

Lama Pema Dorje Rinpoche

Biography

Birth

Pema Dorje Rinpoche was born into a yogi family named Jova, whose ancestors can be traced back to Milarepa's paternal line. His father Kathok Rigzin Dorje Rinpoche was a disciple of Taklung Gangshar Rinpoche and Taklung ChoDung Rinpoche. From these two teachers Rinpoche received the entire Longchen Nyingthik teachings, as well as the Machig Labdron Chod teachings. When he was twenty he went to Mount Kailash for an extended retreat. After that he met Drubwang Serta Rinpoche, a lineage holder of the first Dudjom Lingpa's treasure teachings, from whom he received the main Throma Nagmo practice which he continues to practice. Afterward, he became a follower of the Dudjom Tersar lineage.

Once Rinpoche's father's wife dreamed of a clear and brilliant crystal pillar. At the same time her mind felt very pleasurable and her body felt great bliss. When she mentioned this dream to her husband, he said that this was a sign that they had conceived a boy. Therefore he gave the unborn infant a male name, Phagpa Dorje. Although some thought it might be a girl, he assured them it was a boy, which would be proven at childbirth.

Lama Pema Dorje was born in 1942 on the banks of the Ganges River in Rishi Kesh, India. The infant was draped over by a long placenta, looking like he was wearing a meditation belt, which was considered a very auspicious sign.

Childhood

During childhood Rinpoche always liked to be naked, disliking wearing clothes. He couldn't eat meat and also was disgusted by jerky hung in the house. The first language spoken by the infant was Sanskrit and mantra sounds. This made him very different from other Tibetan children, and people didn't know if this was a good or bad sign. When Rinpoche was four years old his father consulted with his Guru, Drubwang Serta Rinpoche, who confirmed this as a good sign: "Your son is the reincarnation of an accomplished Indian Acharya." He then bestowed refuge vows on the boy and gave him a statue of Buddha Shakyamuni and a picture of a white umbrella, as a sign of his future activities to benefit beings. At this time he gave him the title of Acharya Tulku Pema Dorje.

Education

At the age of 4, Pema Dorje Rinpoche started his Buddhist education under the instruction of Serta Rinpoche. He received from Serta Rinpoche the Dudjom Lingpa lineage upper tradition of the Namkha Kyungzong teachings, including Throma ngondro and the Zabsang Khandro Nyingthig ngondro, which is the main Dudjom lineage ngondro of the Profound Secret Heart Essence of the Dakinis. At this time he also received the Dudjom short ngondro, the Throma Nagmo Chod initiation and the Chod main teachings as well as Nyen Sa, Nang Jang and Phowa. All of these

teachings were in the upper tradition of Dudjom Lingpa, and Rinpoche received these teachings twice. He finished the three ngondro practices and continued to practice all of these teachings.

Between the age of 12 and 14, he completed guru yoga and the Throma Nagmo main development stage at Pema Chodzong. At age 15 he studied with Rigsang Dorje Rinpoche, senior disciple of HH Dudjom Rinpoche, Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje. From him he received the Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje mind treasures of Tso Kye Thugthig, Khandro Thugthig, and the Vajrakilaya Namchak Putri and Putri Repung teachings as well as Dorje Sempa teachings. All these teachings included empowerment, lung, and practice instruction.

At the age of 17 Rinpoche went to India and first met HH Dudjom Rinpoche, offering his body, speech, and mind and requesting His Holiness to be his root guru for this life and until enlightenment. His Holiness accepted Rinpoche as his student and gave Rinpoche many initiations and lungs, covering all the Dudjom Lingpa teachings and his own Dudjom lineage teachings as well as many Nyingmapa teachings. These teachings included the Nyingma Kama and Nyingma Gyu Bum. At the age of 18 he did a practice intensive with His Holiness during which he received mind transmission, individual instructions, and personal interviews. Rinpoche considers this time spent with His Holiness the best time of his life.

Afterwards, Pema Dorje Rinpoche was able to learn Rigdzin Sogdrub tsa lung and tummo practice from Lama Kunzang Dorje Rinpoche under the permission of HH Dudjom Rinpoche. This study included rare teachings. Lama Kunzang Dorje Rinpoche also gave Rinpoche teachings on the Northern Treasure Phagmo Sabga tsa lung cycle and afterwards taught Rinpoche the Rigdzin Jatsom Nyingpo Three Roots initiation and main completion practice, Great Perfection Three Realm Liberation practice. He also studied with the Bhutanese mantrayana master Pema Wangchen Rinpoche, who was also a Dudjom tsa lung lineage holder. From this teacher he received all the Dudjom lineage tsa lung and tummo teachings, which included the complete five-branch practice including the six yogas, which covered the outer, inner, and secret teachings.

From Neten Chokling Rinpoche he received the Chokling Treasure initiations and lung. From Rike Chatral Rinpoche he received the Guhyagarbha and many other teachings. Rike Chatral Rinpoche acknowledged Pema Dorje Rinpoche as the reincarnation of the Indian Mahasiddha Padampa Sangye when he was 21.

From Jamtrul Rinpoche he received the teachings of Shantideva's *Bodhicaryavatara*. From Lama Sherab Rinpoche he received many initiations, lungs, teachings and kind advice.

From HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche he received all the Nyingma Treasures, many other teachings, and much kind advice and personal instruction. He received from HH Thinley Norbu Rinpoche the Three Roots initiation as well as instruction and advice on Nang Jang and many Dzogchen teachings.

From HE Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche he received the Orgyen Thinley Lingpa treasures, Red Tara initiation and Kurukulle initiation. He also received Longchen Nyingthig Yeshe Lama Dzogchen teachings, as well as Chagdud Rinpoche's own Pure Vision mind treasure, Green Tara Nortreng (Jewel Mala) initiation, teaching and instructions.

From HH Penor Rinpoche he received the Nyingthig Yabzhi and Kalachakra initiations, as well as many other initiations and teachings. From Khetsun Sangpo Rinpoche he received the Yangtig Nagpo Golden One Syllable teachings, the Trulshig Do Ngag Lingpa treasure, including the Three Roots and 100 Deities initiations. The culmination of these teachings included a seven-day dark retreat in total darkness.

Rinpoche received the Padampa Sangye Shijed Khorsema initiation and teaching and the Machig Labdron Chod teachings, which included the Opening the Door of the Sky initiation, from Trulshig Rinpoche.

From Rinpoche's uncle Kyangchak Rinpoche he received many oral teachings and inner teachings of Dzogchen. He was very kind, helpful and insightful.

From Mindroling Trichen Rinpoche, Dodrub Rinpoche, Chatral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche and Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche he received many blessings and good dharmic connections. He has also received special teachings, advice and transmission from several hidden yogis.

In addition to extensive connections within the Nyingma lineage, Rinpoche also received many blessings, teachings and dharma nectar from such teachers as HH the 16th Karmapa, HH the 14th Dalai Lama, HH Sakya Trizin, Taklung Matrul Rinpoche and Sakya Chogyed Rinpoche.

Practice Experience

Rinpoche received many teachings from many great lamas. Having great respect for these teachings and not wanting these instructions to be wasted, he has practiced diligently. In general, the root of the vajrayana path is initiation. The root of initiation is samaya. The root of all samaya combined is the guru's body, speech and mind. Rinpoche diligently renounced all contradictions with his teachers, keeping the samayas without even small mistakes and practiced wholehearted faith and devotion and supplication to his gurus. He practiced the outer development stage of mahayoga, Three Roots, and special deity practice. As a result of this practice Rinpoche received good signs.

Rinpoche practiced the inner completion cycle of anuyoga focusing on the prana, nadi and bindu. This includes the practice of tummo and the five-branch yoga. Doing these practices Rinpoche received good signs.

Rinpoche has since continued to do the Great Perfection atiyoga main practices of trekchod and togal. The essence of all victorious ones' wisdom, body, speech and mind come together in the root teacher; there is nothing higher anywhere. For this reason, Rinpoche has guruyoga as his heart essence practice for his whole life and until enlightenment.

Teaching Experience

Although Pema Dorje Rinpoche was qualified to teach, initially he only provided for a few fellow practitioners at the explicit request of his teacher. Then, on 20 March 1991, HH Dilgo Khyentse authorized and encouraged him to spread the dharma. Rinpoche's other teachers Chagdud Rinpoche, Lama Kunzang Dorje Rinpoche, and Kyangchak Rinpoche, as well as Chogtrul Shiva Lodro Rinpoche (the reincarnation of his first teacher, Serta Rinpoche) also encouraged and

authorized him to teach. Therefore he accepted the invitation of Chagdud Rinpoche and started his teaching career in America, Taiwan and Brazil. Rinpoche also has students from Taiwan, Japan, America, Tibet and elsewhere.

Conclusion

Pema Dorje Rinpoche is a very experienced yogi and keeps pure samayas. He watches over disciples carefully and has fulfilled the wishes of serious practitioners. For those who are really interested in Nyigmapa tradition, teachings, and practice, to be able to spend time with Rinpoche is very beneficial.

Pema Dorje Rinpoche travels extensively. He has a wife, Kunsang, three sons and one daughter. His wife's father, Uthog Tsomchung Rinpoche, is a Longchen Nyingthig lineage holder. The family of her mother, Choje Zangmo, was from the Drikung Kagyu tradition.