

Namchak Dorje Loppön Chökyi Lodrö

Namchak Dorje Loppön Chökyi Lodrö was born in 1962, the water tiger year of the sixteenth sexagenary cycle, to his father Lama Namchak Tashi and his mother Peya,¹ leaving the confines of her womb during the end of a lunar eclipse. From an early age he showed a propensity for virtuous activities, and showed interest only in the sacred dharma. He began learning reading and writing, as well as the performance of rituals, from his father. He then spent five years at the school established by the local government at Kyilkhar, and two years at the Gyang Ngönchu school.

When he was nineteen he accompanied his elder brother Tsewang and others on pilgrimage to Lhasa, and on the road there he developed a stomach ailment and almost died in Nakchu hospital. During his stay there he dreamed of the venerable yogini Tsepak Lhadrön telling him that he needed to get to Lhasa as swiftly as possible. Accordingly he continued to Lhasa, where he gradually healed. Once he had completed the majority of his pilgrimage in that area, making spiritual connections, he went to Kongpo to stay with the family of Tsepak, a close relative. When he journeyed to the sacred lake of Bönri Tso, he saw a wrathful deity mounted on a tiger and bearing a vajra and purpa, a midnight blue wrathful deity with nine heads and eighteen arms, and numerous forms of lamas. At the same time he saw many places and races of people, which he later said were in India and Taiwan.

He asked the yogini Tsepak Lhadrön about these incidents and she said, “Stay in Drakkar for a seven-day retreat and then go to Gochen Monastery to meet with your elder brother Lama Tukchok.” At an early age Chökyi Lodrö was recognized by the yogini Tsepak Lhadrön as a being who would benefit the teachings. In particular, she prophesied that he would bring benefit to Ngang-zo Monastery and the Namchak teachings. She also said, “In the future a row of monks will appear in this Namchak family, and I too will be a part of your that row. So saying that, she treated Chökyi Lodrö with great affection.

As mentioned above, the Namchak family (which is today the Namchak bloodline of tantric masters) has continued down to the present day as an uninterrupted lineage of a tantric family and a family of physicians in the Tibetan system of medicine. Accordingly, Chökyi Lodrö studied both with the doctor Lama Kunga and his elder brother Lama Tukchok, memorizing the four tantras of the medical tradition and other texts and becoming proficient at identifying medicinal plants and preparing them. He trained with the old lama Tsejor, learning the chants and melodies and music for our Namchak tradition. He requested the vows of monastic ordination from Khawa Tulku Chökyi Nyima, who prophesied that he should instead go to his elder brother Tulku Sang-ngag who would be the one to show him the path, and to receive from him any necessary empowerments, ordination, and study and contemplation of teachings.

¹. Chökyi Lodrö is Gochen Tulku Sang-ngag Rinpoche’s younger brother.

Following this prophesy, he set out on his journey and through the activity of the dharma protectors and guardians, every morning many kinds of birds including hawks and owls and magpies showed him his path up to evening, when they led him to where he would stay the night. Many such marvels occurred during his journey. Finally he rejoined his younger brother Khenpo Ngawang Gelek at Zhechen Monastery. In time at Paro in Bhutan, in the presence of Khyentse Rinpoche he received the grace of *The Four Higher Collections of the Heart Drop Teachings*, the six volumes of Jatsön Nyingpo's teachings, and other transmissions. He then accompanied this lord to Bodh Gaya in India where, in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he received the empowerment of Kalachakra, the transmission of teachings on *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, and the bodhisattva vow.

Then, obeying the wishes of the refuge lord Khyentse Rinpoche, he received the ordination of a novice monk from the refuge lord Trulshig Rinpoche, who conferred on him the name Ngawang Chökyi Lodrö. The refuge lord Khyentse Rinpoche conducted him to the eight great sacred sites, after which he spent some six years studying at the Ngagyur Nyingma Institute in Mysore, devoting himself to his studies. This situation was described in a letter of introduction given him by the refuge lord Drupwang [Penor] Rinpoche:

This one called Chökyi Lodrö enrolled at Namdroling at an early age and, beginning with reading and writing, studied the Buddhist tradition and spent some years in Nyingma Institute of Namdroling and studies of the Tibetan medical system, completing his education in an excellent manner. Following this, for many years he excelled at serving with medical facilities to the monks of Namdroling Monastery in medicine. Nowadays, as per the hopes and wishes of students at the dharma center of Jingang Falun and so on....

As Penor Rinpoche stated in the letter he conferred, Chökyi Lodrö trained for some years at the Namdroling Shedra and, at the same time, served the monastery by running a medical clinic. For several years he accepted responsibility of overseeing construction of the two retreat centers in Pharping, Nepal.

Following this, in 1994 he went to Taiwan and initially founded the Namchak center of Purpa Ling and then, over time, expanded with the addition of several Ewam centers, including the founding of a new Ewam center in Hong Kong. All this serves to illustrate the enormous undertaking he has carried out for the teachings and for beings. In addition, he ensured great benefit for many groups of students. For such reasons, in 2007, during the empowerments for *The Four Higher Collections of the Heart Drop Teachings*, Tulku Sang-ngag Rinpoche enthroned Chökyi Lodrö as the Dorje Loppön (Vajra Master) of the Namchak tradition. Following this, due to numerous causes and conditions both internal and external, and a former prophecy from the dakini of timeless awareness Tsepak Lhadrön concerning benefit for the teachings in the land of Tibet in general, and Ngang-gön Monastery and other centers in particular, Rinpoche felt that the time had come when the auspicious circumstances had come together. Thus, in 2008 Rinpoche offered to him the position of director to oversee the

development of all Namchak dharma centers in general, and he has carried out many praiseworthy activities for all inside and outside of Tibet.

In 2009, while Rinpoche was offering the Namchak empowerments and those of the *Kusum Gongdü* cycle, during the ritual for bringing down blessings in the major empowerment for *The Means for Accomplishing the Enlightened Mind of the Lama*, Chökyi Lodrö experienced direct introduction to pure awareness in a sudden manner, after which it seems that this experience was not subject to any transition or change. Rinpoche wondered at the time whether this was a case of what is traditionally said to be someone of the highest acumen, for whom realization awakens solely due to devotion.

Following this, Namchak Choktrul Rinpoche sent the following missive from Dzapang Sangak Tupten Chöling:

To Khenpos, Tulkus and all the practitioners in all Ewam centers of the Namchak Dzogchen tradition of the Early Translation School I offer this message.

Prior to this the sublime refuge lord Gochen Tulku Rinpoche invested Chökyi Lodrö as the vajra master of the Namchak tradition, and I found this entirely appropriate and am extremely delighted. Now I have the following comment to offer. The vajra master Chökyi Lodrö Rinpoche, having accomplished unsurpassable benefit over the years, both spiritual and temporal, for all centers of Namchak Monastery at home and abroad, has proved to be a vajra master in the definitive sense, truly living up to his title and being entirely worthy of it. This being the case, I ask that all patrons in home region and foreign country; all the khenpos and teachers and tulkus of the Namchak tradition, and all its monastics and laypeople render service as best they can, whether in the spiritual or the secular realm, to the sublime vajra master Chökyi Lodrö Rinpoche

From Namchak Pakchok Gyatso, who bears the title of the incarnation of Namchak Tsasum Lingpa, on September 15, 2000.

This letter refers to the fact that Chökyi Lodrö has built many new shedra colleges, retreat centers, and nunneries of the Namchak tradition, as well as medical clinics and stupas, in Tibet. He has made any number of donations to these projects. In Tibet, Bhutan, and other regions he has created endowments for drupchen rituals for the profound Namchak terma cycles, and at present has created endowments to continue to fund drupchens at all Namchak monasteries in Tibet. In particular, he published five hundred copies of the entire corpus of Namchak teachings in China and contributed one thousand stupas in the Garden of One Thousand Buddhas in the United States. In such ways he has made an enormous impact everywhere, in his homeland and abroad. Rinpoche continues to pray that his noble deeds will carry on into the future, not waning but flourishing more and more, and that his life and spiritual practice will be brought to perfection