





His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin presided over the celebration of the 2nd US Monlam Prayer Festival for World Peace in Minneapolis. His Holiness was accompanied by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche.



His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche embarked on teaching tour of the USA, during which he made several stops at centres in the Lake Region and on the Western Seaboard.





His Holiness visited Los Angeles on the invitation of Lama Jampa Thaye



His Holiness bestowed the Amitayus Long-life initiation at the Masonic Center in Madison, Wisconsin and held a public discussion with the renowned advocate of mental wellness, Dr. Richard Davidson, on the science of wellness and compassion. His Holiness also met with representatives of the Tibetan community in Wisconsin.



His Holiness visited the Deer Park Buddhist Center, in Wisconsin

His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin spent a month in Mustang on the invitation of the Mustang Sakya Buddhist Association. His Holiness was accompanied by H.E. Dagmo Kushok Kalden Dunkyi Sakya. Rinpoche and Dagmo Kushok were greeted by H.E. Thartse Khen and H.E. Khangsar Tripa Rinpoche, and were lavished with an exuberant display of devotion by followers throughout their journey. Rinpoche began his trip with a visit to Pema Ts'al Monastery in Pokhara.





At the request of the Sakya Phuntsok Phodrang, His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche bestowed the Chakrasamvara initiation in Seattle. In attendance were H.E. Dagmo Kushok Sakya and members of the Khön family.



🕉 For the first time, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche conducted the students of Sakya Academy in the performance of the Mahakala puja



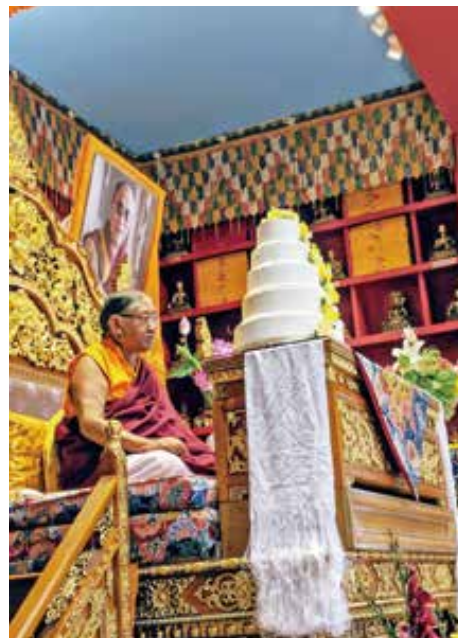
🕉 His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin led the performance of a special Vajrakilaya Cham and conducted the annual Vajrakilaya Puja at the Sakya Centre, Dehradun.





September

Centres in India and abroad marked the birthday of His Holiness the Gongma Trichen Rinpoche's Birthday, with a special celebration held at Tsechen Kunchab Ling, Walden, where His Holiness was at the time.



His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche hosted His Holiness the 17th Karmapa at Walden, NY



His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin conducted the 2nd part of The Complete Path teachings at the International Buddhist Academy, Kathmandu. His Holiness was greeted on arrival by H.E. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and by Khenpo Ngawang Jorden.



His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin bestowed the Long-life initiation at the Tharlam Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal



HE Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche embarked on his yearly Phurdup Tour, which was to last until November. He was accompanied by H.E. Dagmo Kushok Sonam Palkyi Sakya.

The first stop on Rinpoche's tour was Mongolia, where he spent three weeks giving initiations and teachings, and performing rituals.



Rinpoche then led a week-long Vajrakilaya programme at the Gig Lok Monastery in Hong Kong, which boasts two temples, one for the local community of Buddhist monks and another dedicated to Tibetan Buddhist activities. The latter is graced with a life-like statue of His Holiness the Gongma Trichen Rinpoche.



His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche returned to India from the USA



Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche conducted a 3-week Vajrakilaya programme of initiations, rituals and teachings in Singapore.



Rinpoche also led the assembly in the performance of the Damtsig Kangso ritual.



Rinpoche bestowed the Tara Maja Chenmo initiation. This Maja Chenmo's name is translated as the "Great One of the Peacock". It is said that peacocks consume poison without adverse effects, and so this Tara is considered to counteract inner and outer poisons.

His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin visited Ghoom, Kalimpong and Sikkim



His Holiness briefly visited the Guru Sakya Monastery in Ghoom, Darjeeling



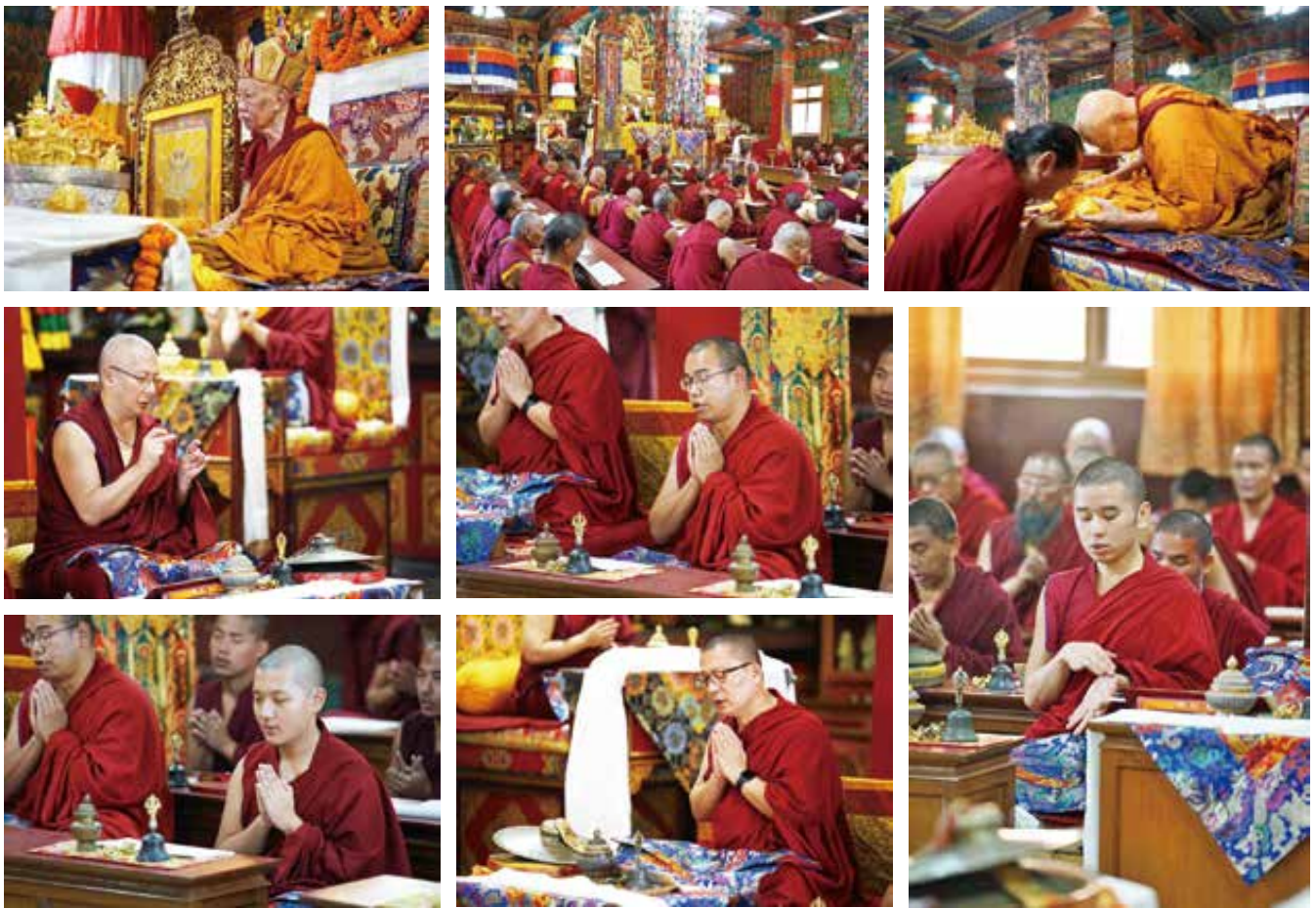
His Holiness presided over the conclusion of the Grand Vajrakilaya Ritual at the Sakya Monastery Kalimpong



Invited by H.E. Zurmang Gharwang Rinpoche, His Holiness visited the Zurmang Monastery in Lingdum, Sikkim, where he bestowed the Three Wrathful deities empowerment.

His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche presided over the preliminary part of the White Tara ritual held at Ngor Monastery, Manduwala for the long life of H.E. Luding Khenchen Rinpoche. His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin conducted the main part of the ceremony.





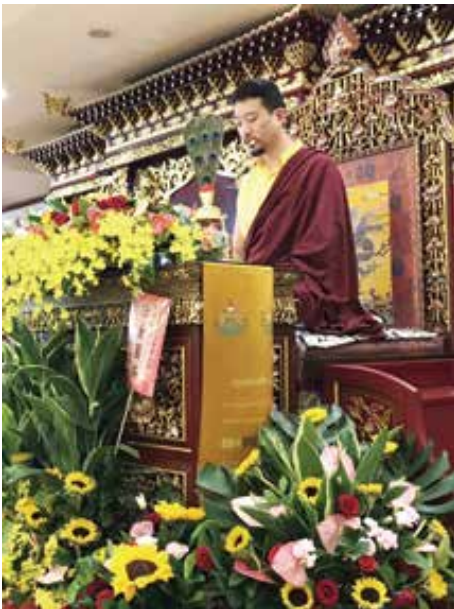
His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche and His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin presided over a ceremony to mark the parinirvana of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. Also in attendance was Jetsunma Kunga Thinley Palter Sakya. The ritual had an air of enchantment as it was being celebrated in the evening, in the courtyard of the Sakya Centre.



November

🕉 Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche conducted a month-long Vajrakilaya programme of initiations, rituals and teachings at the Vajrayana Sakya Manjushri Center in Taipei, Taiwan.

A translation into Chinese was graciously provided by Phula Rinpoche.



His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche presided over a ceremony held at the Sakya Centre to mark the Parinirvana of Sonam Tsemo.



Celebrations were held at centres in India and overseas to mark the birthday of His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin. His Holiness was specially celebrated in Singapore, where he was holding a teaching programme at the time.



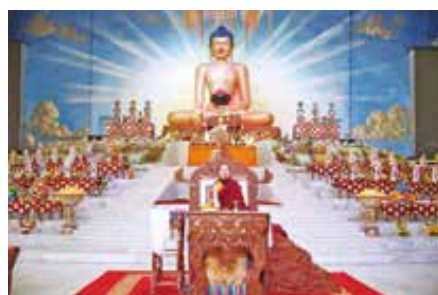
His Holiness the Gongma Trichen Rinpoche conducted the Mahavairocana ritual at the Sakya Centre, Rajpur



His Holiness the Gongma Trichen Rinpoche bestowed four oral transmissions upon the staff and students of Sakya Academy, Dehradun. In attendance were Dungsey Siddharth Vajra Rinpoche and Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo, alongside their mother H.E. Dagmo Kushok Sonam Palkyi Sakya.



His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche conducted the Sakya Monlam Prayer Festival for World Peace at Bodh Gaya. Also in attendance were Khöndung Abhaya Vajra Rinpoche and the members of Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche's family, as well as H.E. Thartse Khen Rinpoche.





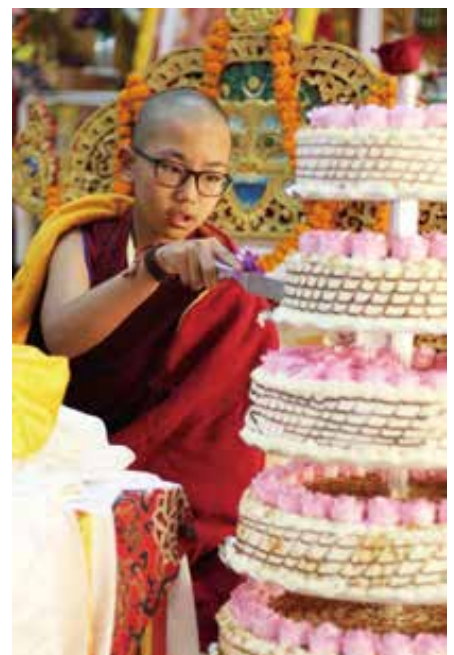


His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche took the opportunity to visit the new Sakya monastery at Bodh Gaya, which is to be inaugurated in November 2019.

On the 21st of December, His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche conducted a ritual at the Sakya Centre marking the anniversary of Sakya Pandita.



At the same time, His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin and Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche presided over a celebration held at Sakya Nunnery for the 13th Tibetan birthday of Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter Sakya.



Year of the Earth Pig Calendar of Events

Annual Grand Pujas at the Sakya Centre, Dehradun

Every year the Sakya Centre in Rajpur, Dehradun, holds various grand pujas:

1. Annual Grand Vajrayogini Puja 8 th of the 1 st lunar month for 3 days	7. Dhamtsig Kangso 25 th of the 10 th lunar month for 8 days
2. Annual Grand Vajra Nairatmya Puja 8 th of the 2 nd lunar month for 7 days	8. Annual Grand Cakrasamvara Puja 9 th of the 11 th lunar month for 7 days
3. Annual Grand Mahavairocana Puja 11 th of the 4 th lunar month for 5 days	9. Dochen Puja 23 rd of the 11 th lunar month for 7 days
4. Wrathful Guru Rinpoche Puja 10 th of the 5 th lunar month for 1 day	10. Gu-Tor 23 rd of the 12 th lunar month for 7 days
5. Annual Grand Vajrakilaya Puja 11 th of the 7 th lunar month for 11 days	11. Mahakala Day Each 26 th of every lunar month for 5 days
6. Annual Grand Hevajra Puja 8 th of the 9 th lunar month for 8 days	

Auspicious Dates

Six Auspicious Days

The 8th, 14th, 15th (full moon day), 23rd, 29th & the 30th (new moon day) of every month.

Losar – (Feb 16, 2018)

Losar is the Tibetan New Year. It starts on the first day of the first lunar month. It is said that, during this month, the effects of positive and negative actions are magnified 100,000 times, and that therefore the benefits of practice are hugely enhanced.

The Four Great Festivals (düchen)

These days commemorate great deeds performed by the Buddha. On these days, the effects of positive or negative actions are magnified 10 million times.

1. Chotrul Düchen: 1-15 (Feb 16-Mar 1)

Shakyamuni Buddha displayed a different miracle each day for 15 days in order to increase the faith and devotion of disciples. The 15th of the 1st month is called "Day of Miracles".

2. Saga Dawa Düchen: 4-15 (May 29)

The day Shakyamuni Buddha entered His mother's womb, attained Enlightenment and passed into Parinirvana.

3. Chökhör Düchen: 6-4 (Jul 16)

This celebrates the Buddha's first Turning of the Wheel of Dharma. It was only seven weeks after His Enlightenment that, exhorted by Indra and Brahma, He consented to teach the Four Noble Truths in Sarnath.

4. Lha Bab Düchen: 9-22 (Oct 31)

The day Shakyamuni Buddha descended from Tushita heaven and taught for three months in the Heaven of Thirty Three, where His mother had been reborn. This was in order to benefit the gods in the desire realm and to repay His mother's kindness by liberating her from Samsara.

✿ NB: Lamp offerings in the monastery or food offerings to the monks are welcome during all important pujas and ceremonies. If you wish to make any offerings, please contact the Sakya Centre in Rajpur Dehradun directly (contact details on the last page)

AUSPICIOUS BIRTHDAYS	TIBETAN (M/D)	WESTERN
Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter Sakya	11-14	Jan 2
Jetsunma Kunga Chimey Wangmo Sakya	12-13	Jan 24
Khondung Siddharth Vajra Rinpoche	1-18	Mar 19
Khöndung Akasha Vajra Rinpoche	2-12	Mar 27
Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya	1-29	Apr 2
Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche	5-10	Jul 5
His Holiness the Dalai Lama	5-5	Jul 6
His Holiness the Sakya Trizin	8-1	Sept 7
His Holiness Jigdal Dagchen Rinpoche	9-15	Nov 2
H.E. Luding Khenchen Rinpoche	9-14	Oct 25
H.E. Jetsun Kushok Chimey Luding	9-22	Nov 14
Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche	10-5	Nov 19

Holy Days

TIBETAN	HOLY DAYS	TIBETAN	HOLY DAYS
1-3	Parinirvana Day of Dagshul Thinley Rinchen (Grand-father of H.H. the 41 st Sakya Trizin)	4-25	Parinirvana Day of Ngorchen Dorje Chang Kunga Sangpo
1-21	Parinirvana Day of Kunkhyen Gorampa Sonam Senge & Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo	5-2	Parinirvana Day of Sachen Kunga Lodro
2-8	Parinirvana Day of Yabje Kunga Rinchen (Father of H.H. the 41 st Sakya Trizin)	5-6	Parinirvana Day of Khyentse Dorje Chang Jamyang Chokyi Lodro
2-12	Parinirvana Day of Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen & Khangsar Shabrug Ngawang Lodroe Tenzin Nyingpo	6-20	Parinirvana Day of Ngawang TUEtop Wangchuk
2-23	Parinirvana Day of Khenchen Dorje Chang Jampa Jampal Sangpo	6-29	Parinirvana Day of Dorje Chang Ngawang Lodro Rinchen
2-26	Parinirvana Day of Khuwo Rinpoche Kunga Gyaltsen	7-14	Parinirvana Day of Ngakchang Kunga Rinchen
2-30	Parinirvana Day of Jamgon Loter Wangpo	7-15	Parinirvana Day of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso
3-15	Parinirvana Day of Phende Khenchen Ngawang Khedup Gyatso	7-19	Parinirvana Day of Ngakchang Kunga Tashi
3-18	Parinirvana Day of Dezhung Tulku Kunga Tenpei Nyima	9-14	Parinirvana Day of Bari Lotsawa, Khön Konchok Gyalpo & Sachen Kunga Nyingpo
3-25	Parinirvana Day of Gongkhar Dorje Denpa Dzongpa Kunga Namgyal	9-21	Parinirvana Day of Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup
3-29	Parinirvana Day of Gatön Ngawang Lekpa, Luding Khenchen Jamyang TUEpten Lundok Gyaltsen	10-8	Parinirvana Day of Munchen Konchok Gyaltsen Sempa Chenpo
4-12	Parinirvana Day of Khenchen Dhampa Dorje Chang Ngawang Lodoe Shenpen Nyingpo	11-10	Parinirvana Day of Jamgon Ameshab
4-23	Anniversary of Mahasiddha Virupa's attainment of the First Bhumi	11-11	Parinirvana Day of Lopen Sonam Tsemo
		11-14	Parinirvana Day of Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen Pal Sangpo
		11-22	Parinirvana Day of Drogon Chogyal Phagpa & Dezhung Anjam Rinpoche
		11-23	Parinirvana Day of Khenchen Appey Rinpoche
		12-4	Parinirvana Day of Chogyé Trichen Dorje Chang Ngawang Khyenrab Lekshey Gyaltsö

Melody of Dharma

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This Issue was Generously Sponsored by

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Guided by the belief that every human life is precious with unlimited potential, Sachen Foundation works to support the collective aspirations of our spiritual teachers and generous donors, to help transform lives and communities through Dharma education and publication.

因為堅信每一個人的生命都是寶貴的、具有無限的潛力，薩千基金會致力於支持我們的精神教師們的宏願以及眾多慷慨捐助者的願望，通過佛法教育和出版的事業來改善大眾生活及社會環境。

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Sachen Foundation is a grant giving public foundation supporting Dharma education and publication prioritized by His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin. At this initial stage, funds will be granted to:

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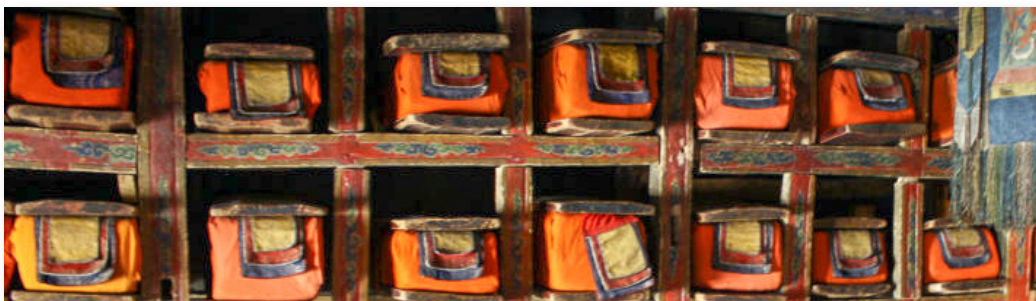
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支持僧眾學習、修持、及修法



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His Holiness the 41st Sakya Gongma Trichen Rinpoche
said, "Drops of water can accumulate into an ocean."

「猶如滴水入大海，大海未乾彼不盡；
如是迴向善菩提，未獲佛果彼不盡。」

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***"You must yearn for the Dharma like a starving person
starving for food."***

Guru Rinpoche



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