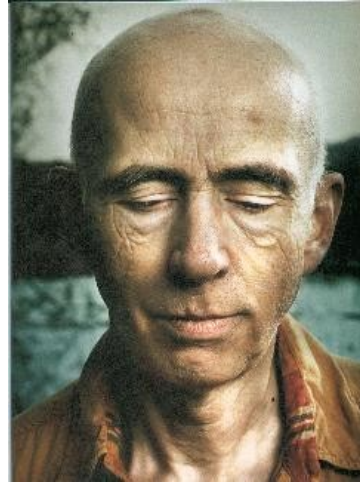


About Lama Tendar Olaf Hoeyer

Lama Tendar Olaf Hoeyer 2003,
photograph: Jes Larsen © territorium



My name is Olaf Hoeyer. The name *Tendar* is from my time as a monk. I am not a monk any more, but this name seems to stick with a lot of people, that know me from old times, so I still use it. I was born in 1948 near Copenhagen on the edge of city and farmland. In 1967 I graduated from High School and attempted to study philosophy and psychology at the University of Copenhagen, but revolted against the established culture there. So I became part to the hippie movement of that time and became one of the first inhabitants of 'Christiania' - Copenhagen's Hippie Town. I moved out from there in 1975. The hippie era had ended. In my youth I was very interested in philosophy, psychology, religions and psychedelic substances. My livelihood in those years was very basic. I sustained myself with various jobs within many trades and professions. In 1976 I became bus driver, and that has sustained my life for many years, when I was not travelling or enjoyed sponsorships.

My Lamas

I met the 16th Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpae Dorje in 1974. He impressed me greatly, because obviously he was a Saint (*Sanskrit: Bodhisatva*). I did not become a Buddhist at that occasion though, but I had never before met such a human being with a completely pure heart. He had no dark side. There was only light and kindness. He gave no teachings though – only various empowerments and the Black Crown ceremony many times. I was amazed, but I also felt, that something was missing. I was not aware that he had brought other Lamas to teach, so we just met and I felt his great blessing.

Then in January 1977 I encountered the well known Lama Kalu Rinpoche, who showed me the kindness of demonstrating the very nature of mind beyond any concepts in the most direct way in an astonishing moment of no self nor other (*Sanskrit: darshan*). He demonstrated mind to mind his own insight into the nature of the mind, so suddenly I experienced his own experience. Naturally I went for refuge with him that very same evening in Copenhagen. Kalu Rinpoche spent some weeks in Denmark, giving many empowerments and instructions. The same summer Karmapa returned with Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche and Tsultrim

Gyamtso Rinpoche. They stayed for 3 weeks giving again many empowerments and instructions. In this way the foundation for my understanding of *Mahamudra* was laid firmly in my mind. And I have no problem with Guruyoga, since my teachers were sincere Bodhisatvas.

After that, many other Lamas educated me. First of all there was *Gendun Rinpoche*, who was the master of my 3 year retreat in France from 1991 to 1994 and so trained me and gave many transmissions. *Shamar Rinpoche* became my master in 1982. He is still a source of wonder, because he was one of the most precise and serene Lamas of our time. Over the years, I have received many important transmissions from him. I came to know Shamarpa when I served as his driver in Nepal for about one year, early in the eighties, as I was living and studying there at that time. Since then, he has over many years given me the important Dharma transmissions and the decisive personal instructions, that guided me through life. In this way, he sent me to Gendune Rinpoche in France for the deeper training in the Dharma.

Finally, *Tenga Rinpoche* is also my master (1978). He had always an answer even on the most difficult questions of philosophy or the technicalities of Dharma practise. I also benefited from his mastery of meditation. In the period of spring 1982 until the summer of 1985, I spent most of my time in Katmandu not far from Tenga Rinpoche's house. I visited Tenga Rinpoche almost every day, when I was in town. There he generously instructed me in meditation and the view of Dharma and answered many questions. These four masters have been a true blessing for me in my life.

Besides these four masters, I received transmission to the Dharma (Buddhism) from, first of all, the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpae Dorje, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche, Thrangu Rinpoche, Bokar Rinpoche and Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche.

I also came to know many others, first of all, the Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, Choegyi Nyima Rinpoche (from Kathmandu), Lopon Chechu Rinpoche (from Bhutan), Lama Yeshe Dorje (from Dharamsala), Lama Thubten (from Nice), Lama Wangdor (from Tso Pema), Lama Tarchin (from Nepal, later resident of USA), Lama Sherab Gyaltsen (from Pokara), the French Lama Yeshe Nyingpo (from Le Bost in France, who later made a scandal of broken vows concerning sex with his female students) and the English Lama Gelongma Rinchen (also from Le Bost). They have all either instructed, helped or inspired me at our meetings or training sessions, or they have accomplished all the 3 points in one go.

Education and activity

My education started in 1977 and proceeded in many places, both here in Denmark, France, India and Nepal, where I stayed almost 3 years in a period first in the eighties. I was 4 years in France first in the nineties.

From August 1985 until August 1989, I served as the manager of the Copenhagen Buddhist Centre *Karma Drub Dgy Ling* (Karma Kadgy Skolen). Holding that position, it was possible to obtain the recognition by the State of Denmark as an authentic religious society with all the privileges that such formal recognition entails. It was also possible to transform the Centre to a genuine institution and pay all the debts of that Centre. (Today this Centre is part of the Diamondway Buddhist Network of centres. At my time, it was a very mixed group of Karma Kagyu practitioners, that followed several different Lamas. I have no longer anything to do with this centre because various kinds of prejudice are at work.) In 1989 I went to France and participated in the preparations of the great Temple-project for Dhagpo Kagyu Ling (Karmapa's main seat in Europe) in Dordogne. In 1991 my 3 year retreat started at Le Bost (Kundreul Ling) in Auvergne, where also the Monastery is situated today and the Great Temple. These two centres along with their satellite-centres are organised as Dhagpo Kagyü Mandala. I still have a connection with them.

Tenga Rinpoche ordained me as Geltsül (novice-monk) in 1984 and gave me the name *Karma Drubgyü Tendar*. In 1988 I received the Gelong ordination (Sanskrit: *Bikshu*, fully ordained monk) by Kenchen Thrangu Rinpoche. I gave back the vows in the year 2000, because it was not possible to live correctly as a monk in Denmark at that time. (There are no monasteries, and I dared not live as a homeless for health reasons.) Gendun Rinpoche appointed me Lama, when I left the retreat in 1994. Shamar Rinpoche have later confirmed the appointment. I am not a master myself, but just educated and trained in this craftsmanship of a spiritual nature and entrusted to formally teach Dharma.

Lama on Tilogaard

In 2006 Shamarpa asked me to establish *Bodhi Path* here in Denmark. This was then done formally in 2007, when I visited Rinpoche in Nepal. In 2009 a Bodhi Path group was formed in Copenhagen on my initiative. Tilogaard though, is now an independent Danish Karma Kagyü institution and do not participate in the Bodhi Path network. In respect of Shamar Rinpoche, Tilogaard has kept an affiliation with the Bodhi Path centres. I am teaching the Bodhi Path Curriculum, but does not take part in the Bodhi Path centres' particular way of organisation.

After the demise of Shamar Rinpoche, the Bodhi Path network has developed a rather tight governance, I think. I may be mistaken. Maybe it is just me, that is used to self reliance and cannot submit to an international governance, that I feel is conducting themselves in a wrong way in my opinion, in a variety of areas. I hope the best for the Bodhi Path network, but it is not possible for me to participate. Most networks of a spiritual character have problems with transparency, democratic governance, superstition and their ability to actually follow their own ideals. Instead, they promote stereotype attitudes for the sake of community and develop spiritual bypassing strategies, that prevent the liberation, that they allegedly are seeking. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to do otherwise in a club, that gather around a common interest. They then cultivate infighting and narrow mindedness, even the

purpose of the club is to develop and grow *Bodhicitta*. Such a shame, really. It was the same in the Karmapa centre in Copenhagen in the eighties.

On the other hand, the Bodhi Path Curriculum is excellent. It has been developed by Shamar Rinpoche for modern people with a sense of the ancient wisdom of Buddha Sakyamuni and the authenticity of his Dharma. Shamar Rinpoche has composed a study and practise plan, that both contain a lot of the original Dharma from Tilopa and Atisha, as well as being very suitable for modern people. The quality of the curriculum is simplicity, depth and vast extensions. *Simplicity in complexity*. The purpose of it is to enable you to reach the path of insight among the 5 paths of Dharma. This will empower you to train and accomplish *Mahamudra*.

Tilogaard is for now privately owned, but it is my aim to donate everything here to the self-owning institution of 'Tilogaard Meditation School'. The Institution of *Tilogaard Meditation School* was legally founded in October 2012, but the transfer of ownership is not possible yet for practical reasons. The financial situation cannot be resolved as it is, before 2024, unless some sponsors appear to carry the project through in a faster pace.

How does it feel to be Lama?

The expression *Lama* (Sanskrit: *Guru*) means several things, but mostly it means instructor, coach and trainer. I instruct students in formal meditation and how to use the Buddhist views while meditating and in the post-meditation daily life. Then I train the students just like any other coach in other disciplines. I also perform rituals for clients on request ('client' means people who ask for services, rather than Dharma instructions or teachings).

When I was a hippie, it seemed that becoming a Lama was the highest and best endeavour to aspire for. In our time, the title is not so good, because it is connected with misuse of public trust, both in respect of sexual abuse as well as financial. Also it does not really matter, when people only seek instructions in the Sutra methods. Actually, it is only within Tantra that a Lama is important. The Tantra, that I teach, is very limited. I do not teach erotic Tantra. My enthusiasm for the Lama title has therefore gone away, but my masters thought something else. I have to respect that.

At present, teaching and training is organised for individuals or very few people at any one time, because I have very limited housing space here at Tilogaard. In the future, I aim to develop proper facilities at Tilogaard for larger groups, so everybody can enjoy this nice country place, that is so well suited for study and Dharma practise. Lately, I have become quite handicapped by a serious lung disease, so the renovation of Tilogaard has come to an unintended hold.

Lama Tendar Olaf Hoeyer, January 2018.