



sutra and tantra. When he turned twenty, he took the vows of full ordination and furthered his education at the great Sera Monastery, where he studied the five major Buddhist subjects (logic, Madhyamika, Prajnaparamita, Abidharma, and Vinaya). In 1943, the Tibetan year of the Water Sheep, when he was twenty-six years old, he met his teacher of previous lifetimes, Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche Jikdral Yeshe Dorje. Dudjom Rinpoche gave him instruction on the three inner yogas in general, and, in particular, he matured him in the mandala of the Great Glorious Vajrakilaya, the Dudjom Namchak Putri, and gave him liberating guidance on the general stages of the path of the “four piercings of the kilaya”. He granted him the special pith instruction for the kila of awareness, the primordially pure Trekchö and the spontaneously accomplished Tögal, which was not left as mere intellectual knowledge but applied through a direct introduction to the nature of the three kayas. Dudjom Rinpoche then crowned him as Lord of the Teachings. From that day forward, he endeavored constantly in practice with one-pointed diligence, and later he also served as khenpo in his home monastery. During and after the Chinese Cultural Revolution, he endured tremendous physical suffering, yet his wisdom mind never wavered from the true nature of reality, and he experienced happiness and suffering with perfect equanimity. Later, after the political circumstances had relaxed a bit, he spent the rest of his life in a single hermitage and devoted himself exclusively to practice.

One day in 1994, during the fourth month of the Tibetan Wood Dog year, his assistant monk, Tsewang Rigdzin, along with four other people, settled the Khenpo inside his room and locked the door before heading out on an errand. When they returned, they discovered the Khenpo outside walking around in the front yard.

“How did you get outside?” they asked.

“I came through the door. How else could I get out?” he replied.

They checked the door and windows and saw that they were still locked, just as they had been before. They realized that he had passed unimpeded through the wall, and they were filled with wonder and amazement.

At some point, the lama’s mind seemed to become free of reference points. He would ask questions like, “Have I already eaten?” or “Have I already gone to the bathroom?” If he was told he had not yet done so, he would eat again and return to the bathroom. Halfway through his meal, if he was told he was finished eating or drinking, he would stop. If he was told he had already gone to the bathroom, when he had not yet gone, he would not go. He merely repeated what others were saying, and he seemed to have gone beyond the everyday behavior of ordinary beings.

Finally, in 1998, on the seventh day of the seventh month of the Tibetan Earth Tiger year, as he sat holding his prayer beads and reciting the mantra of Chenrezig, without the slightest physical discomfort, the array of his corporeal form dissolved into the pure space of reality.

That evening, when they removed his regular clothing and wrapped his monastic robe around him, they noticed that his wrinkles had vanished, and his body had become youthful. This was observed by all the attendants. The next morning, his nephew, Tsultrim Gyatso, entered the room to offer lamps and water on the shrine, and he saw that the body was much smaller. Each morning after that, when he went to make offerings, the body was smaller than before. The attendants, feeling unsure, sent someone to ask Khenpo Achuk what they should do. The Khenpo told them not to tell anyone and to keep it secret for seven days. Accordingly, they left the body undisturbed for seven days, and on the eighth morning, six attendants—three at first and three more afterwards—entered the room. When they opened his religious robe, there was nothing there at all, not even hair or nails. His body had vanished completely. This was witnessed by everyone present.

A short time before the precious Khenpo passed away, a rainbow arched above his room, and beautiful sounds were heard. No one could tell whether the sounds were coming from within the room or from outside it. For a long while, five-colored rainbow lights appeared throughout the region, and many of the inhabitants witnessed them. Of Dudjom II Jigdral Yeshe Dorje's many disciples who traversed the secret path of the Great Perfection and displayed extraordinary signs of high realization at the time of death, Khenpo Achö displayed the supreme sign. He manifested what is known as the fourth of the four methods of dying enumerated for superior Great Perfection yogis. His story fills me with inexpressible faith, devotion, and pure vision, and I share it with you today in hopes that others will also experience renewed faith. I have extracted this short biography from the great scholar Khenpo Tsultrim Lodrö's writings with a few subtle clarifications.

May all living beings achieve the Rainbow Body!

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