

# **Biographies of The Great Sachen Kunga Nyingpo and H.H. The 41st Sakya Trizin**



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**Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc.**

*Biographies of  
The Great Sachen  
Kunga Nyinpo  
&  
His Holiness The 41<sup>st</sup>  
Sakya Trizin*



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# *Contents*

## **Biography of the Great Sachen Kunga Nyingpo**

<i>Biography of the Great Sachen Kunga Nyingpo</i> .....	1
The Good Qualities of his Realization .....	8

## **Biography of His Holiness Sakya Trizin**

<i>Khön Family</i> .....	15
The Birth of His Holiness .....	18
Early Childhood .....	22
Early Education .....	22
Early Public Events and Travel .....	26
Enthronement and Departure from Tibet .....	28
The Establishment of the Sakyapa Order in India .....	29
Teachings Received by His Holiness Sakya Trizin .....	33
Major Key Teachings Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin .....	35
Precious Lam Dre Teachings .....	35
Common Lam Dre Teachings Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin .....	36
Uncommon Lam Dre Teachings Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin ....	37
The Collection of Tantras Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin .....	37
The Collection of Sadhanas Given by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin ....	38
The Excellent Qualities and Noble Activities of His Holiness .....	38

## **Public speech by His Holiness Sakya Trizin**

<i>Dharma Talk at the Tibet Centre by His Holiness Sakya Trizin</i> .....	43
<b>List of Photos — in alphabetic order</b> .....	51



FAMILY PICTURE AT TIBETAN NEW YEAR 2003

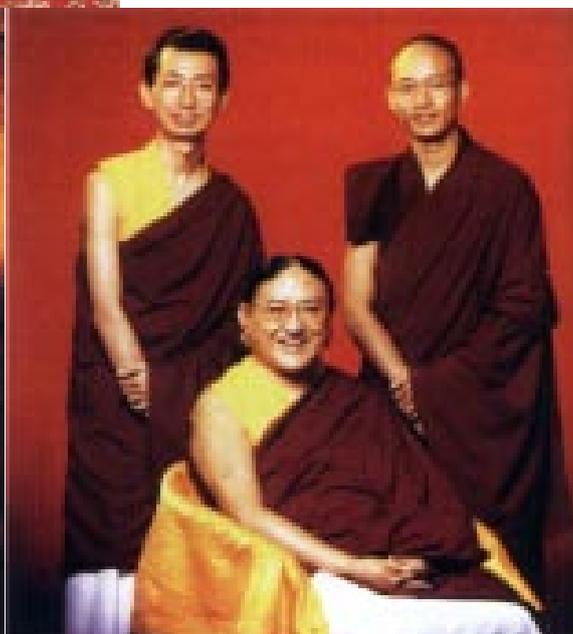


SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA STATUE IN THE MAIN SHRINE OF  
HIS HOLINESS SAKYA TRIZIN'S SAKYA CENTRE IN RAJPUR, INDIA

THE 41<sup>ST</sup> LINEAGE  
HOLDER OF SAKYAPA,  
HIS HOLINESS  
SAKYA TRIZIN



HIS HOLINESS PERFORMING RITUAL



H.H. SAKYA TRIZIN WITH H.E.  
RATNA VAJRA RINPOCHE AND  
H.E. GYANA VAJRA RINPOCHE



HIS HOLINESS SAKYA TRIZIN WITH HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA





EARLY PICTURES OF HIS HOLINESS SAKYA TRIZIN IN TIBET

◀ VAJRAKILYA TORMA OFFERING PUJA



◀ GROUP PICTURE IN FRONT OF NGOR MONASTERY, MANDUWALA



SAKYA MONLAM AT LUMBINI



CONSECRATION CEREMONY AT THE  
RETREAT CENTER IN MANDUWALA, INDIA



SAKYA COLLEGE IN INDIA



HIS HOLINESS  
PERFORMING RITUAL

HIS HOLINESS  
THE DALAI LAMA  
WITH HIS  
HOLINESS  
SAKYA TRIZIN  
AND  
HIS FAMILY



SANGA MEMBERS IN LUMBINI AT SAKYA MOM-LAM



HIS HOLINESS SAKYA TRIZIN WITH RATNA VAJRA RINPOCHE  
AND GYANA VAJRA RINPOCHE



DAGMO KUSHOLA WITH GYANA VAJRA RINPOCHE



HIS HOLINESS SAKYA TRIZIN WITH RATNA VAJRA RINPOCHE  
AND GYANA VAJRA RINPOCHE



HIS HOLINESS  
WITH  
HIS EMINENCE





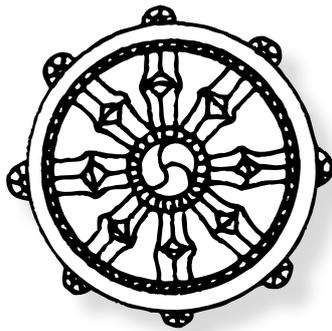
HIS HOLINESS WITH HIS EMINENCE RATNA VAJRA RINPOCHE  
ATTENDING A DHAMMA GATHERING

HIS HOLINESS WITH  
GANYA VAJRA RINPOCHE  
AT JANGCHUP LING,  
TAIWAN



THE GREAT SOUTH SAKYA MONASTERY  
ESTABLISHED BY CHOGAL PHAGPA IN 1269

*Biography  
of  
the Great Sachen  
Kunga Nyungpo*



# Biography of the Great Sachen Kunga Nyingpo

**T**HE GREAT SACHEN KUNGA NYINGPO, emanation of Lord Avalokiteshvara, embodiment of the compassion of all the Buddhas, emanation of Lord Manjushri, embodiment of the wisdom of all the Buddhas, was born in the Khön family to Khön Konchog Gyalpo and Sonam Kyid (known as Machig Shangmo). Shortly beforehand, the Lord of Mahadsiddhas, Namkha'upa Chokyi Gyaltsen, was meditating on clear light. In his pure vision he saw a rainbow canopy in space over Kar Ghong Valley. In the centre of the rainbow canopy he saw Avalokiteshvara Khasarpani clearly in Bardo form, with one face and two hands in a standing position. His right hand was in the gesture of excellent giving, while between the thumb and ring finger of his left hand he held an utpala flower. He was adorned with rich cloths and precious jewels.

By this signs Namkha'upa foresaw that an emanation of Avalokiteshvara was about to come into the world as the son of Khön Konchog Gyalpo. The next time he received one of his regular visits from Khön Konchog Gyalpo, Namkha'upa sent him away from his house at sunset, instead of asking him to stay the night. He suggested that Khön Konchog Gyalpo spend the night in the Kar Ghong Valley. This was because he foresaw that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo would be born from the union of Khön Konchog Gyalpo and Machig Shangmo who was living in the Kar Ghong valley. It was there that Khön Konchog Gyalpo first saw Machig Shangmo, who offered him accommodation. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was born in 1092, the Male Water Monkey year. His birth was heralded by many auspicious signs.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was an extraordinary child. From a very young age, he was skilled in reading, writing and the common sciences such as astrology, Sanskrit, poetry, rhetoric, medicine, gemology, zoology and psychology etc. Through his mastery of these fields of knowledge, he pleased all the people. His Noble Father was the upholder of many teachings and he imparted several to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was only eleven years old when his Noble Father entered into parinirvana. According to astrological predictions, his future would be auspicious provided that three things were accomplished in one day: funeral rights were to be performed for his Noble Father, the foundation stone for a new shrine was to be laid and a throneholder of Sakya was to be appointed as a successor. All three tasks were accomplished accordingly. Bari Lotsawa, a great and respected scholar, was appointed to the throne. Bari Lotsawa told Sachen Kunga Nyingpo that first of all he needed to study. In order to study, he needed to acquire wisdom. In order to acquire wisdom, he needed to practise Manjushri, the wisdom deity. Then Bari Lotsawa gave Sachen Kunga Nyingpo the initiation of Manjushri Arapatsa (one type of Manjushri practice). Sachen Kunga Nyingpo followed Bari Lotsawa's instructions faithfully. However, while practising Sachen Kunga Nyingpo experienced many obstacles. His Holy Guru told him that in order to pacify these obstacles, he should practise Achala first. When he gave him the initiation of Achala, all Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's obstacles were pacified. Following that, he practised Manjushri. After practising for six months in all he had a pure vision of Lord Manjushri and obtained infinite wisdom. It was at this time that Manjushri imparted to him the teachings on Parting from the Four Attachments:

If you have attachment to this life, you are not a Dharma practitioner,

If you have attachment to samsara, you do not have renunciation,

If you have attachment to your own purpose, you do not have Bodhichitta,

If grasping arises, you do not have the view.

This sacred verse of only four lines contains the pith essence of the Mahayana teachings. It became very famous throughout the Land of Snows and to this day is studied and practised by many great masters. When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo had received this teaching, seven swords connected in a continuous line emanated from the heart of Manjushri and were absorbed into Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's heart. This signified that initially there would be seven outstanding emanations of Manjushri in the Khön family and that subsequently there would be many more emanations of Manjushri in the Khön lineage.

Due to receiving this direct blessing, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo effortlessly mastered many kinds of knowledge. However, in order to comply with the conduct of noble beings and that of the common people, he undertook extensive formal training. At the age of twelve he went to Rong Ngurmik to receive the Abhidharma from Geshe Drang Ti Dharma Nyingpo. Much to everyone's amazement, he immediately understood both the words and the meanings.

Instead of continuing to study Pramana from Kyung Rinchen Drag, the leader of Sakya insisted that he return to Sakya and receive teachings from Bari Lotsawa, who was then advanced in age. So Sachen Kunga Nyingpo returned and

received a vast range of teachings of both Sutra and Tantra from Bari Lotsawa. Then, shortly before he entered into parinirvana, in the year 1111 Bari Lotsawa passed the throne of Sakya to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo when he was twenty years old. After this, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo continued to receive extensive teachings and empowerments from many great teachers.

He visited his teacher, Namkha'upa, and received teachings on the four classes of Tantra from him. He also received further Sutra teachings, including Shiccasamuccaya, the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life and the Sutrasamuccaya, etc. After that some senior Sakya people decided that it was time for Sachen Kunga Nyingpo to study the teachings that were held by his Noble Father. Thus he went to receive teachings from Khön Gi Chu Wa Dra Lha Bar, who was in the same lineage as the Khön family. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo proved to be the most intelligent of all Khön Gi Chu Wa's students. He understood each and every meaning of the teachings thoroughly after hearing them only once.

One day he and some other students of Khön Gi Chu Wa Dra Lha Bar attended a public teaching by Lama Seton Kunrig (Sekar Chungwa). Lama Seton asked each of the students' where they came from, etc. When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was asked, he replied that he was from Sakya. Lama Seton observed that his own Lama had once lived there, but had since passed away. When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo told him that he was the son of Khön Konchog Gyalpo, Lama Seton replied in disbelief, saying that Khön Konchog Gyalpo had no son. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's Dharma friends explained that he was the son of his Noble Father's later years. When Lama Seton finally realized who Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was, he said that although it is said that the living cannot meet the dead, this had happened. Then he sat Sachen Kunga Nyingpo

on his lap and told him that he was an old man who carried within him precious Dharma teachings which he must pass on to him without delay, because he knew that he would enter into parinirvana in the following year. However, circumstances did not permit Sachen Kunga Nyingpo to return and receive teachings from Lama Seton.

Some time later, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo made preparations to invite Khön Gi Chu Wa to give teachings in Sakya. Then he received the news that his Lama was gravely ill and had summoned him to his bedside. When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo reached there, his Holy Guru had already entered into parinirvana. Afterwards he visited Khön Gi Chu Wa's teacher, Mal Lotsawa, and received extensive teachings of both Sutra and Tantra from him. After hearing the teachings only once, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo could master teachings which took most people a lifetime to understand. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo could accomplish Dharma activities swiftly, while the other students of Mal Lotsawa were still struggling. During this time, Lama Mal Lotsawa was delighted and said that he saw a very auspicious sign which showed that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo would be a great practitioner.

After receiving teachings from Lama Mal Lotsawa, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo left and travelled homewards, giving teachings on the way. He received offerings of seventeen gold coins, which he sent with a yogi to offer to Lama Mal Lotsawa. Later Lama Mal Lotsawa announced that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was an 'inconceivable' samaya holder and asked Sachen Kunga Nyingpo to return for more teachings. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo later returned to Lama Mal Lotsawa and received many further teachings from him. Lama Mal Lotsawa also bestowed upon Sachen Kunga Nyingpo holy objects along with the sacred mask of a Dharma Protector. This was a special mask

with the power of communicating with human beings and flying through space. He then spoke to the mask, saying that now that he was so old he didn't need him any more. He instructed the mask to follow the Khön Sakyapa and to obey his instructions and those of his descendents.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo continued to receive many more teachings and empowerments from other great masters. Then the time came when he wished to receive the full Lam Dre teachings. He enquired which of the disciples of Lama Sekar Chungwa was best qualified to bestow the precious Lam Dre teachings. He was told that the best qualified disciples were the two Shangton brothers. Although the younger brother had died, the older brother, Lama Shang Gonpawa, who was highly learned in the Lam Dre teachings, was alive and living in Sag Thang. Accordingly, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo travelled to Sag Thang Dhing. When he arrived, he saw a group of people spinning and asked them where he might find Lama Shang Gonpawa. One of them pointed out a man who was wearing robes and a goatskin vest. This man was spinning and talking idly with others. When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo greeted him and prostrated to him, Lama Shang Gonpawa told him that he looked like he was from a noble family and asked him whether he had mistaken him for somebody else. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo replied that he had not made a mistake, and had come to ask to receive the precious Lam Dre teachings from him. Lama Shang Gonpawa replied that he knew only some Dzogchen teachings which he sometimes imparted, but these would not suit one who was obviously a follower of the new Tantra, such as Sachen Kunga Nyingpo appeared to be. As for the Lam Dre teachings, he knew nothing about them.

From what Lama Shang Gonpawa had said and also judging from the Lama's general appearance and demeanour, Sachen

Kunga Nyingpo concluded that he probably really did not have the Lam Dre teachings, after all. Jho Say Odchog's father asked Lama Shang Gonpawa whether it was all right to refuse him like that, since he looked like the son of his Holy Guru's Lama Khön Konchok Gyalpo. Lama Shang Gonpawa replied that if that were so, then there would be a danger of breaking his samaya by refusing to give the teachings to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. Then he sent him to call back Sachen Kunga Nyingpo and examine his history. After speaking to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, Lama Shang Gonpawa was satisfied that he was the son of Khön Konchok Gyalpo.

He then admitted that he held the precious Lam Dre teachings, but said that as he had never taught them before, he would need time to reflect upon them. He asked Sachen Kunga Nyingpo to return the following spring. When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo returned, Lama Shang Gonpawa discussed with him the three major Tantras related to the precious Lam Dre teachings and was pleased with the answers he gave. He then bestowed the empowerment and preliminary instructions upon him, but on the eve of giving the actual Lam Dre teachings, Lama Shang Gonpawa found that his tongue had become swollen. Therefore he was unable to start giving teachings on the next day. He told Sachen Kunga Nyingpo that there was a breakage of samaya between them and that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo would need to recite the Hundred Syllable Mantra and make mandala offerings to repair this breakage.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo thought that there had been no breakage of samaya apart from thinking that Lama Shang Gonpawa did not have the Lam Dre teachings. So he did these practices. When the Lama recovered, he began to bestow the complete Lam Dre teachings and many other teachings also.

This was done slowly, over four years, during which time Sachen Kunga Nyingpo thoroughly understood the teachings. Towards the end, Lama Shang Gonpawa told Sachen Kunga Nyingpo that he should not even mention the name of the precious Lam Dre teachings over the next eighteen years. After that, he would be the owner of these teachings and he would then be free to teach them or write them down. He told him that if he decided to concentrate mainly on teaching others, he would benefit countless sentient beings. Specifically, three of his disciples would reach the state of Mahamudra in their present life, seven would attain the state known as 'patience,' which is close to the state of Mahamudra and many others would attain high realizations.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo promised to reflect constantly on the precious teachings. At the completion of eighteen years, Lama Aseng requested Sachen Kunga Nyingpo to bestow the Lam Dre teachings upon him. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo regarded the timing of this request as very auspicious. Accordingly, he imparted the Lam Dre teachings to Lama Aseng. From that time onwards he gave Lam Dre teachings many times and wrote many commentaries on the Lam Dre teachings in addition to composing many other religious texts and commentaries.

## **The Good Qualities of his Realization**

SACHEN KUNGA NYINGPO kept the precepts and samayas of the Three Vows perfectly without even the slightest transgression. He was the embodiment of loving kindness and compassion. He lacked attachment to material things. He pleased his teachers through the strength of his devotion and by following their instructions faithfully. He was able to see deities directly and thoroughly understood the nature of phenomena. He also

possessed clairvoyance and miraculous powers unlimited by time and space. It has already been mentioned that as a child, in his pure vision, he saw Manjushri along with Green Tara and Arya Achala, who dispelled all obstacles.

On another occasion, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo suffered a relapse of an earlier illness. As a result, he forgot all the Dharma teachings he had received. Although he could receive other teachings again from Dharma friends or refer to them in books, there was no Guru from whom he could request the precious Lam Dre teachings nor were there any written texts available. He was very distressed, because even if he were to travel to India, he was not sure whether he could receive the precious Lam Dre teachings again. He then went into retreat. After praying and supplicating whole-heartedly to the Holy Guru and the Triple Gem, he regained a recollection of some of the teachings. Then one day Lama Shang Gonpawa appeared to him in a dream and imparted teachings. As a result, he regained his memory of all the teachings he had received. After this he began to pray fervently and with great joy from the depth of his heart. One morning he had a pure vision of the great Mahasiddha Virupa in Sakya seated in the posture of full meditation and performing the mudra of turning the wheel of Dharma with both hands. On his right was Mahasiddha Krishnapa, on his left, Pandita Gayadhara, behind him, Kokalipa and in front of him, Vinasa. After seeing this vision, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo generated unimaginable non-conceptual samadhi in his mind. He later composed a homage to Virupa, which is recited by followers of the Sakya school to this day. After that, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo remained in retreat for a month, during which period Mahasiddha Virupa appeared to him many times and transmitted many teachings, empowerments and blessings.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo had the power to manifest many different forms at one time. On one occasion, he manifested his body in six different places simultaneously: (1) bestowing teachings to about thirty meditators for three years in Tsar Khar; (2) giving Lam Dre teachings in Sakya to fulfill the wishes of his holy teachers; (3) receiving teachings on Chakrasamvara from Lama Mal Lotsawa; (4) performing a consecration ritual in Dring Tsam; (5) giving precious Lamdre teachings in Zang Dong nomad region; and (6) giving other Dharma teachings in Shap Go Ngar. These manifestations were discovered only after Sachen Kunga Nyingpo had entered into parinirvana, when his disciples discussed his noble Dharma activities.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was able to subjugate the opponents of the Dharma through his powers. During that time there were two teachers of black magic who were emanations of demons. One was Lachen Taktsa, and the other was Rewa Zugu. They were jealous of great beings in general and specifically of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. They wanted to hamper his Dharma activities. With the inducement of a large quantity of gold, Lachen Taktsa sent Khampa Dorgyal forth to assassinate Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. Accordingly, when Khampa Dorgyal reached Sakya, he presented himself to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. He told him that he had been born in Kham and had lived for a long time in the upper part of Tibet. Then, hearing of the fame of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, he had come with great devotion to see him. He asked Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's permission to remain in his presence for a while. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo agreed to this.

Khampa Dorgyal remained there and gave every appearance of being a faithful disciple. However he secretly plotted Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's assassination. The greatly compassionate Sachen Kunga Nyingpo knew Khampa Dorgyal's true

intention through his clairvoyance. One day when Khampa Dorgyal saw Sachen Kunga Nyingpo sitting with his cloak wrapped around his children, Sonam Tsemo and Drakpa Gyaltzen, he developed thoughts of disdain, thinking that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo appeared to be an ordinary father and not even like a Dharma practitioner, let alone a Guru. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo knew that he was harbouring disrespectful thoughts. He called him over and asked whether he had any wrong thoughts in his mind. Khampa Dorgyal was terrified when he heard this question and became extremely agitated. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo then told him that it is very wrong to have negative thoughts about the Holy Guru in Vajrayana. He then stretched out his legs and showed a different Vajrayana mandala on the sole of each foot. These appeared even more clearly than if they had been painted.

Khampa Dorgyal was filled with remorse for his evil intentions and confessed his nefarious plans. He promised that from then on he would offer his body, speech and mind in service to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. He then returned to the black magician Lachen Taktsa and lied to him, saying that he had carried out the assassination of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. Lachen Taktsa entrusted his belongings to Khampa Dorgyal, and told him that his rosary and mattress were powerful magical instruments and they should be kept clean and not moved. But Khampa Dorgyal did precisely the opposite and he also did likewise to the other black magician, Rewa Zugu. This completely undermined their black magic activities.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, using his great Dharmic power, instructed Dharma protectors to subdue the two black magicians. These Dharma protectors sent many emanations, including two black yaks who performed wrathful activities, such as sharpening their horns, etc. They also sent other emanations,

such as black birds and black dogs, etc. During that time, Khampa Dorgyal managed to drive away all the disciples of the two magicians. For a month he gave every appearance of serving them assiduously. Then on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar month, he subdued both of them. When he returned to Sakya, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was very pleased with what he had done. He gave him huge rewards, and in particular he imparted special instructions to him on the pith essence of the teachings, which would enable him to gain Buddhahood in one lifetime. Then Khampa Dorgyal returned to his native Kham and meditated. He displayed signs of having attained major siddhi. It is said that he was certain to gain Buddhahood in Bardo.

On another occasion, a man from Kham visited Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, saying that unless he was shown a sign that Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was a true emanation of Avalokiteshvara, he would kill himself right there. So saying, he held a knife to his heart. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo replied that there was no reason for him to stab himself, and showed him the palm of his hand, on which an eye was clearly visible.

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo had many great disciples. The foremost among these was Lupon Rinpoche Sonam Tsemo, his physical and spiritual son, who resides on the first bhumi. As prophesied by Lama Shang Gon Pa Wa, and also revealed to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo in a dream on the eve of a major empowerment from Khön Gi Chu Wa, three of his disciples achieved the excellent Mahamudra within that lifetime. Seven disciples attained a high state of realization and many others became great practitioners, very learned etc. Also there were uncountable hidden disciples who became great scholars, powerful practitioners and accomplished meditators while maintaining their everyday lives and activities.

After holding the throne of Sakya for forty-eight years

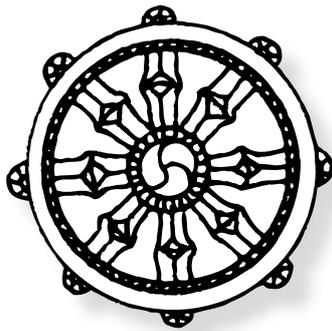
from the age of twenty to the age of sixty seven, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo entered into parinirvana in 1158, on the fourteenth day of the ninth lunar month in the year of the Male Earth Tiger. Even common people perceived signs such as celestial music, heavenly fragrance and rainbow light filling the sky. Most witnessed his body manifested in four different aspects. The first aspect proceeded to Sukavati, the second to Potala, the third to Odiyana and the fourth to the Golden Colored Realm in the north.

When Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's physical remains were cremated, those who were present felt no sorrow, but entered into deep meditative absorption. They all perceived his body as a deity and some perceived two distinct deities. When his holy ashes were scattered into the sea, a mandala of the deity appeared on the surface of the water as clearly as if it had been painted.

Throughout his extraordinary life, there were times when it appeared that through illness he had completely forgotten all the teachings he had received. However, he prayed fervently and with such devotion to the Holy Guru and the Triple Gem, that through the blessings of his Holy Gurus, he regained his recollection and even received further teachings directly from Mahasiddha Virupa. In actuality, he did not forget what he had learned. Sachen Kunga Nyingpo was an emanation of Avalokiteshvara, who had abandoned all the obscurations, gained all the qualities and is residing in the state of Buddhahood. All of these events were merely a display by which he inspired the faithful and set an example to be followed by practitioners of the future.

THIS SUMMARY WAS PREPARED BY  
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*Biography  
of  
His Holiness  
Sakya Trizin*



# Khön Family

**H**IS HOLINESS THE 41<sup>ST</sup> SAKYA TRIZIN was born in Tibet in 1945. He is the supreme head of the Sakya School, one of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism. His Holiness belongs to the ancient and distinguished family of Khön, whose history dates back to the early days of Tibet, even before the arrival of Buddhism in Tibet.

The Khön family holds three supreme names. The first of these supreme names is Lha-Rig, which means ‘the race of heavenly beings.’ This name came about through the family’s ancestor, Yapang Kye, who was the great-great grandson of the heavenly being Yuring. Yuring was believed to have descended from the heavenly realm of Rupadhatu.

Later, the family received it’s second supreme name, Khön Gyi Dung, which means ‘Clan of Khön.’ This name was derived from Yapang Kye’s triumph over the Rakshas, which in reality demonstrated his power to conquer ignorance.

Many generations later, in the eleventh century, an illustrious master named Khön Konchog Gyalpo founded the glorious Sakya order by establishing a monastery in Sakya in 1073 AD. Thus the family received its third supreme name, Sakyapa.

Since those times, the generations of the Khön family have continued in an unbroken lineage, and have included many emanations of the Three Bodhisattvas. (The three Bodhisattvas are Manjushri, who embodies the wisdom of all the Buddhas, Avalokiteshvara, who embodies the compassion of all the Buddhas and Vajrapani, who embodies the power of all the Buddhas). Many famous masters too have appeared in this illustrious lineage, including the Five Great Founders of the Sakyapa Order: the Great Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (1092–1158),

Loppon Rinpoche Sonam Tsemo (1142–1182), Jetsun Rinpoche Dragpa Gyaltsen, (1147–1216) Chöje Sakya Pandita (1182–1251) and Drogön Chögyal Phagpa (1235–1280).

Many generations later, one of the members of the Khön family, Pema Düdul Wangchuk founded Shabten Lhakhang. His son, Thegchen Tashi Rinchen, founded Dolma Phunpal Phodrang (The Glorious Tara Palace). It was named after the nearby Turquoise Tara Shrine. Today it is called Dolma Phodrang or Tara Palace.

His Holiness Sakya Trizin's Noble Father, Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen was born as the heir-apparent of Trichen Dragshul Thrinley Rinchen in the Dolma Palace in order to uphold and continue the divine lineage for the betterment of all sentient beings. Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen was an emanation of Avalokiteshvara. On one occasion when he was meditating in his private room, the famous and holy Manjushri statue called Jamyang Tsödgyalma manifested before him in the form of the actual deity. Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen prostrated to the deity, and recited the confession prayers to Manjushri. Manjushri spoke to him and said that it would be better to practise the Guru Yoga of the owner of the hundred races, his great Noble Father Dragshul Thrinley Rinchen, instead of reciting confession prayers. Manjushri instructed him to do this while contemplating the ultimate view, which meant merging his mind and the primordial wisdom of his Noble Father into one.

Because of the preciousness of the Khön lineage, not only in the Sakya tradition, but also for the continuation of the Buddha's doctrine in general, it became necessary for Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen to have an heir. Accordingly he wed Thrinley Paljor Sangmo, the sister of a renowned minister of the Tibetan government. She thus became his Dagmo, which

is the title given to the Consorts of the Lineage Holders of the Khön family. When after sixteen years they still had not managed to have any children, he wed his Dagmo's younger sister, Sonam Drolkar who is His Holiness' mother. Her first child was a Jetsunma, Chime Thrinley Luding who now resides in Canada. Jetsunma is the title given to the daughters of the Lineage Holders of the Khön family. Dagmo Sonam Drolkar then gave birth to a Dungsay named Jigdral Dutsul. Dungsay is the title given to the sons of the Lineage Holders of the Khön Family. Dagmo Sonam Drolkar gave birth to another Jetsunma named Ayang, and then finally to His Holiness Sakya Trizin.



GRAND-  
FATHER OF  
HIS HOLINESS  
SAKYA TRIZIN,  
THE 39<sup>TH</sup>  
LINEAGE  
HOLDER  
— DRAGSHUL  
THRINLEY  
RINCHEN  
RINPOCHE, AND  
HIS SON ON  
THE LEFT ➤



▲ FATHER OF HIS  
HOLINESS NAGWANG  
KUNGA RINPOCHE

GRANDFATHER ➤  
AND UNCLE OF HIS  
HOLINESS, AND THE  
PRIME MINISTER  
OF TIBET



## The Birth of His Holiness

HIS HOLINESS' ELDER BROTHER passed away as a young child. Despite many attempts, including a lengthy pilgrimage to many sacred places in Nepal and Tibet, Dagmo Sonam Drolkar did not conceive another son. They had almost given up all hope, when they reached the Nalanda Monastery in Phenpo, Tibet. It was there that His Eminence Chögye Trichen Rinpoche and the Lamas and monks of Nalanda Monastery requested them:

'The Khön family of the Glorious Sakya Order has been of great benefit to all the people of Tibet, to the teachings of the Lord Buddha, and especially to the Sakyapa tradition and its followers. Even the Whispered Lineage of the teachings held by the Ladrangs, have all come through many generations of the Khön lineage holders of Dolma Phodrang. It would be very benevolent of you to continue this holy lineage. To assist in this, we all will certainly do whatever is necessary. Please take with you our Nalanda Abbot Lama Ngawang Lodroe Rinchen Rinpoche (Ngaglo Rinpoche) who is powerful in religious rites, giving mantras and other blessings. With his assistance, you will be guaranteed results.'

The Abbot, Lama Ngawang Lodroe Rinchen Rinpoche then accompanied His Holiness' holy family and performed many spiritual rituals and rites. It was by the spiritual powers of these prayers and rituals that His Holiness entered his mother's womb. Before he was conceived, His Holiness' mother had a recurring dream of a yellow horse descending towards her from the clear blue sky and being driven away by terrifying birds. In her dream, many special initiations and prayers were undertaken until finally the birds retreated and the horse came closer and closer until it merged with her body. It was at this

time that she conceived and thereafter experienced continuous pleasure and happiness. In a similar way Lama Ngaglo Rinpoche dreamt that the sun, moon and stars appeared simultaneously in the sky and the light of the three became indistinguishable. He also heard a voice in the sky saying: 'This is the son for whom you wished.'

His Holiness was born at sunrise on the morning of the first day of the eighth lunar month in the year of the Wood Bird, or on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1945. His birth occurred painlessly in the very same blessed room where Vajradhara Kunga Rinchen, who revitalised the Sakya Doctrine, had been born more than ten generations earlier. There were many auspicious signs that heralded his birth. During his birth, the entire sky was festooned with extraordinary rainbows. Soon afterwards, an eighty-year old man with a head of white hair made an offering of a Thangka of long life deities, butter and cheese to His Holiness. The milk of one hundred dri's or female yaks was also offered in a crystal vessel by a handsome youth clad in white, who claimed to have been sent by the chieftain of Tsedong. However, when enquiries were made, no trace of this young man could be found.

Many prayers, special initiations, and rituals were performed to safeguard the life of His Holiness. Soon after his birth, in keeping with the tradition of the Dolma Palace, he received the initiation of a long life deity from Ngaglo Rinpoche. His Noble Father and Ngaglo Rinpoche gave him the Sanskrit name Ayu Vajra which means Long Life Vajra. This inaugurated a tradition of giving Sanskrit names to the sons of the Khön family.

The supreme spiritual master of the time, the great abbot Vajradhara Dhampa Rinpoche (Ngawang Lodroe Shenphen Nyingpo), said to Lama Ngaglo Rinpoche, 'In bringing about the birth of this child, you have performed a great deed. Now

the future of the doctrine of the Sakya Order is well assured. I am an old monk. Now, even if I die, I shall have no regrets.'

There were a number of signs that indicated that His Holiness was also the reincarnation of the great Tertön Orgyen Thrinley Lingpa (Apam Tertön). Apam Tertön was the true regent of Padmasambhava and possessed the attributes of a noble being with great spiritual realization. His body could pass through solid objects and he had discovered many 'treasure teachings.'

The first indication that His Holiness was a reincarnation of Apam Tertön occurred when a Dakini prophesied to Apam Tertön that he would hold the throne of Sakya in his next life. As a very young child, when His Holiness' Noble Father and mother asked him where he came from, he answered that he came from far away and that his home was a tent. When he first began to talk, he spoke in the Golok dialect, which was the dialect spoken by Apam Tertön. Once when Apam Tertön's son came to visit the Khön family, His Holiness' aunt asked him who this man was. His Holiness replied that this was his son. When he met a disciple of Apam Tertön called Sheija, His Holiness repeated a piece of advice given to him using the same words that Apam Tertön had spoken earlier. He even called him Thubten Sheija: only Apam Tertön and a few close people had known that Thubten was Sheija's first name.

There were other signs to show that he was the reincarnation of Apam Tertön. On the day of His Holiness' birth, someone offered an image of Padmasambhava. This was an auspicious sign and it was considered a further indication that he was the reincarnation of Apam Tertön. Another auspicious connection was the fact that during his first meeting with Jamyang Khyentse Choekyi Lodro, he received the transmission of the complete cycle of Longchen Nyingthig teachings from him. In

1949 when Apam Tertön's son visited His Holiness, Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen, the father of His Holiness was concerned that Apam Tertön's son might request the return of his father's reincarnation. However the son said, 'The great Tertön purposely took birth in the Sakya Khön family to uphold the Sakya doctrine. I have no intention of requesting his return.'

When His Holiness was a few weeks old, a large celebration was held during which his birth was publicly announced. At that time he received his formal name, which is Ngawang Kunga Thegchen Palber Thrinley Samphel Wanggi Gyalpo. His aunt who took care of him after his mother passed away, said he was a child with exceptional qualities. The extraordinary signs that have always accompanied him bore witness to his realization. He was a very well behaved child and showed many signs of special qualities. As a young child, he pretended to do fire pujas and made toy tormas which he tossed away in imitation of the ritual of disposing of the effigy. He also used to imitate chanting and rituals. When Lama Ngaglo Rinpoche saw these things he said, 'There is no doubt that he will be a great teacher, with high accomplishment and spiritual power.'

His Holiness' mother passed away in the twelfth lunar month of the Tibetan year in 1948. Although His Holiness was too young to completely understand the gravity of this situation, when he was told this, he went into deep mourning.

HIS HOLINESS AUNT THRINLEY  
PALJOR SANGMO



## **Early Childhood**

HIS HOLINESS RECEIVED HIS FIRST major Annutara Yoga Tantra empowerment in 1948 at the age of three, along with many other empowerments. His first empowerment was an empowerment of the Khön tradition, which was bestowed upon him elaborately and with great care by his Noble Father, Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen according to the Khön tradition. He remembers this well and believes that by the blessing power of that empowerment, he has not encountered any major obstacles to any of his activities.

At the end of the first lunar month in 1950, His Holiness' older sister Ayang contracted a fever and passed away. His Holiness was very upset, but even before he had a chance to fully recuperate from the untimely demise of his beloved sister, his Noble Father became ill and due to his disciples' lack of merits, entered into Parinirvana on the eighth day of the second lunar month. This was a sad time for the children of the family. His Holiness and his sister felt great sorrow, and their aunt who herself had suffered many grievous losses, took on the responsibility of caring for him and for his sister. She supervised the overall operation of the Sakyapa Tradition and also administered Dolma Phodrang. She played a pivotal role in preserving and disseminating the traditions during this period. Under the guidance of Khenchen Jampal Sangpo, she ensured the errorless performance of all the Vajrayana rituals. She also took charge of the offerings and sponsorships for the funeral ceremony, including the cremation and the preservation of the relics of His Holiness' Noble Father.

## **Early Education**

ALONG WITH MANY OTHER EMPOWERMENTS, Lama Ngaglo Rinpoche gave His Holiness the special empowerment of

the orange Manjushri. It was in the presence of a very holy statue of Manjushri that His Holiness first learned how to read from Lama Ngaglo Rinpoche. He learned the first letters of the Tibetan alphabet from a specially blessed scroll written in golden ink by Sachen Kunga Lodroe which had previously been used by the successive Dungsays of the Khön Lineage. His first tutor was Kunga Gyaltsen who taught him the fundamentals of reading, writing and recitation of prayers. His Holiness diligently learned how to read until he completely mastered the art. He believes that this was the foundation of his excellent reading skill, which is one of his many remarkable qualities.

In the autumn of 1950 His Holiness travelled to Ngor E-warn Choeden in Tibet to receive the exoteric Lam Dre teaching from his root Guru, the great abbot Vajradhara Ngawang Lodroe Shenpen Nyingpo. The moment he saw his Guru, a great devotion arose in him, and His Holiness realized that the great Abbot had been and would be his Guru in every lifetime. In the same year, during an extensive ritual for his long life, His Holiness recited the verses of response by heart, agreeing to live long. This was considered a very admirable feat for one so young. In 1951, when His Holiness was six years old, he began to memorize the very important texts of Tantra. It was in that year also that he met His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama for the first time.

In early 1952, the officially sealed proclamation of the succession designating His Holiness as the future Sakya Trizin was read by the representative of the national government of Tibet and a brief preliminary ceremony of enthronement took place. It was at this time that His Holiness took an oral examination in which he was successful in reciting texts by heart. He had memorized many major and minor texts, comprising

in all over a thousand pages. His ability to memorize was considered extraordinary.

At about this time, Venerable Kunga Tsewang was appointed as his tutor. His Holiness performed rituals and made a prediction to discern the best candidate for the new Abbot of the Sakya Monastery. Venerable Mangtho Gyatso was chosen for the post. From then on, the task of selecting various position holders in the Sakya Order continuously remained with the office of His Holiness.

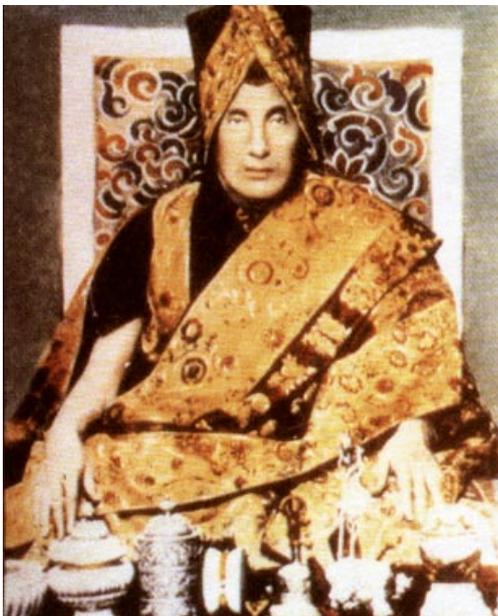
His Holiness undertook his first retreat in 1953. This was a long life retreat. He also bestowed his first initiation in that same year. Despite many entreaties from His Holiness to remain in bodily form, his main Guru, Vajradhara Ngawang Lodroe Shenphen Nyingpo (Dhampa Rinpoche) entered into Parinirvana in the fourth lunar month, seated in the meditation posture. Many miraculous signs appeared during and after the cremation. His regent, Khangsar Shabdrung Ngawang Lodroe Tenzin Nyingpo Rinpoche, had such devotion for his Guru, Dhampa Rinpoche, that while reciting the Lineage Guru Prayers he was not able even to pronounce the name of his own Guru. Even many years later, tears would come to his eyes when he pronounced his Guru's name. His Holiness also has such devotion to his Guru.

In the seventh lunar month of that year, he commenced a major retreat which lasted for more than seven months. During this retreat, he also engaged in many other practices and actually conducted about twenty different retreats at the same time. In this way he fulfilled the unparalleled spiritual activities of his predecessors. His Holiness successfully followed the examples set in the field of meditation by the great Sakya masters.

In 1954 His Holiness took examinations in the inner and outer spiritual dances, in order to preside over the extended

rituals. He performed the ritual dances wearing the blessed mask worn by the preceding Khön Lineage masters. The task of Vajra master, leading rituals and ritual dances continues to be part of his role even today.

In the same year, certain auspicious signs occurred in the Gorum shrine room. The statue turned towards the east, revealing a silken thread tying it to the wall. Even the shrine keeper had never seen this before. During that period, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and many other great Lamas had visited China. People believed that this was a sign that the deity was constantly protecting them. Seven or eight months later, the image returned to its normal position with the thread no longer visible. The next year at Dolma Phodrang, His Holiness gave his first major empowerment to more than a thousand people in small groups, extending over many days.



VAJRADHARA KHENCHEN  
DHAMPA RINPOCHE,  
ROOT GURU OF HIS  
HOLINESS



EARLY  
PICTURE OF  
HIS HOLINESS  
HOLDING A  
LONG-LIFE VASE



HIS HOLINESS DONNING  
A GORGEOUS TANTRIC  
COSTUME FOR A RITUAL  
DANCE TO WARD OFF EVIL

## Early Public Events and Travel

IN EARLY SEPTEMBER 1955, His Holiness travelled by car to Lhasa to meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama and receive teachings. This was his first experience of travelling by car. While making offerings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he gave an extensive explanation of the mandala in the presence of the monks from Namgyal Monastery (His Holiness the Dalai Lama's private monastery) and a lay assembly including many high-ranking government officials led by Cabinet Ministers. The assembly praised him highly for his extraordinary knowledge at such a young age. Since then, his wisdom has been proclaimed throughout Tibet.

In 1956, after the Great Monlam Festival in Lhasa, he and his entourage went on a pilgrimage to the south of Lhasa. There they visited many Sakya monasteries. During this visit, His Holiness established Dharma connections with the local people by bestowing empowerments, oral transmissions, and other teachings as requested by the monasteries he visited in those areas.

That year, the Chinese leaders organized a major meeting of the Preparation Committee for the Tibetan Autonomous Region. His Holiness was obliged to attend this meeting and had to cut short his tour. Many other high lamas, leaders and officials were at the meeting too. During this conference, despite his youth, he made a speech that was highly praised. It was an uncomfortable time for His Holiness, as he was not allowed to take any attendants with him. He vividly recalls the kind gesture of His Holiness the 16<sup>th</sup> Gyalwang Karmapa, who carried him in his arms through the crowd and allowed him to rest on his lap during the conference.

During this time, Jamyang Khyentse Choekyi Lodro

visited Sakya and bestowed many empowerments. In his biography, Vajradhara Khyentse Rinpoche wrote that he saw His Holiness as the real embodiment of the highly realized master Ngagchang Chenpo Kunga Rinchen.

In 1956, His Holiness went on pilgrimage to India. The entourage visited Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Shakyamuni Buddha, Sarasvati, his principal residence and then Kushinagar where Lord Buddha manifested his Mahaparinirvana. They also went to Varanasi, and the Deer Park at Saranath where Lord Shakyamuni Buddha first turned the wheel of Dharma, giving the teaching on the Four Noble Truths. They then visited Bodh Gaya where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment and where future Buddhas will become enlightened. His Holiness and his entourage made thousands of offerings at the Bodhi tree. They went to Rajgir where Lord Buddha taught the Prajnaparamita Sutra. They visited nearby Nalanda University, which has been in ruins for centuries. This University had produced thousands of illustrious scholars including Mahasiddha Virupa, who pioneered the Lam Dre teachings and was the most prominent disseminator of the Buddhist doctrine in India. The entourage chanted prayers and made offerings at all these sacred places.

Later that year when Kyabje Luding Khen Rinpoche visited Sakya, he received a major empowerment from His Holiness. On the last day, as a token of gratitude, Luding Khen Rinpoche made a mandala offering with an extensive explanation.

THE SECOND JAMYANG KHYENTSE CHOEKYI  
LODROE RINPOCHE



## Enthronement and Departure from Tibet

MANY RITUALS WERE PERFORMED DURING 1958 in preparation for His Holiness' enthronement, which was scheduled for the following year. The ceremony took place in 1959, when he was fourteen years old, beginning with a seven day ritual followed by an elaborate three-day-long ceremony during the first lunar month. More than a thousand monks attended, and many great Lamas and high ranking government officials sent representatives who made elaborate offerings.

That year, His Holiness and his entire entourage left Tibet for India. Upon their safe arrival, they were given a warm welcome and were treated to lavish hospitality by the Royal Court of Sikkim. Later that year, Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche entered into Parinirvana in Sikkim. On the day of his pass-



ing, the valley was seen to be filled with light, long after the sun had set. Many other remarkable signs also appeared.

In 1962, Vajradhara Jampal Sangpo entered into Parinirvana in Tibet. Around that time His Holiness dreamed that the great Vajradhara, with a glowing face and delighted mood, gave him an auspicious scarf. This was a sign that he would never depart from the compassionate mind of his master.

## The Establishment of the Sakyapa Order in India

THE FIRST TIBETAN BUDDHIST CONFERENCE was held in Dharamsala in 1963, under the auspices of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The conference was attended by the head Lamas of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, along with many other prominent Lamas. His Holiness Sakya Trizin's rich knowledge of Dharma and his compassionate attitude towards all the different traditions won him the admiration and reverence of all participants.

That year, His Holiness received the kind permission of the Dalai Lama to establish a Sakya monastery for Sakya monks and a settlement for the Sakya lay population in India. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1964, the re-establishment of Sakya Monastery was celebrated in a large rented hall in Rajpur. Many auspicious omens were seen.

Later on there was discussion between His Holiness and Most Venerable Khenpo Appey Rinpoche about the importance of maintaining a constant and continuous effort to revive the Dharma. This gave birth to an idea to establish an institute of Buddhist philosophy. As a result, a curriculum was prepared and Sakya College was established. On December 19<sup>th</sup> 1972, the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the eleventh lunar month (Sakya Pandita's Parinirvana day), the opening ceremony for Sakya College was held in a rented house. Most Venerable Khenpo Appey Rinpoche became its first Abbot and Principal. In the first lunar month of 1979, he presided over the foundation stone laying ceremony performed on the site of the future Sakya College. Later His Holiness established Sakya Institute in Puruwala. Its first Abbot and Principal was Most Venerable Khenpo Rinchen Rinpoche. Both of these institutes provide education in higher Buddhist Sutric and Tantric studies. Among the scholars who

graduated from both of these Institutes are many Khenpos, monastery directors, resident Lamas, teachers and translators who all contribute to the development and propagation of Lord Buddha's teachings.

The Sakya settlement of Puruwala was founded in the Northern Indian State of Himachal Pradesh in 1968. Later, in 1977, His Holiness contributed all the funds Dolma Phodrang had available to the construction of a new monastery, Sakya Thupten Namgyal Ling, in Puruwala, Himachal Pradesh. After three years of arduous work, the construction was completed and the inauguration ceremony was held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1980. A very beautiful image of the Buddha was completed for the monastery. It was filled with many holy and rare relics. Vajradhara Sakya Trizin, Vajradhara Chögye Trichen Rinpoche and Vajradhara Luding Khenchen Rinpoche jointly sanctified the statue of the Buddha.

In 1968 His Holiness recognized the son of Thrinley Norbu, now widely known as Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, as the reincarnation of Jamyang Khyentse Choekyi Lodroe, a great non-sectarian master of the twentieth century. The enthronement was held in Rajpur. Since then, His Holiness has recognized many reincarnations within the Sakya Order as well as in other traditions.

In 1974, in order to maintain the unbroken lineage of the Khön family, His Holiness consented, at the request of many Lamas and of his own aunt, to accept Tashi Lhakee as his Dagmo (Consort). She was the daughter of Dege Hochotsang, head of a high noble family in the kingdom of Dege, Kham, an Eastern Province of Tibet. Dagmo Tashi Lhakee's arrival at the Dolma Phodrang was followed by numerous auspicious signs, including the successful births of two Dungsays.

In the same year His Holiness travelled abroad for the

first time. He visited Switzerland, England, Canada, USA, Japan and Thailand. During that trip he made his first public addresses in English in England, birth-place of the English language. This was an auspicious coincidence. Since then he has visited many other countries.

On 19<sup>th</sup> November 1974, Dagmo Kusho Tashi Lhakee gave birth to Dungsay Ratna Vajra. The next year, his Aunt Trinley Paljor Sangmo passed away. The performance of Phowa (transference of consciousness) and elaborate funeral ceremonies were conducted. Describing his deceased aunt's supernatural qualities, His Holiness said:

'Starting from learning the alphabet to receiving the ocean of profound and extensive Dharma teachings from masters who are Buddhas in human form and acquiring the ability to be a part of the group of those noble people, was all the result of the great kindness of my late Aunt.'

Besides having great devotion and pure insight, she was extremely compassionate toward living beings. She was a great practitioner who had accomplished many great spiritual practices such as: 600,000 prostrations along with recitation of the Refuge Verses; 10 million Guru Yoga verses; about 5 million Mandala offerings; 20 million mantras of a Tara deity and many other similar practices. Her meditative attainment exceeded that of many who spend their lives in solitary retreat. During the cremation many auspicious signs appeared, such as one might expect when a realized being passes into Parinirvana.

On 5<sup>th</sup> July, 1979 Dungsay Gyana Vajra Rinpoche (the younger son of His Holiness) was born. Many remarkable signs appeared.

That year His Holiness visited the H.H. Gyalwang Karmapa who was then having medical treatment in a hospital in New

Delhi and requested him to retain his holy life for the sake of all sentient beings. To strengthen their relations further and to create an auspicious connection for the future, Gyalwang Karmapa requested an empowerment according to the Khön tradition. He offered his own wristwatch as a gesture of gratitude. In 1985 Vajradhara Chögye Trichen Rinpoche invited His Holiness, together with his entourage, to perform the consecration of a large and exquisitely crafted statue of the future Buddha, Maitreya, in the main shrine hall of Jamchen Lhakang Monastery in Boudha, Kathmandu. His Eminence Chögye Trichen Rinpoche built this statue to enable beings to make an auspicious connection with Maitreya Buddha, so that they may be fortunate enough to meet him when he appears in this world. His Holiness has over the years consecrated many monasteries, statues and stupas at the request of high Lamas and others of all the four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

It is vitally important to all his students and devotees and in fact to all beings that His Holiness remain with us for a



long time. On 9<sup>th</sup> September 1986, Kyabje Luding Khen Rinpoche led an elaborate and profound long life ceremony for His Holiness at Ngor Magon, Manduwala, the main seat of the Ngorpa sub-sect of the Sakya tradition in India. Describing this occasion, he said:

‘This brought me victory in my battle with mortality and was an excellent and auspicious indication of my long life.’ In addition to this, his disciples have carried out many long life pujas and practices.

## Teachings Received by His Holiness Sakya Trizin

HIS HOLINESS HAS RECEIVED many precious and profound teachings, such as empowerments, blessings, initiations, oral transmissions, explanations and pith instructions from many great Gurus. Some of the principal teachings he received from his kind Gurus are described below:

FROM HIS NOBLE FATHER, the Vajradhara Ngawang Kunga Rinchen, he received major empowerments of the Khön tradition and other sacred and secret teachings.

FROM DHAMPA RINPOCHE (Vajradhara Ngawang Lodrö Shenphen Nyingpo, his main Root Guru) he received both common and uncommon Lam Dre teachings.

FROM HIS HOLINESS THE 14<sup>TH</sup> DALAI LAMA, he received the Kalachakra teaching Avalokiteshvara empowerment and many other exoteric and esoteric teachings.

FROM VAJRADHARA KHANGSAR SHABDRUNG RINPOCHE, regent of Vajradhara Dhampa Rinpoche, he received the Collection of Sadhanas.

FROM VAJRADHARA KHENCHEN JAMPAL SANGPO, he received the precious Lam Dre teachings.

FROM VAJRADHARA NGAGLO RINPOCHE he received the sacred and secret teachings on major Tantras such as the profound Whispered Teachings belonging to the Sakya tradition.

FROM VAJRADHARA CHÖGYE TRICHEN RINPOCHE he received the precious Lam Dre teachings of the Tsarpa sub-sect of the Sakya tradition and most of the empowerments of the Collection of Tantras.

FROM VAJRADHARA JAMYANG KHYENTSE CHÖKYI LODRO he received some very important major empowerments of the Sakya tradition, as well as oral transmissions of the Nyingmapa cycles of teaching.

FROM VAJRADHARA DESHUNG RINPOCHE he received the oral transmission of Sakya Kabum (collection of works of Five Founding Masters of the Sakyapa tradition).

FROM VAJRADHARA PHENDE KHEN RINPOCHE he received some major empowerments of the Sakyapa tradition.

FROM VAJRADHARA JADRAL JANGCHUB DORJE he received the complete Treasure Dharma of Apam Tertön.

From many great scholars of the Sakya school, including Most Venerable Khenpos such as Khenpo Thubten Rinpoche, Khenpo Appey Rinpoche, Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk Rinpoche, and Khenpo Rinchen Rinpoche, His Holiness received teachings on the six major divisions of Buddhist philosophy according to the Sakya tradition. These are Vinaya, Abhidharma, Prajnaparamita, Pramana, Madhyamaka and the Trisamvaraprakarana, (the famous text by the Great Sakya Pandita known in English as the Differentiation of the Three Vows). He also received teachings on the three major Tantras and other subjects such as astrology, calligraphy, grammar, poetry, rhetoric, lexicography and various rituals and ritual dances. He developed great expertise in mudra and in playing all the ritual percussion instruments.

His Holiness always feels indebted to his Masters who, with inexpressible kindness, bestowed upon him many precious and profound teachings, more revered and far more difficult to obtain than a wish-fulfilling jewel. He has spent most of his life in the practice of the Dharma, completing over twenty major solitary retreats.

His Holiness began to study English in 1959. Since then, during leisure time from his constantly busy schedule, he has managed to find a little time to continue his study informally. His excellent and effortless command of the English language exemplifies the truth of his being a manifestation of Manjushri.

## **Major Key Teachings Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin**

HIS HOLINESS IS A GREAT TEACHER, a supreme guide and a source of wisdom and empowerment for many thousands of followers. He has been amply prepared for this role by having received profound and extensive teachings, having attained superior practice and by his consummate skill in imparting the teachings. He has the ability to explain subtle and profound teachings in language which is easily understood by students of different levels. He embodies the authentic teachings of the Lord Buddha. His teachings are like a beacon, guiding beings out of the darkness of samsara.

He has taught extensively both in India and abroad, generously bestowing many major empowerments, initiations, blessings, oral transmissions, explanations and pith instructions. He has bestowed these teachings and empowerments of vast numbers of deities for the benefit of all beings. The major cycles of teachings bestowed by His Holiness are the precious Lam Dre, the Collection of Tantras and the Collection of Sadhanas.

### **Precious Lam Dre Teachings**

THE PRECIOUS LAM DRE TEACHING is the most sacred teaching in the Sakya tradition. It is unique in giving pith instructions on the complete path from beginning to the ultimate state or state of Buddhahood. There are two traditions of the precious Lamdre: Common and Uncommon. His Holiness first bestowed the precious Lam Dre in Saranath, Varanasi, where Lord Shakyamuni Buddha first turned the Wheel of Dharma to his five fortunate disciples. The particulars of precious Lam Dre teachings bestowed by His Holiness are as follows:

# Common Lam Dre Teachings Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin

	Year	Venue	Requested by
1	1967	Tibetan Monastery, Saranath, India	Lama Kunsang Gyatso
2	1975	Sakya Center, Rajpur, India	Lama Yonten Dorje (Amchi Lama)
3	1987	Sakya College, Rajpur, India	Miss Liba Hoskin
4	1988	Vajradhara Gonpa, Kyogle, Australia	Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche
5	1991	Marian Conference Centre, Washington DC, USA	Lama Kalsang Gyaltzen
6	1995	Friday Harbour High School, San Juan Island, USA	H.E. Jetsun Chimey Luding
7	1996	Sakya Center, Rajpur, India	Given for two Dungsays and Lamas
8	1997	Sakya Tenphel Ling, Singapore	Sakya Tenphel Ling



LAMDRE GROUP PHOTO AT SAKYA RETREAT CENTRE, MANDUWALA

## Uncommon Lam Dre Teachings Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin

	Year	Venue	Requested by
1	1980	Sakya Magon, Puruwala, India	Mr. Rinchen Gyatso
2	1984	Community Hall, Strasbourg, France	Lama Sherab Gyaltzen Amipa
3	1997	Vajrahara Gonpa, Kyogle, Australia	Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche
4	2000	UBC, Vancouver, Canada	H.E. Jetsun Chimey Luding
5	2000/1	Sakya Retreat Center, Manduwala, India	Ven. Khenpo Gyatso
6	2002	Community Hall, Strasbourg, France	Lama Sherab Gyaltzen Amipa

## The Collection of Tantras Given by His Holiness Sakya Trizin

THE COLLECTION OF TANTRAS contains more than 300 major empowerments from the new and old Tantric schools. Most of the empowerments are from the eight sub-traditions of the new Tantric schools. These are: Sakya, Marpa Kagyud, Shangpa Kagyud, Bhodong, Bhuton, Jonang, Old Kadhampa and New Kadhampa tradition.

His Holiness gave these teachings at Ngor Magon at the request of Luding Ladrang (Abbacy), in many sessions during the winter months over a period of seven years.

These are lengthy and complex teachings, and preparing for them requires the Vajra Master to have close and extensive knowledge of many texts and the ways in which they interconnect and mastering a vast number of mudras, etc.

## The Collection of Sadhanas Given by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin

	Year	Venue	Requested by
1	1976	Sakya Mangtro Gonpa, Ladhak, India	Luding Ladrang
2	1994	Tharlam Monastery, Bhouda, Nepal	Mr. Thupten Gyaltzen
3	1995	Sakya Center, Rajpur, India	Rajpur Sakya Center

THE COLLECTION OF SADHANAS has more than 600 initiations. It includes the bestowal of Nyingmapa as well as Sakyapa initiations.

## The Excellent Qualities and Noble Activities of His Holiness

HIS HOLINESS HAS ALSO TRANSMITTED many other teachings he received from his Gurus. Due to his scholarship and to the eloquence of his discourses, his teachings always generate great reverence and inspire people from all walks of life, irrespective of race, culture, class, creed, nationality or language.

His Holiness has always worked untiringly for the preservation and propagation of the precious teachings of both Sutric and Tantric traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and has ensured the continuity of a new generation of well-trained teachers and practitioners by founding monasteries and institutes for the higher study of Buddhist philosophy.

Having received teachings from the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism, he is able to bestow empowerments in all traditions and he gives teachings to high Lamas of all traditions. In this way he enriches all schools and holds his place as a great non-sectarian Master, contributing to mutually enriching co-operation amongst the schools.

His Holiness has given teachings to many other high Lamas of the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism. He has frequently discussed with other high Lamas about ways and means of cooperating to uphold and promote the doctrine of the Buddha and preserve and foster the language and culture of the Tibetan people.

His abiding concern has always been for the preservation and propagation of Lord Buddha's teachings and in particular those of the Sakyapa school. He is tireless in pursuing these goals. In spreading the Buddha Dharma, he is skilled in teaching each of his followers according to their individual mental disposition. Thus his teachings are not only broad-reaching but individually effective.

By scrupulously maintaining the five precepts, he has followed in the footsteps of all the great Sakyapa masters, pleasing his Gurus and all the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three times. Possessing genuine Bodhicitta or the thought of enlightenment, he helps and benefits all sentient beings. As a Vajrayana Master, he has attained high realization and great skill in means.

Through realizing the selflessness of self and phenomena, he teaches with profound depth. Embodying relative and ultimate Bodhicitta, his view is as vast as the ocean as he bestows teachings upon endless numbers of disciples. His behavior exemplifies the method of conduct of the Bodhisattvas, a beacon lighting the way for all followers of the Buddha Dharma.

He is liberated from the extremes of samsara and nirvana. As all obscurations have been removed, he has attained all the supreme qualities. Because of our manifold obscurations, we are unable to see the Lord Buddha with our own eyes and receive his teachings directly. But due to the kindness of the Guru, whom we can see in ordinary form, we are nevertheless

able to receive through him the teachings and blessings of the Lord Buddha. His Holiness has come in human form to set an example for us, bound as we are by negative thoughts and actions. By exemplifying the kayas and wisdoms of the Buddhas, he spreads the vast teachings of the result.

Out of compassion and altruism, His Holiness has ensured the continuation of the Sakya Khön lineage for the sake of all sentient beings. To preserve the unbroken lineage teachings and the tradition of the Khön family, he has ensured that his two sons receive an extensive education in the Buddha Dharma.

His Holiness has encouraged the propagation of the holy Dharma throughout the world. He has established and supported Dharma centers, monasteries and other Dharma institutions in many parts of the world. In addition to having taught in Tibet and his extensive teaching schedules in India, he has given teachings in Australia, Austria, Canada, England, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Monaco, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States of America.

Under the patronage of His Holiness there are several hundred Sakya monasteries and Dharma centers in Tibet, India and the rest of the world. These serve to preserve and propagate the Buddha's teachings during this degenerate age.

He is always available to help karmically linked disciples to uphold the Buddha Dharma, encouraging them with material support, teachings and guidance. Also through his prayers and his all-pervasive benevolence, he extends blessings to all beings.

Most days, when his other Dharmic activities permit, he

receives a stream of visitors and devotees. His other noble deeds, apart from his intense teaching schedule, include giving predictions, curing people with mental illnesses, paralysis, etc., undertaking rituals for deceased people, preparing texts for use in Dharma centers, consecrating places and objects, performing Phowa and saying protection prayers, etc.

His Holiness also extends his infinite compassion and wisdom to fortunate disciples through his writings. To date he has published a detailed list of all the teachings he has received from various masters; an enumeration of the works of the Great Masters of the Sakyapa Order and a two volume autobiography along with a brief version of this. He has also written profoundly upon Birwapa's Guru Yoga Puja and many other ritual texts and composed numbers of dedication prayers, long life prayers and prayers for swift rebirth, as well as many short verses on other topics.

His Holiness Sakya Trizin upholds the Buddhist doctrine in it's entirety and has propagated the Buddha Dharma throughout the world. He has been a constant source of wisdom and compassion for all beings. His Holiness resides at Sakya Dolma Phodrang in Rajpur, Dehradun, UA, India.

May his holy body enjoy perfect health and immortality;

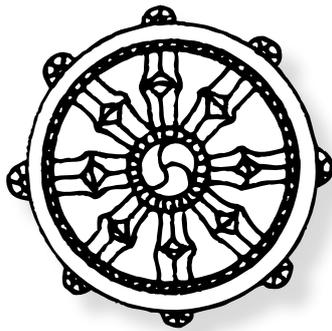
May his precious teachings illuminate the world forever;

May all disciples steadfastly keep their vows and practices;

May all sentient beings swiftly attain complete Buddhahood.

THIS SHORT SUMMARY DREW ON HIS HOLINESS' OWN AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY LAMA KALSANG GYALTSEN AND ANE KUNGA CHOEDRON. THE SUMMARY WAS PREPARED BY KHONRIG RATNA VAJRA, LAMA JHAMPA LOSAL, KUNGA SOEDRON AND DOLMA LHAMO.

*Public speech*  
*by*  
*His Holiness*  
*Sakya Trizin*



## **Dharma Talk at the Tibet Centre by His Holiness Sakya Trizin**

**I** WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY to extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to all of you. I would particularly like to thank the Tibet Center which has very kindly invited me to come here tonight to meet all of you and to have a chance to share the teachings of the Buddha.

As you all know, we, as human beings have many requirements in our lives and have many things to accomplish, but whether we are of a different race, different philosophy, or different religion, what is common to us all is that we all wish to be free from suffering and we all wish to have happiness. This is the same, not only for human beings but all living beings, from the tiniest of insects to the most intelligent of human beings: they all have the same wish to be free from suffering and to have happiness. Therefore every sentient being makes efforts to achieve happiness just like every nation makes efforts and developments to find happiness for its people. Everybody is actually working to achieve happiness.

However it is very clear that unless we make inner mental and spiritual development, no matter how much effort we put into material development, it will not produce happiness, but instead bring us more misery and suffering. Therefore, in our lives the most important thing is to make efforts towards inner spiritual development, because only then can we find real happiness and real peace. Otherwise, even though every one of us is seeking happiness, we will not find it. Therefore we must make every effort towards our inner spiritual development, which we can only do by following the teachings of the great masters. At this present moment and place, all of us are following the Buddha's teachings.

The Lord Buddha departed from all forms of faults and obscurations and obtained every good quality and performed many great activities for the sake of all sentient beings. The Lord Buddha performed physical, speech and wisdom activities, of which the most important activity was the speech activity. What speech activity means is that the Lord Buddha turned the Wheel of the Dharma by teaching sentient beings the inner realization he had gained. This teaching of the Dharma through words to all sentient beings so that they could all also become permanently free from suffering is the Buddha's speech activity. Since the true nature of the mind is never stained with defilements and delusions, all sentient beings have the capacity to become Buddhas. The true nature of our mind, right from the very beginning is pure, however at the moment we do not see this because we are completely covered with defilements and delusions. As long as the true nature of our mind is covered with defilements and obscurations, we will always be caught up in this realm of existence and as long as we are in this realm of existence, we will never be free from suffering, because in this realm of existence, there is nothing but suffering. Were the true nature of our mind not pure then we would never become pure, but since the true nature of our mind is pure, and the impurities and obscurations only temporary, there is a possibility of departing from, or clearing up the obscurations that we have. It is said in many scriptures that every sentient being possesses the buddha nature, and that the true nature of our mind is in fact, the buddha nature. So, in actuality we have the basic requirement with which we can, if we make enough effort, try to be permanently free from all suffering and obscurations and become fully enlightened like the Lord Buddha. Becoming fully enlightened will not only be a great achievement for ourselves but also for the countless

sentient beings whom we will be able to help. Therefore gaining enlightenment is like accomplishing a double purpose — for us as well as for other sentient beings.

However at the moment we do not see the buddha nature, because the true nature of our mind is completely covered with obscurations. The source of all our faults and suffering is that we do not see the basic clear light of the Buddha nature as it is, and instead without any basis or reason, we cling to ourselves. In clinging to ourselves, we are committing the greatest ignorance and making the greatest mistake that we could ever make, for if we were to examine the reasons for clinging to ourselves, we simply will not find a 'self' because there is no such thing as a 'self', as oneself. If we were to search every part of our bodies whether it be the internal organs or the external organs, the skeleton or the skin, we will not be able to find any substance or any concrete thing such as a 'self'. Yet still, without any basis or reason, we continue to cling to our 'self' and do not see the basic clear light. Just as it is with the right and left — when you have a right there is always bound to be a left, so also when we see a 'self' we see an 'other' — the two are dependent on each other. So, when there is a 'self' and an 'other', then automatically you will have desire and attachment to one's own side, one's own life, one's own relatives, one's own friends and feel hatred for others, like one's enemies, and so forth. These impure things all arise from the most basic of the three poisons which is that of ignorance, with which we cling to the 'self'. From this then arises the attachment to one's own side and hatred for others and from these basic poisons stem the ten defilements. If the root of the tree is poisonous then whatever grows on this tree, like it's flowers and leaves, will also be poisonous. Similarly, whatever actions or non-virtuous deeds arise from these three poisons, they create all the suffering in

this life and the suffering of future lives. Therefore, these poisons are the root of all our actions — physical actions, speech actions and mental actions. Taking action then, is like planting a seed. When you plant a seed, in due course, it will ripen. So in this way the way we live our lives in this lifetime determines how we live our next lifetime, and hence we keep going on from beginningless time up to now. We believe this for two reasons as it is said in the teachings, one, that we have lives before and two, that we have many lives in the future, because the body may die but the mind continues. Mind and matter are two completely different things: mind will never become matter and matter will never become mind. The mind has to continue as it is and so in this way even though we change our physical body from time to time, the mind still continues. Although the mind is also changing, the continuity of the mind is constant because even though we die and leave this body, we take another form. Since beginningless time, we have been caught up in this realm of existence mainly because instead of seeing the clear light, and recognizing our inner buddha nature, we continue to cling to our 'self'. It is due to this, that we have the attachment and hatred which causes us to perform more and more actions which in turn increases our misery and suffering, because all the suffering of our past and our present are the direct product of actions that we ourselves have committed. Therefore in this lifetime, when we have been fortunate enough to be born as humans who are not only different from other living beings, but have all the right conditions to practise the dharma, we surely must not waste this great opportunity to awaken from these delusions. If we continue living as we presently do, we will continue to be born in this realm of existence, and in the future also, continue to be caught up in the suffering of this very realm of existence.

Therefore, when we have this great opportunity, we must not waste it on other things. We must try to seize the essence out of this great opportunity. The most important thing to realize is that everybody wishes to be free from suffering. It is also important to realize that the very reason for our suffering is the result of us not changing our lifestyles and continuing with our wrong ways of thinking. So, one has to work on eliminating the causes of suffering. If we were to use the example of crops for instance, if the crop is already ripened, then we cannot change its growth and progress very much. However if the crop is yet to ripen and has just been planted, then it's growth as well as many other factors depend on how much care and how much work is put in it. So similarly, the suffering that we undergo are actually in the result stage. Using our body as an example — the shape, size and condition that our body is in at present is already formed and we cannot change it, but what happens to our body in the future is in nobody else's hands but our very own. Therefore, if one really wishes to be free from suffering, one must eliminate and remove its causes, which are the defilements, the three basic poisons and the other defilements that arise from these three basic poisons. So, difficult as it is to eliminate the defilements, which we have lived with since beginningless time, one must see the defilements for what they are, even though they persist like bad habits and are difficult to remove. While it is very easy to arouse desire, hatred, pride and jealousy, etc., it is very difficult to arouse the good qualities of the mind, like loving kindness, compassion, devotion and faith, etc. Causing the defilements to arise within us is very easy. However being able to see the tiny little causes that give rise to the defilements so very easily is a difficult thing to do, but we must try our best. There are many different methods by which to get rid of the causes of these defilements.

There are outer methods, inner methods and secret methods. Of course, the most common outer method is to realize that every sentient being wishes to be free from suffering. If we really wish to be free from suffering, then we must remove the defilements, which are the causes of all suffering. Since the defilements are what we should really aim to eliminate, we should not fight with our external, physical enemies but instead with our internal enemies. The defilements are our biggest enemies, because no external enemies can send us into the lower realms of hell, but the defilements can send us into the hell realms where we would have to suffer unimaginable amounts of suffering. So, the common method to get rid of the defilements is to see their causes, that is, what causes the sufferings and what effects the causes have. So if we see the cause of our sufferings very clearly, then we must not cling to but instead remove the causes of suffering. For instance, if we are sick with a certain disease then we must abstain from the causes of the suffering brought about by the disease. Whatever the causes of suffering, whether they are certain kinds of food, or certain kinds of behaviour, it is the cause of that disease that we must remove. Otherwise, even though we undergo treatment for the disease, if we keep ignoring the cause of the disease, then time and time again, we will continue to suffer the ravages of the disease and not get better. Similarly if one really wishes to be free from suffering, then one must see the defilements as our biggest and worst enemy with whom we must fight, for in this way we will try to abstain, reduce and eliminate the defilements and instead try to develop all the positive aspects of the qualities of the mind. Of course, these are the common methods.

The uncommon methods means fighting the defilements using inner methods through the wisdom aspect. In this

method, when the defilements arise, instead of following the impure or the defilement thought, by taking action and creating our own karma, we must turn inwards and try to see where the defilement comes from. For instance, take anger: normally when we get angry with a certain person, we tend to think it is that person's fault, and we also tend to continuously think of what he has done to us. The more we think about the situation, the worse it becomes, until finally the situation is blown so out of proportion and finally the anger becomes so great, that we take action against that person. In this method, instead of following that initial thought towards anger, one turns back and tries to examine where the anger comes from, which part of the body the anger comes from and we try to see from where it all started. Which part of the body does the anger rise from, where it is contained and what its nature is, are the questions to which we should seek answers. We must try to investigate or try to examine the anger. And then finally, we will discover that we can not find any concrete thing, anything of substance that we can call anger that we can hold on to, we cannot say what shape and color anger is, where it is, and so on. Therefore in this method, you examine the anger itself and then in this more uncommon method the wisdom that we find naturally sort of calms us down and eliminates our anger. Both in the method aspect as well as in the wisdom aspect, we try to see the defilement as the fault and cause of suffering, the defilement as the enemy, the defilement as something that we must try to avoid and eliminate.

So, instead we must try to develop good qualities of the mind, like loving kindness and compassion because we ourselves along with every sentient being wish to achieve happiness. When we think of others we must also develop the thought that only by helping others will we be able to achieve

our own happiness. In this way, we will gradually develop more loving kindness and compassion to generate the precious bodhicitta or the enlightenment thought which is the wish to attain enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. This enlightenment thought or bodhicitta is the source of all happiness and benefit and is the essence and root of the Mahayana teachings whose basic teaching is in fact to cultivate and arouse the enlightenment thought. Even though we cannot immediately arouse bodhicitta within ourselves, by making it a goal to arouse the enlightenment thought has great merit and great benefit. This is because bodhicitta is wished for limitless sentient beings without exception in order for them to have every form of suffering removed and every possible good quality produced. Generating the enlightenment thought is greatly meritorious because just helping a certain section of people with a particular type of problem has great merit, so surely cultivating bodhicitta for the benefit of all sentient beings has greater benefit and greater merit.

So with this now, I conclude my talk and wish all of you happiness in this life and complete success in your spiritual path and may the blessings of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha be with you now and always. Thank you.

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## **Support the Sakya Academy Foundation**

KHONDUNG GYANA VAJRA RINPOCHE, the younger son of His Holiness the 41<sup>st</sup> Sakya Trizin, has undertaken the responsibilities of establishing Sakya Academy under His Holiness direct and auspicious guidance.

The Academy will provide a combination of traditional Buddhist and modern education. This unique experience

will preserve the holy teachings of the Lord Buddha while introducing young monks to the essential knowledge of today.

This noble project will benefit many future generations. Your support will be essential for the success of this Academy. Your contribution is highly appreciated.

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## *List of Photos*

CONSECRATION CEREMONY at the Retreat Center in Manduwala, India .....	x
DAGMO KUSHOLA with Gyana Vajra Rinpoche .....	xii
EARLY PICTURES of His Holiness Sakya Trizin in Tibet .....	ix
EARLY PICTURE of His Holiness holding a Long-Life Vase .....	25
FAMILY PICTURE at Tibetan New Year 2003 .....	iv
FATHER OF His Holiness Nagwang Kunga Rinpoche .....	17

GRAND-FATHER OF His Holiness Sakya Trizin, the 39 <sup>th</sup> lineage holder — Dragshul Thrinley Rinchen Rinpoche, and His son on the left .....	17
GRANDFATHER AND uncle of His Holiness, and the Prime Minister of Tibet .....	17
GROUP PICTURE in Front of Ngor Monastery, Manduwala .....	ix
H.H. SAKYA Trizin with H.E. Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and H.E. Gyana Vajra Rinpoche .....	vi
HIS HOLINESS with His Eminence .....	xiii
HIS HOLINESS Aunt Thrinley Paljor Sangmo .....	21
HIS HOLINESS donning a gorgeous tantric costume for a ritual dance to ward off evil .....	25
HIS HOLINESS performing ritual .....	vi
HIS HOLINESS performing ritual .....	x
HIS HOLINESS Sakya Trizin with His Holiness the Dalai Lama .....	vii
HIS HOLINESS Sakya Trizin with Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche .....	xii
HIS HOLINESS Sakya Trizin with Ratna Vajra Rinpoche and Gyana Vajra Rinpoche .....	xiii
HIS HOLINESS the Dalai Lama with His Holiness Sakya Trizin and His Family .....	xi
HIS HOLINESS with Ganya Vajra Rinpoche at Jangchup Ling, Taiwan ....	xv
HIS HOLINESS with His Eminence Ratna Vajra Rinpoche attending a Dhamma Gathering .....	xiv
LAMDRE GROUP photo at Sakya Retreat Centre, Manduwala .....	36
SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA Statue in the main shrine of His Holiness Sakya Trizin's Sakya Centre in Rajpur, India .....	v
SAKYA COLLEGE in India .....	x
SAKYA MONLAM at Lumbini .....	ix
SANGA MEMBERS in Lumbini at Sakya Mom-Lam .....	xi
THE 41 <sup>ST</sup> Lineage Holder of Sakyapa, His Holiness Sakya Trizin .....	vi
THE GREAT South Sakya Monastery established by Chogal Phagpa in 1269 .....	xv
THE SECOND Jamyang Khyentse Choekyi Lodro Rinpoche .....	27
VAJRADHARA KHENCHEN Dhampa Rinpoche, Root Guru of His Holiness	25
VAJRAKILYA TORMA offering Puja .....	ix