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Pearls of Wisdom on Pearl Island:

The Margarita Retreat

March 30 - April 3, 2001

By Elias Capriles

Isle de Margarita' literally means Daisy Island. However, the island originally became famous because of its pearls; since on the island there is a town called Juan Griego, meaning John the Greek, it is not too far fetched to suppose that the name 'Margarita' may as well derive from the Greek 'margaritaria' meaning pearl. At any rate, it was with pearls of wisdom, which we hope will become wish-fulfilling Mani pearls, that Rinpoche showered us at the retreat on Margarita Island from March 30 through April 3, 2001.

The retreat lasted five days. Rinpoche devoted one of them to explaining the three main Paths in the Buddhist teachings: the Path of Renunciation (the Sutrayana), the Path of Transformation (the Vajrayana, Tantrayana or Mantrayana), and the Path of Self-Liberation (the Atiyana). After briefly outlining the principles cor-

responding to these three main Paths, and helping his listeners to clearly grasp the distinctions between them, Rinpoche explained the difference between Paths and vehicles (as we all know, in the old system the former two Paths contain eight different vehicles). Thanks to this and other explanations, the new people had the opportunity to build their own treasure chests, so as to place each pearl of wisdom in the appropriate drawer.

Another day Rinpoche delivered his internet address to the worldwide Community, which consisted mainly of practical advice on how to follow the teachings, how to behave in daily life and how to function in the Dzogchen Community. He also gave the *hings* for the various practices so that newcomers could participate or practice on their own if they wish.

Rinpoche devoted two more days to explaining in a most clear

way his condensed new wisdom pearl necklace which was the theme of the retreat: *Direct Introduction to the State of Atiyoga*.

Regarding the new book that Rinpoche taught at the retreat, the translator, Adriano Clemente, writes:

"*Direct Introduction to the State of Atiyoga* is an upadesha or essential extraordinary teaching belonging to the cycle *The Intimate Essence of the Dakinis of the Radiant Clarity of the Universe*, that explains how to find oneself in the authentic state of Atiyoga or Dzopa Chenpo. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu received this teaching through his dreams in 1972, in 1978 and finally in 1983, when he transcribed it in its final form. The story of his dreams and visions are also translated herein."

The book is, indeed, a most clear, though quite short Nyingthig text on how to gain a first access to

the state of Atiyoga Dzogpa Chenpo in general. As implied by Tonpa Garab Dorje's Testament, after Direct Introduction dualism is reestablished, and thus doubt concerning the nature of the state accessed (therefore also regarding the essential condition of the essential condition of both the individual and the universe), may arise. If this happens, it is imperative to return to the said state again and again, until one no longer remains in doubt. It is then and only then that one may finally "continue in the state of Ati" and thus accomplish the injunction of the third of Garab Dorje's statements.

Firstly Rinpoche briefly explained the Four Yogas of Dzogchen Semde, then he explained how Dang energy manifests the realization of the Essence that is Dharmakaya, the Nature which is Sambhogakaya and the Energy which is Nirmanakaya. He explained the arising of the five pranas, five lights, etc., and how they are to be recognized as one's own nature. The Master explained the three Kayas of the Base, as well as the four aspects of development on the Path constituted by view, meditation and behavior. To conclude, Rinpoche noted that the three series of Semde, Longde and Upadesha must be applied according to the essence of the Three Statements of Garab Dorje.

Thus went the retreat at Margarita Island, the island of pearls where Rinpoche showered us with

genuine pearls of wisdom. We practiced Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico and danced the Vajra Dance with Rita Renzi, met old Vajra brothers and sisters who we had not seen for long time, walked long stretches of white sand at Playa El Agua, swam and frolicked in the sea and visited the land where Tashi Gar North will be built. And, as always in samsara, soon the experiences were but memories of events past. Memories that are not meant merely to treasure but to apply!

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Complete works of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Project

SPECIAL
MARGARITA
ISSUE

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NAMKHAIR NORBU RINPOCHE'S SCHEDULE 2001-2002

RUSSIA, KUNSANGAR

Santi Maha Sangha
May 27th-29th
SMS Base Level Exam
May 30th-June 5th
SMS I Level Training
June 6th-8th
SMS I Level Exam
June 9th-13th
SMS Level II Training

June 15th-21st
Kunsangar Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha
June 22nd-23rd

SMS II Level Exam
June 24th-28th
SMS III Level Training

ITALY, MERIGAR

July 6th-10th
Merigar Retreat
July 17th-August 6th
Personal retreat of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
August 10th-19th
Merigar Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha
August 21st-23rd
SMS Base Level Exam
August 24th-28th

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Public Talk, Berkeley California
May 1, 2001

The Essence of Dharma

I am very glad to see many of you again. I am sure many of you already follow Dharma teachings, so this evening I would like to go more into the essence of Dharma. Why? Because already everyone's life is very busy. First of all, we don't have much time to learn very Dharma in a very detailed way. Secondly, even if we learn something, it is not so easy to apply. If we do not apply or practice it has no benefit. Dharma is something like medicine. We need medicine because we have problems; physical problems. So when we have medicine, what do we do? We must take the medicine and we follow the advice of a doctor. Otherwise even if we have good medicine, there is no benefit. The same thing with Dharma; we can learn. Dharma is also something useful for living this life. Of course, if we believe there is some continuation of our life then Dharma is still more useful. Even then, Dharma becomes something useful only if we know how to apply it, how to integrate into our condition, particularly in daily life. For that purpose we need to understand the essence. What is the real essence of Dharma? It is not only understanding the different kinds of traditions; different traditions are secondary. Within the essence of all traditions - all traditions which follow Dharma teaching, the teaching of Buddha - there is no difference. We have many kinds of traditions within the teaching of Buddha. We have these different traditions because there are many different kinds of people with different kinds of capacities and different kinds of judgments. Even if one teacher is giving a teaching, then later, for example, ten students have ten different ideas and ten different ways of understanding. Maybe not all ten students create ten different schools, but some are created. Someone who is more active creates a school, a tradition, and many different kinds of traditions arise. But the essence must be same.

This doesn't mean that we should go after multiplying traditions; actually we can do the reverse. We can try to understand the essence of what Buddha taught, why Buddha taught, and which kind of benefit we have if we follow the teaching. I think these things are really very, very important.

I want to give you a little idea about this from my experience. Because I have studied the Dharma for many years - Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen - I have my experience. When we study or follow a teaching, why are we following the teaching? We study in order to have knowledge, to discover the real sense, how we can integrate, and how we can have a kind of realization. That is the purpose. So when we learn or follow a teaching for all of our lives, in the end we arrive, more or less. Sometimes we arrive very late. We are always judging, thinking, creating, so many things. Sometimes we can arrive a little earlier, if we are fortunate, meeting teachers who really give the essence of the teaching. Or we

know how we should go on the path and learn; sometimes we have that possibility.

I will give you an example of myself. When I was small child I entered the monastery and received an education, a monastic education, learning many things like how we do prayers in the monastery. Later, when I was nine years old, I entered college. Finally we studied some real Dharma. Even if we



EM. BREGLIA

UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENCE CHÖGYAL NAMKHAIR NORBU

study Sutra, we are trying to understand what the path is, what it is for, etc. After five years I studied in college, mainly Sutra teaching, and then I felt, "Now I know everything". Really, I felt that way. I finished my college, and went to another college, two different colleges, for comparing studies, etc. and it seemed that I learned very well. I never thought, "I don't know Dharma". Or that I was not being in the sense of Dharma. Later, when I was seventeen or eighteen years old, I met one of my teachers, a Dzogchen teacher, and received Dzogchen teachings from him. I had received teachings many times before, I had met many Dzogchen teachers, but had received that teaching in a more traditional way. They gave initiations, empowerments, some instructions through some books, etc., and we learned and thought, "Now I know that, I am an expert of that".

Finally I discovered I was not really being in the knowledge of the teaching but I believed I knew everything. Also, my teacher, when we talked, before I received the essence of the teaching, he told me many times, "Your mouth is Madhyamika and your nose is Logic". I always thought he said that because he didn't go to college. He didn't study for many years like me. I thought, "He is good practitioner, but he is not scholar". This was my idea. Then later, when he really transmitted the essence of the Dzogchen teaching, I discovered I had really built my idea of knowledge, something like building a castle of my idea of study, knowledge, understanding, and I was living in that. So of course, when my teacher transmitted, I discovered that and my construction of the castle collapsed. Finally I understood how we should learn the teaching and how we should be in the teaching, so this is my experience.

Teaching through Experience

Later, many years ago in Italy, when I started to teach, I thought the best way to teach was through my experience. I knew that people who were interested were not really interested in learning only in a traditional way, but wanted to have knowledge and realization; some benefit for themselves. I knew how they could have benefit. If we really know the essence of the teaching, then we can have benefit. We

can also integrate in our existence. Of course, sometimes when I give some kinds of lectures, particularly like seminars of Buddhist philosophy at a university, for example, I do it in a more traditional way. Otherwise they believe I don't know Madhyamika; I don't know this or that thing. But when I am teaching people so they can have benefit, then I go very much with my experience.

For that reason I want to inform you a little about this and maybe you can have benefit. When we are following Dharma, any kind of Dharma - Sutra, Tantra - most important is that first of all we know our condition, not Dharma. We are following Dharma; Dharma is for us, we are not for Dharma. That is important. If Dharma is for us, we must understand our condition. In our condition as a human being we have three existences which in Tibetan are called "go sum." "Go" means "door", like a gate from which we enter and from where we go outside. "Sum" means three. Everybody has three gates or three doors. What are these three gates? Our body, speech and mind. Body means physical body and is easy to understand. Speech or voice means more on the energy level; the physical body has energy. Then there is mind and mind is the main thing in individual existence. These three are what we call the three gates. Why do we call them the three gates? If we want to go to visit something inside a place, for example, a museum or somewhere, we must go through a door or a gate. Sometimes we also need to buy tickets. Otherwise we couldn't go in. When we arrive inside, if we go regularly, we discover everything which is inside. If we don't go through the door, we can't get inside. If we don't go inside we can't discover what is there. It is the same thing if we want knowledge and understanding of Dharma, what the of essence Dharma is, or the teaching of Buddha, then we should go through our three gates. That means with our body, speech and mind. If we are already in our existence then we know our three gates and if we want to go outside, for example, we are now in samsara and we want to get outside of samsara, maybe liberating from samsara, in which way can we have liberation? We should go through three gates. Learning the teaching,

path, applying, with our energy, physical body, etc., we can then have realization. The three gates are indispensable. The three gates are not only learning and getting in the knowledge, but everything. The teaching, methods, all existence, if we observe well, everything is related with the three gates. There is nothing not related.

In this case the three gates become a kind of key for the

a much larger sense than if we only say energy. For example, in Tantric teaching, sometimes we say Vajrayana, the vehicle of Vajra, and sometimes we say Tantrayana, the vehicle of Tantra, but many times we say Mantrayana, which is a very general name. Mantra means sound. Sound is related to the base of energy; this is the reason why we call it speech.

These three - body, speech, and mind - are the three gates. When we say body it doesn't mean only our physical body, but everything related with the physical body, everything on the material level. Subject, object, everything is part of our body. If we think of a person, the condition of a person, number one is mind, then energy, and then the physical body. The physical body is related to the physical dimension in which we live; the subject, object, and everything. The teachings also go in that way.

Sutra and Tantra

For example, there are Sutra and Tantra teachings; these are very famous in Buddhism. What do Sutra and Tantra mean? Sutra and Tantra are Sanskrit. Sutra means conclusion; the conclusion of an event. For example, when Buddha was in India he gave a teaching every day. There were many students, sometimes important Indian kings, Dharma kings, and they invited Buddha and his students somewhere and the students asked Buddha to give specific teachings or some explanation of something in a specific way. Then, of course, Buddha explained, gave that teaching, and at the end he finished the teaching. When he finished the teaching, the king and all the people present were very happy and thanked the Buddha for receiving this teaching. That's normal, no? Then later, someone like Ananda or another student of Buddha wrote down, "One day Buddha went someplace, like Rajgur, for example, and then the King of Rajgur asked for this kind of teaching and Buddha taught and explained this way". Buddha taught and explained and when he finished the teaching and everybody was satisfied, they thanked Buddha. That is the end of the Sutra. What was written down, the event of that day, that is one Sutra. Then they were given different titles. For example, "The Sutra of the request of this King" or "The Sutra request of this place", "The Sutra of these people", etc. There are many these kinds of Sutra teaching. Sutra teaching is related more to the physical level. When we say the three gates, it is more on the physical level. Why? Because first of all Buddha, the real Buddha state of the condition of Buddha is not the physical body. It is Dharmakaya. Dharma means all phenomena, kaya means its dimension. The real dimension of all phenomena is emptiness. Dharmakaya is not something we can see or touch. Buddha is in the Dharmakaya and communicates the teaching to beings. How can it be communicated? For communication we need a Buddha, not Dharmakaya, but we need a Buddha which we can see so we can talk with him. In this case, Buddha manifests a physical body, like a human being. So we can talk to

continued on next page

each other; Buddha can talk and we can listen, we can hear, and this is on a physical level. Also the teaching is on a physical level and Buddha taught many of these kinds of teachings on a more physical level.

For example, with the explanation of karma - cause and effect - you understand this already and I don't want to explain. I am sure you all know the Four Noble Truths. This the first thing Buddha taught. What is the main point of the Four Noble Truths? To explain cause and effect. Buddha is not explaining the cause first, but the effect. Why? Because people understand effect more easily. If someone gives me a punch, I feel pain. That is the effect. I wouldn't say, "Oh, I don't feel anything". I feel. So Buddha is saying that we have suffering. The noble truth of suffering; all sentient beings have suffering. There is no one who has no suffering and also no one likes to suffer. Everybody agrees with Buddha. No one would discuss or argue with Buddha. Otherwise, if Buddha explained the cause first, maybe many people wouldn't agree. They have a different way of seeing and they argue instead of learn. So Buddha explained suffering and everybody said, "Yes, it is true, we have suffering", and then Buddha asked, "Do you like to have suffering?" Everybody said, "No, we don't like it." So Buddha offered an idea: If you don't want to suffer, then the solution is not that you fight with suffering. In general we act in that way. We live that way. When there are problems we struggle. We make a revolution. Buddha gives a teaching which is not a solution because suffering is an effect. With the function of the effect you can learn or discover what the cause is. That is all. No struggle. So why do you have suffering? Because there is cause. If you don't want to have suffering, then you discover what the cause is. It is very easy. In the

same way when we go to a doctor, you arrive there and the doctor says, "What did you eat yesterday? What did you do, what was your attitude?" etc. Why does he ask this? Because he wants to discover which is the effect and the cause. Then the Buddha taught the second noble truth of karma, the cause, then cause and effect, and then the third noble truth of how we stop this. In this case, the teaching is more related to the physical level because there are many people who have no capacity. Buddha explained: to not have suffering you should do meditation. Many people don't understand what doing meditation means. It is a very simple way to not create negative karma. With your body you don't do these things, for example. With your voice, you don't insult, you don't lie, etc., with your mind, you don't think bad things for others, etc., and so as to not commit negativities he gave vows. There are also different levels of vows. These teachings are characteristically more related to the physical level. When we take these kinds of vows, we take these vows until we die. We don't take this kind of vow until we have total realization. For example, we say we don't kill animals. For killing animals what we could do? We do something, we act with our physical body. We are not only doing something like magic power for killing. Most people in general are acting. If we have no physical body after death, how we can kill animals? Not so easy. That's an example of how everything, like vows, and all these things, are related more to the physical level.

Characteristic of this teaching, of how Buddha taught Sutra, is the path of renunciation. Renunciation means renouncing all causes of negative karma. When we know, if I do this, if I apply this, it becomes a cause for creating some cause for negativity, we renounce that. The

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The Vajra Dance

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Tashig ar 2001



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave the lung of the Song of the Vajra to some people who wished to participate in the Vajra Dance course at Tashig ar this past January. Here is a talk Rinpoche gave in the Gonpa before he gave the lung.

There are three dances in the Vajra Dance; the short, medium and long dance. This, in general, is like the Dzogchen teaching. When we find ourselves in our own state, that state is represented by the Ah and one develops from there. We have to begin with the three Vajras, Om, Ah and Hum. Therefore, the shortest dance, the Om Ah Hum, represents our body, speech and mind. The Vajra Dance is mainly for integration; integration means to know our state first and how it is represented. The three Vajras represent Om Ah Hum. Our state is linked with our wisdom and energy. For example, there are the five wisdoms, or in our relative condition, the five passions. The five wisdoms together or the five passions together become one so that we have six, and the symbol for this is Ha A Ha Sha Sa Ma - the state of Samantabhadra or the six spaces of Samantabhadra. This is the way to liberate our state from samsara.

Samsara is made up of six lokas - our five passions plus one - and altogether they become the six passions and result in the six lokas. In the short dance, Om Ah Hum, the three Vajras represent our three states. In the liberation of the six lokas we have the six spaces of Samantabhadra, Ha A Ha Sha Sa Ma, and this dance is a little more developed and longer. The Vajra Song is even longer. The Song of the Vajra represents all our chakras and centers of energy.

First of all, in our body we have body, speech and mind represented by three Vajras; completely developing the five chakras. In the end, we have six chakras, and all of this represents the base of our energy, further developing all the chakras as secondary chakras. Then we have many chakras and all of them are governed by sound. So all of the main sounds become like the Song of the Vajra, so this Song of the Vajra is a mantra and in reality a symbol of our energy, whole and global.

It must be understood that when we say the Dance of the Vajra it is not a dance like a folk dance. It is a practice primarily to integrate our energy, our real condition. So we have to dance and understand it in this way. When we dance we also have a mandala, which represents the inner mandala, the mandala from inside. In our body we have five or six mandalas. This whole cycle is represented when we do the dance, either the Om Ah Hum or the Ha A Ha Sha Sa Ma or the Song of the Vajra. Also when we dance we don't just walk around on the mandala. In fact, we move very precisely and all these points represent all the points of our internal chakra, therefore the mandala is a symbol of the internal chakra.

This mandala we have is internal, and so the internal and external integrate. When one has more knowledge then one has the capability to integrate and can then have the realization of integration. This is one of the fundamental aspects of practice and teaching. It is very important. So the Dance is very important and more so when one goes into depth, it is not just dancing. We take a course to learn how to move, turn and do all with care and then once we have learned, when we get

on the mandala, we know how to move by following the sounds of the Song of the Vajra. We don't even have to think about how to move and where. In this case we have the possibility to completely integrate; integrate with the sounds of the song, the power of the sound of the Song of the Vajra and integrate the external and internal mandala.

If one is more expert and knows more, then there is a lot to learn. If one knows all the positions on the mandala - the internal positions - then it is not so difficult to understand the external mandala. First of all, we live on the earth and this globe is a mandala. If we stretch our vision we are not just on this earth, but are part of the solar system which is more extended. Close to us we find the earth and even closer we find the internal mandala. Then we can understand the external mandala and which positions are the same as the internal positions.

So, if one wants to deepen this practice in the future there is still more to learn. For example, we can learn where these points on the mandala are on the earth. When one knows this it means this place is a sacred place. Where we move corresponds to a sacred place on the earth. Sacred places have always been sacred, for example, where practitioners and realized beings have been. Some of these places are recognized as such, but at times these places are not recognized but are still sacred because it is a place where energy is concentrated.

Where energy is concentrated two aspects can manifest. Very sacred places like Bodhgaya or Samath are known sacred places and considered very important. For example, I saw that Jerusalem is a very particular place. So these places can manifest a negative aspect instead of a positive one. We know very well that potentiality always depends on secondary causes. When there is a positive secondary cause we have pure vision, such as the manifestation of the Sambhogakaya, the realized beings. But when there are negative secondary causes then we have samsara and suffering; problems.

All places are not the same, also all suffering, and in some places everything is very concentrated and there is more of both, so the energy is a little like this in our internal mandala as well. In this way we work and do the practice and for example, in Tantrism, we transform and the wisdom has more effect. The external mandala is the same. So we know there are many possibilities to be able to develop our practice by having relative contact with sacred places. For example, in places like the Middle East, Iraq, Baghdad, where many problems always manifest up until today; when we see the position on the mandala we see that it is a very important sacred place. A sacred place doesn't always manifest a realized or enlightened being or teaching. It depends on secondary causes and when secondary causes are negative, it can manifest heavily negative. In this way also our body is the same, the internal mandala. It is very important in this case to have that understanding and awareness.

Translated from Italian by Antonio Ferraro
Edited by Naomi Zeitz

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's schedule continued from page 1

SMS I Level Training

September 7th-17th
Vacation in Sardegna

Santi Maha Sangha

September 23rd-25th
SMS II level Exam
September 26th-30th
SMS III Level Training

October 7th

Leave for Margarita Island

VENEZUELA, MARGARITA ISLAND

December 26th-January 1st
Margarita Island Retreat

2002

February 15th-24th
Margarita Island Teacher's Training
March 29th-April 2nd
Margarita Island Easter Retreat
April 9th-23rd
Margarita Island Longsal Teaching

USA, TSEGYALGAR

May 3rd-7th
Dzogchen Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha

May 10th-14th
SMS Base Level Exam
May 15th-19th
SMS I Level Training
May 21st-23rd
SMS I Level Exam
May 24th-28th
SMS II Level Training
May 30th-31st
SMS II Level Exam
June 1st-5th
SMS III Level Training

June 14th-28th

Personal Retreat of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

July 5th-14th

Dzogchen Retreat

ITALY, MERIGAR

July 18th
Leave for Merigar

Santi Maha Sangha

July 23rd-25th
SMS Base Level Exam
July 26th-30th
SMS I Level Training

August 10th-18th
Dzogchen Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha

August 22nd-23rd
SMS III Level Exam
August 24th-28th
SMS IV Level Training
August 30th-31st
SMS IV Level Exam
September 1st-5th
SMS V Level Training
September 8th-22nd
Vacation in Sardegna

AUSTRIA, KALACHAKRA

October 10th
Leave for Austria
October 11th
H.H. the Dalai Lama arrives
October 23rd
H.H. the Dalai Lama departs

ITALY, MERIGAR

October 28th
Return to Merigar

THAILAND

November 4th
Leave for Thailand
November 15th-17th
Thailand Dzogchen Retreat

SINGAPORE

November 22nd-24th
Singapore Retreat

AUSTRALIA, NAMGYALGAR

November 25th
Leave for Brisbane
December 26th-January 1st
Namgyalgar Retreat

Around the World

Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Margarita

Dear Dzogchen Community of all the World,

Very Happy Tibetan Losar !!!!!!!!

I am sending my warm wishes and many greetings to you all from Margarita Island.

For this coming new year we have finally found some wonderful land here on this Island. It has the perfect conditions that we need for creating Tashigar North, so I can spend more time in my life with many of our elder practitioners transmitting my Essential Teachings of Ati Dzogchen to my qualified students, enjoying the rest of our lives and so on. For all these purposes this land is really perfect and fantastic. In this place we can find all the qualities that we need: it is a dry place; everything grows easily; there is always warm weather; there is very nice land for building the houses; there is already a source of water; there are power lines and an irrigation system for the fields; it has a nice view of mountains and the sea. There are

very nice sandy and rocky beaches not far from the land and a very easy connection to the main road. This is really a place of "Lhundrup".

I am really very happy that we have this land and I am sure that you all also will like this place just as I do. We are all getting older day after day, so we can't wait a long time, we need a little peace and enjoyment in a place like this very soon. For that reason our committee of the land is very aware of these things and they are working very hard and in a good way.

If some of you are interested to join with us in this wonderful place, then it is much better that you participate immediately before the possibilities become limited.

I hope everything manifests fantastically for you.

With many Tashi Delegs !!!!!

Yours,

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



MELUPE

Saint Margarita or Margarita Island

by Elio Guarisco

"I live in Caracas". "What are you doing here?" "I came for my marriage". "Why did you chose Margarita for your marriage?" "Oh, it is a magic island." A tall, blonde Venezuelan girl told me as I was having breakfast at Costa Linda Hotel on Agua Beach where Rinpoche's retreat took place, from the 29th of March to the 3th of April, 2001.

The first, slightly unpleasant impression of the beach was like that of arriving in the renowned and spoiled resort of Rimini on the Adriatic in Italy at the peak of the summer season. Thirty-five minutes by plane from Caracas, Margarita is a small island with about 40,000 inhabitants, mostly concentrated in Porlamar, the airport town. The rest of the island is scarcely populated especially the hills of the interior part, where none seem to have set foot, and with some still deserted and uninhabited beaches.

The rare local people that show up in the streets are taxi drivers and a few youngsters, who look at tourists with an eye on earning the daily bread. Fishermen do their work on the coast keeping themselves away from the tourists. Most of the local people remain unseen, hidden away from the open sun. Most probably, Margarita, until a few

years ago, was a forgotten place populated only by some hundreds of fisherman. Only in the recent years has it gained a tourist status sprouting a couple of huge touristic and ugly hotels. Somehow the characteristics of this island have not favored tourism like the other islands of the Caribbean sea.

Slowly the feeling of unpleasantness felt on arrival gave way to a state of relaxation and pleasure at being there that allowed me to see the surroundings with other eyes. Unlike the Maldives for example, Margarita does not have the spectacular beaches with clear emerald waters and multicolored fish swimming in them, nor does it have an enchanting tropical vegetation. The landscape of the coast is dry and barren; trees pounded by the sun do not grow very tall. A few palms along the beach and some mango in the distance mitigate the otherwise barren look of the place that would remind one the Tanzania savanna.

Despite this outer look, Margarita, as the girl who came to marry there told me, has some magic. It brings a total state of relaxation to the mind, so much so that one wonders if there could be someone on the island effected by diseases such as heart problems, nervous disorders and all the other problems that afflict people in the Northern hemi-

sphere. The weather is definitely the plus of this island; the temperature just reaches the point before heat would cause sweating and constant thirst every day of the year.

Finally, after few days spent at Margarita, and with Rinpoche's teachings, the full magical impact of this island enveloped me. Pedro Gonzales, a small and lost village, next to two beautiful beaches with cold water, and with a wonderful potential for the future, is situated on the Northeastern side of the island. It is the closest village to the land chosen by Rinpoche called Tashigar North, the twin of Tashigar in Argentina. From this village, going up toward the interior (about six minutes by car), one reaches a flat area enclosed in an amphitheater of small hills, the highest of which is around 1000 meters and has a cap of what looks like a tropical forest nurtured by the heat of the clouds that occasionally dwell on its peak for few hours before moving to the horizon and disappearing over the sea. The land is situated in the right corner of this amphitheater, fifteen lots, mostly of flat land, but a part of them on the side of a hill; the hundred meters above the plain forms a flat breast. This is the Garuda's nest where Rinpoche's house will be con-

structed overlooking all the land and the sea in the distance.

A first impression of the land reminds me of Merigar as it was at the beginning and give me a clear impression of a power place graced with infinite potential to grow into a complex working community. Though Rinpoche himself never said a word during the retreat about the land and the project, his very way of being there manifested the determined intention of creating a Gar and making Margarita a main Buddha field of his activity. Venezuelan members of the Community seemed fully engaged in carrying out the project of buying the land and the plan of the aloe vera plantation that will allow the land to be edifiable and will also bring home some dollars. A well detailed plan of the plantation project was presented during the retreat with the plan for building the houses in the 31 lots, plus one for Rinpoche's house. Exhilaration took hold of the whole group of people as we inspected the land with a member of the Venezuelan community. Going back to the teaching place in a big land rover, imagination broke loose envisioning the fully realized project with Rinpoche's house, the Gonpa and the houses of the practitioners much resembling to Changchub Dorje's Gar in Tibet and the poor village of Pedro Gonzales completely transformed by the strong energy of the members of the Community to an unfathomable extent. In Margarita Rinpoche looked like a silver striped fish swimming easily and happily in deep but clear waters despite the gall bladder operation he underwent a few days before. Rinpoche looked in a way that I have never seen before, like a man who arrived at his promised land or final destination. In a four days retreat he commented briefly but decisively on his mind term: "The Direct Introduction to the Dzogchen State". He engaged his students in intense hours of teachings in a sharp and utterly straight manner, allowing the fullness of his being and presence manifest very

closely to the listeners and leaving bewildered and astonished the new comers whose lucky conditions have brought them to Margarita. He reiterated very clearly and unconditionally the very essence of the teaching, emphasizing the need to discover one's own true or primordial condition without depending too much on books, on false beliefs or on the guru's condition. The teaching culminated in a procedure of direct introduction to the state by means of experiencing the space of total openness. Many on that occasion must have had a glimpse for the shortest moment of time of the timeless mind manifesting as a pure presence within ordinary perception of sounds in which there is no room for the habitual patter of acceptance and rejection: a state that when left untouched and unmodified is the source of all the qualities of the enlightened ones. With Rinpoche's posing for pictures with one and then the other, ended the event.

During free time of the retreat, the practitioners in small groups, moved around the island discovering Margarita's beaches and playfully interconnecting with each other, sunning and swimming in the cold but tempering sea water. All enjoyed the blessing of full relaxation that the island bring and dreamed of the day when, tired of traveling, Rinpoche will settle down in the Garuda's nest overlooking the sleepy village of Pedro Gonzales sharing his last secrets with those have placed their confidence in him as a guide and who will come like ants to surround him. As I take off, without regrets as usual, the flight first takes me to Amsterdam, then to Milan, where the feeling to have come down from heaven to Purgatory manifests a little.



G. PARELLA

Dreaming Margarita

by Kathy McGrane

Everyone is happy at the seashore. The sun is hot, the air is fresh, the wind is strong, the ocean rough and tumble. Powerful elements overwhelm with pure sensation. Mind empties out. Shine is useful to relieve agitation. We are always charging body, speech and mind. Shine reeducates mind. Margarita Island is lovely. Playa el Agua, where the retreat was held, is a small tourist corner in the Northeast of the



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island, modestly developed. A few shops and restaurants, two hotels on the main street; small mission-style hotels and vacation homes line the side lanes. Hunkered down among the palm trees, grass-roofed buildings on the beach are brilliantly painted in lime green, coral, cobalt blue. *Mind is like a mirror, with infinite potentiality. Reflections are only appearance. What you see in the mirror you believe to be real. Be the mirror - not looking into it. We begin with visualization, which works with clarity, but dissolve the concept into instant presence.*

At a beach front hotel, the retreat was held in an open air room; tile floors made softer with straw mats. Behind Rinpoche's seat on the dais, a thin net had been hung across the open window spaces and strung with red and pink bougainvillea; behind that a backdrop of palm trees framed a happy lama, resplendent in a flowered Hawaiian shirt and orange lap robe. Rinpoche began the retreat with an explanation of the overriding importance of the practice of Guruyoga in order to recognize that the condition of the master, the practitioner, and Samantabhadra is the same - not becoming one with, but being the same as. The teaching focused on transmission and explanation of the text, "An Introduction to the State of Ati Yoga", describing fixation practice. *From emptiness rises the energy of the elements; from these, secret sound and letters; from letters rise five colors; from five colors rise the elements; from the elements rise their functions - coalescing (solidity), warmth (heat), air (breath).*

We were alternately heated in the sun, cooled in the water, breathing refreshed in the wind. Breath is life. To our lounge chairs on the beach, vendors brought fruit and fish to eat, pearls to wear, aloe vera gel to soothe our skin. Body is sensation, speech is clarity, mind is emptiness. Calm state represents emptiness, instant presence rises through clarity. *If we recognize these experiences, then life is practice. If we recognize these experiences then, at the moment of death, when the function of senses dissolves and experiences are very strong, we can apply instant presence.*

The Miragua Hotel and Cafe face the beach; the hotel restaurant sits across the road perched above the beach itself with open windows to the sea. We ate there together most every day of practitioners from South Africa, Denmark, Germany, Hol-

land, France, the U.S., Argentina, Russia, Italy, Venezuela, all getting acquainted and enjoying each other's company. Sometimes the Maestro and his family joined us. Fresh fish and calamari were served in the restaurant or, on the beach, empanadas, soup and sandwiches were available. So the days were filled with teaching, Vajra Dancing, swimming and dining, interspersed with island excursions, important siestas and salsa dancing. The dance mandala is our primordial condition; its levels represent our chakras. *All of the universe is represented by our chakras in a very precise correspondence. The Song of the Vajra governs the universe.*

The casino at Laguna Mar played with our desires. Slot machines, roulette and auto-roulette, twenty-one and horse racing (computer screens display the race, corresponding with plastic horses on a felt track). A group of practitioners filled the banquettes around the racetrack, laughing, joking, drinking, winning/losing. *The main problem of samsara is emotion. Emotions can be transformed through manifestation of deities. This method eases the grip of emotions without renouncing them. When anger rises one can also use instant presence. Practice is not limited; everything is free. All practices and methods are useful. Free means unconditioned by anything, not even by the teaching.*

The promise of the prospective land for Tashigar North, 15 hectares in the Valle de Pedro Gonzalez, brought about several expeditions to the proposed site. The land itself sits snug up against a broad round hill facing southwest to the sea. A palm-lined driveway leads in from the road, where a wide, flat parcel, useful for farming, gives way to an uphill slope of the proposed site for building homes. The grade grows steeper towards the peak. A dirt road curves up to the shoulder of the hill and ends at the site for Rinpoche's house. Toward the east is a taller mountain capped by clouds; the valley to the south beneath is ringed by low hills. The ground is dry and scrubby but fertile year round. Wind from the east is high and strong.

Vultures ride the drafts overhead. The adjoining property has a well-developed plant nursery which includes bearing fruit trees - mango, tamarind, papaya. *Visions that manifest for the individual are significant; they are the result of potentiality met with method. At the center of the Vajra is a thigle of infinite potentiality. Spontaneous manifestation of thigle represents our dharma. Dharma-dhatu is related with the condition of the individual. Integrate in the thigle.*

We turned our minds to the realization of the Margarita Project. The committee that Rinpoche appointed has worked very hard on negotiating for the property, developing the plans, and shepherding them through the authorities for the necessary consensus. A business plan is in place that has the approval of the Venezuelan government. Agriculture in Venezuela has been in decline since the discovery of oil resources and the government is deeply committed to its redevelopment. For this building project, all that remains in order to put plans into action is obtaining building permits. The committee pre-

pared copies of the business plan and maps of the land for interested practitioners. At the coming December retreat, architects will present final plans with a few model homes to choose from. Rinpoche has already designed his own house and chosen a site for a Gonpa. *The Buddha manifested on the Nirmanakaya level and taught Sutra, which is linked to the physical dimension; so he was working on a physical level with what is visible to ordinary vision, even manifesting death. A teaching must enter into a culture without changing it; it's only a knowledge, an understanding that bonds with the culture. The Buddha used examples of Hindu cosmology from Indian culture as a secondary basis for instruction. But what he taught was emptiness - that reality is illusion.*

To explain the agricultural aspects of the project, consultants arrived one afternoon to give a presentation on the viability of farming aloe vera. Vincent Al Andrade, an agriculturist and Alfredo Morales, owner of an aloe vera plantation in Coro. With several years of experience in the business, they carefully illustrated commercial uses of all parts of the plant for pharmaceuticals, food, and cosmetics. An explanation of each phase of processing from raw material to refined gel clarified the marketability of the plant at any stage, processed or unprocessed. A cost analysis was projected over a five year period; the figures were conservative and positive. Real profit can be derived from this project slowly, in the long term. Rinpoche listened attentively, as did the rest of us.

On the bay at Juan Griego, we drank beer at the beach cafe and watched the sunset. Small fishing boats bobbed at anchor. The sky and water changing color - gold to rose to violet. Fishermen walked chest deep in the darkening water drawing a net behind them. Fixation is a way to hold the mind, with gaze, with visualization, with breathing. *The seven point posture controls body, gaze in triangular fixation holds mind stable, focusing mind with Ah controls thoughts, normal but deep respiration keeps mind from following thought. If distraction rises, train with sound of Ah. Thoughts may seem to increase but*



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it is only a discovery of their real quantity. Employ any object to get into the state of contemplation, then only notice thought. Follow your own capacity, rely on your own experience - check your concentration, your timing to find out what is missing in your capacity. Dzogchen is our condition.

The retreat closed with a transmission of transparent emptiness as an introduction to instant presence. *You don't decide on a Master; you discover your nature through him.* And at its conclusion, we were all in dreamlike love, a state of spontaneous affection risen from the play of bodhicitta. We happily posed for a photo with our Teacher. We all said "cheese".

West Coast, USA

Oakland, Seattle & Portland

Seattle Visit & Public Talk

May 8, 2001

by Erica Moseley

On May 8th, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche arrived in Seattle after a truly wonderful Retreat in Oakland. We were seven people, and two small children, greeting him and Fabio at Seatac airport. Though the day was a little cool after sunny California, the Northwest offered its particular brand of welcome in the form of bunches of fresh lilacs picked from our gardens, and a bald eagle that circled the car as Rinpoche was driven along Lake Washington.

The following day Rinpoche gave a talk, "An Introduction to Dzogchen", at the University of Washington. This was co-hosted by the Dzogchen Community and the Tibetan Language Association of the University (and arranged by



A. BAHAMAST

Daniel Winkler and Heidi Schor.) Despite the fact that this was Rinpoche's very first teaching ever given in Seattle and minimal advertising, the event was sold-out with 240 people attending.

Directed to a wide audience of both Dharma practitioners, and academics and students of the University, Rinpoche gave an extremely concise and lucid teaching tracing the path through the nine yantras to the teachings of Ati-Yoga. The three groups of teachings: Sutra the Path of Renunciation, Tantra the Path of Transformation and Dzogchen the Path of Self-Liberation and their characteristics were explained succinctly with Rinpoche's characteristic humor and directness. Rinpoche seemed relaxed and in very good spirits and we all enjoyed the evening immensely.

Many people meeting Rinpoche for the first time were

very interested and inspired, some of them even attending the Retreat in Portland the following week. His visit brought local practitioners from far-flung places in the Northwest together and a new practice schedule was distributed offering practices in Seattle, Kirkland and on Whidbey Island. Plans were discussed to hold regular practice days and a Vajra Dance Retreat has been scheduled for July 5th-8th.

The day following the talk Rinpoche traveled on again to Portland for the Retreat the following week. Although his visit to Seattle was brief and did not allow time for visiting in the surrounding area, we are so very grateful to Rinpoche for including us on his already very intense travel schedule. We are all hopeful that he will return again one day very soon.



Portland Retreat by Mark Farrington

It was New Year's Eve 1996, a little after midnight. Donatella Rossi and Allan Mandell were spending the weekend at our beach house on the Oregon Coast. Just after we filled the pales outside with water for the New Year's Day star shower, Donatella and I hatched the idea to invite Rinpoche to come teach in Portland, Oregon. We thought what a shame that he hasn't taught here in Oregon before, a wide open country as spiritual and free as this. So, off we went to compose an email to him down in Argentina where he was teaching at Tashigar. The news came back rather quickly and it was confirmed, Rinpoche would teach in Portland... in two years time.

In 1999, Rinpoche did teach in Portland and it was fantastic. It gave birth to the Portland Sangha which now numbers nearly fifty. As the retreat in 1999 came to a close, Rinpoche received a visitor from the North West Tibetan Cultural Association that informed us His Holiness the Dalai Lama was going to teach in Portland May 2001. Donatella and I seized the moment again to invite Rinpoche back to Portland for the same week that the Dalai Lama was to teach and Rinpoche accepted. I'm not sure what we expected, but somehow we knew it would be a good occasion for the people of Portland and all those that were willing to travel there.

Two years later the week passed by like a dream. It started with the Dalai Lama's arrival on Sunday, May 13th. His every movement was heavily covered by the local media. The City of Portland was buzzing in the glow of the non-sectarian, feel-good message His Holiness had to offer. Many of us attended the Dalai Lama's two day teaching on the Four Noble Truths and generating the mind for enlightenment, including Rinpoche who was seated up front with Donatella. The auditorium of about 3,000 people was filled with happy people, calm people, people who had the motivation to stand out in the pouring rain to learn a bit about compassion, about themselves. As I leaned over to say to Mark Fulton while we were waiting for His Holiness to enter the auditorium, "the energy in here is so good, I would love to start a new civilization with the people in this room." It was that kind of feeling.

After three days of events surrounding the Dalai Lama, we began Rinpoche's program with a public talk on Wednesday night at the university where Donatella teaches. It was a serious and polite crowd. Rinpoche gave a beautiful introduction to Dzogchen and drew on some of the Dalai Lama's impor-

tant points taught during the week. The continuity was perfect; the transition made with ease.

Then on Friday the retreat began with another full house of 250 eager students ready to practice. The weather had turned very fine and Rinpoche was feeling well. He gave a very concise teaching on understanding the essence of the Teachings, focusing on quality not quantity of practices. Rinpoche gave a direct introduction to Portland students for the first time and the effect was good. We finished with a Ganapuja on Sunday and ended a golden week with Rinpoche. It was a very auspicious week. There were no plans made for Rinpoche's return to Portland this time, but there have been so many seeds planted in that fortunate city this past month that their fruits will be ripening for many years to come. Thank you Portland, and thank you to all of the Portland Sangha for hosting a beautiful retreat for Rinpoche and his students.

GENERATING THE MIND FOR
ENLIGHTENMENT
WITH A WISH TO FREE ALL
BEINGS
I SHALL GO FOR REFUGE
TO THE BUDDHA, DHARMA
AND SANGHA
UNTIL I REACH FULL
ENLIGHTENMENT

ENTHUSED BY THE WISDOM
AND COMPASSION
TODAY IN THE BUDDHA'S
PRESENCE
I GENERATE THE MIND FOR
FULL AWAKENING
FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL
SENTIENT BEINGS

AS LONG AS SPACE ENDURES
AS LONG AS SENTIENT
BEINGS REMAIN,
UNTIL THEN, MAY I TOO
REMAIN
AND DISPEL THE MISERIES
OF THE WORLD

SUMMER RETREATS AT MERIGAR WITH CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU 2001

JULY 6-10

SHORT DZOGCHEN TEACHING RETREAT

The retreat starts on July 6 at 4pm.
The cost is 400,000 lire with discounts for paid-up members.
Payments can be made in installments.

AUGUST 10-19

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"The Eyeglass and the Mirror" Chögyal Namkhai Norbu visits California May 1st - 6th, 2001 The 5-Metal Snake Year by Michael Nourse

Most people do not realize that Oakland, California is a warm weather oasis amidst the habitual cold and damp climates of Northern California. I learned this local fact from my cab driver as I rode in from the airport to see my beloved master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, whom I had not seen in some eleven - or was it? - Twelve years. Certainly, I was fortunate to arrive early enough on the first day of the retreat to assist Gakyil organizer Patrick Tribble who led the Dzogchen Community West Coast in their preparations to beautify the Scottish Rite Temple. Located in the heart of downtown Oakland, the temple was built in a single year by a California Branch of Freemasonry. And I did not need a cab driver to map the history of Freemasonry in the United States. A secret society of mystics, dating as far back as 2nd Century France with a direct lineage to both Christ (and, it is rumored, Tibet), many of America's founding fathers were known to be freemasons, as are many Americans' and Europeans' earliest grandfathers. Why, even, my paternal uncle was a twenty-third level adept of the Freemason Order, but, of course, I only remember him wearing a Shriner's cap and driving a miniature car in one of their "ludicrous" annual parades.

Still, none of the Freemason history was lost on our community, as we hung thanks of Guru Rinpoche, Garab Dorje and Vajrasattva

in celebration of our own teacher's lineage who has traveled such a long way from Tibet via Italy with his own lessons to impart. The Inner Temple of the building where the teachings were to be advanced was like a secret cave - a perfectly round communal hall fashioned on the early European precepts of sacred geometry and astrology. When Norbu arrived to take his precious seat among us, it was as if he were somehow destined to sit there.

Nor did the Dzogchen Community West Coast disappoint him. No sooner had Rinpoche seated himself than a Tibetan White Seed Syllable Ah greeted him, projected on the dome ceiling through the hall's theatrical lighting capacity. The curling smile of the master, never greedy to be happy but merely willing to taste his own pleasure, grew with certainty, as did the master's health over the 5-day retreat. Guiding us through the sutra, Mahayana, Vajrayana, and Atiyoga systems of Buddhism, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche reminded us yet again of the primary importance of keeping his transmissions and ourselves safe through the White Ah of the Guru Yoga. And I, myself, recalled the many years over the past eleven - or was it? - Twelve - that I was fortunate to maintain my connection to our excellent teacher through just such a miraculous means. How, I wondered, sitting there in the dark before him, had I remembered?

Because Rinpoche had reminded me so well the last time I saw him in 1989.

To be certain, there were new transmissions, new initiations, new mudras, mantras, and melodies to learn, for Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has never been one to "rest on his laurels". Still, he was the same jovial master I remember: focused and involved, with just the right balance of mirth and mischief-ness to keep us all on our toes.

And, while, Rinpoche is always teaching Dzogchen even as he illuminates the sutras, it was a short parable he recounted from his beloved master Changchub Dorje that seemed most appropriate to this retreat. Rinpoche spoke of the Eyeglass and the Mirror, and how the former will lead you out into the world, scrutinizing everything, and the other will lead you back to yourself and your own true nature. In reflection, perhaps this is how we may recall our Dzogchen Community in California now; through our commitment to ourselves and the individual capacities that unite us under the banner of Norbu's Dzogchen teachings. Perhaps that is also how we will realize our Winter Gar in North America. Certainly, it is how we may respect our master's transmission and his long lineage; through Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's guru yoga, and through our personal understanding of the Mirror's capacity.

Lives of the Great Masters

Naropa

by Elio Guarisco

based on The Life and Teaching of Naropa,
transl. Guenther, Oxford University Press New York, 1963



By the kindness of the master,
The dark cloud of concepts has
vanished;

Now there is no sun rising nor sun
set

No day no night.

The citadel of the senses conquered
by great bliss

I Naropa, have no hint where to go
or where to stay.

This comes from the yoga in which
there is nothing to think.

Why shall I give in to conceptual
creations?

Born in Bengal (A.D.1016) Naropa is said to have been of royal patronage. At the age of eleven he left for Kashmir, at the time the main seat of Buddhist learning. He was ordained as a lay disciple with the abbot Gaganakirti. He stayed in Kashmir for three years and became an outstanding scholar master of all sutras and tantras. Upon returning home, he was forced to marry a brahmin girl of a Mahayana family called Niguma. After eight years, the marriage was dissolved by mutual consent. He set himself in a hermitage for twenty-five years. At that time he also became a novice. Thinking that his ordination might be incomplete, he left again for Kashmir where he received the Bhikshu ordination. He continued his studies until his fame and renown had spread everywhere. People started saying that he was a man who thoroughly understood the doctrine of the Buddha. At Pullahari he spread the doctrine far and wide and gathered around him numerous monks who gained excellent realizations. He composed famous treatises and commentaries to the Tantras and then joined the university of Nalanda.

Among the five hundred great scholars he became the successor of Jetari, the siddha, as the Northern Gate Department master, when the latter passed away. When he defeated a host of Hindu scholars in debate, the staff of Nalanda requested him to be their supreme abbot.

One day when studying with his back to the sun a terrible shadow fell on his books. Looking around him he saw an old woman who asked him, "What are you looking into?"

"I study the scriptures," he replied.

"Do you understand them?"

"Yes."

"Do you understand the words or
the sense?"

"The words."

The woman was delighted,
rocked with laughter and began to
dance waving the stick in the air.

"I also understand the sense,"
added Naropa at which the woman
began to weep and tremble and
threw the stick down. Upon been
questioned on her behavior, the
woman advised Naropa to seek the
true sense from his brother, Tilopa,
and then disappeared like a rain-
bow in the sky. Reflecting on the
vision of the old woman he gave up
all his belongings and books decid-
ed to leave the monastery. The
monks pleaded with him to remain
saying that if he were to go to
another country, the monks would
be like fish on dry land. Naropa
thus replied to them,
"Despite my attainments,
Virtues and clairvoyance
I have not seen reality
Therefore I shall seek the true mas-
ter."

He traveled toward the East
and with tears in his eyes prayed to
Tilopa. When he reached a big
cemetery, he built a grass hut and
recited the mantra of Chakrasam-
vara seven hundred thousand times.
Thereupon from the sky a voice
was heard saying,

"In the East lives Tilopa, the
embodiment

Of the great bliss of non-dual
awareness

Incarnate and lord of all that lives.
Seek him the master Buddha."

He proceeded to the East and
as he came to a narrow footpath, he
found a leper woman without hands
and feet blocking the path. Although
he was full of compassion, he closed
his eyes and nose in disgust and
leaped over her. The leper woman
rose in the air in a rainbow halo and
said,

"The ultimate in which all are the
same

Is free of thoughts and limitations

How, still fettered by them

Can you hope to find the Master?"

Later, on a narrow path he met
a stinking bitch covered with ver-
min. He closed his nose and
jumped over the dog, who then
appeared in the sky and said,

"How will you find the master to
accept you

When you look down upon oth-
ers?"

Resuming his journey, Naropa

met a man carrying a load. He

asked him if he had seen Tilopa.
The man replied, "Behind this
mountain you will find a man try-
ing to cheat his parents, ask him!"
Having crossed the mountain, he
found the man who told him, "I will
tell you of his whereabouts if you
help me to trick my parents." Naropa
thought, "I am a prince, a monk and
a scholar, I cannot associate with a
scoundrel." The man disappeared in
a rainbow and said,
"How will you find the master
If you do not crack the skull of self-
grasping?"

Beyond another mountain he
found another man that was tearing
the intestines out of a human
corpse. The man told him, "If you
help me to cut up the intestines of
that corpse I will tell you where
Tilopa is." Naropa did not do so
and the man disappeared in a rain-
bow and said,

"How will you find the master
If you do not cut samsara's ties?"

Proceeding further, on a bank
of a river Naropa found a rascal
who had cut open the stomach of a
live man and was washing it with
warm water. "I will show you
where Tilopa lives, but before help
me," said the man. Again Naropa
refused and the man appearing in
the midst of light saying,

"How will you find the master
If you don't wash samsara's faults
Which is by nature free

With the water of the master's pro-
found instructions?"

When Naropa came to the
shore of a lake, two people were
plowing the fields, killing and eat-
ing the insects they found in the fur-
rows. "Tilopa stay with us, but
before I show him to you - hey
wife, come and get this Bhikshu
something to eat." The old woman
took some fish and frogs from her
net and cooked them alive. She
invited Naropa to eat but he
declined saying that he was not eat-
ing meat. The old woman said, "He
seems stupid, he does not want to
eat." Angry the old man threw the
pan in the fire and the fish and frogs
flew up in the sky, and said,
"How will you find the master
If you don't eat the fish
Of habit creating thoughts?"

The next day, he met a man
that had impaled his father on a
stake, put his mother other into a
dungeon and was about to kill
them. The man told Naropa, "If you
help me to kill them I will show you
Tilopa." Feeling compassion
Naropa refused to kill them and the
man disappearing in a rainbow
said,

"You will find it hard to find the
master

If you don't kill the three poisons
Born from the parents of duality."

Praying, Naropa reached a
hermitage. One of the inmates re-
cognized him and received him with
great honor. "I am searching
Tilopa," he said. "Your search has
come to an end. Inside is a beggar
that claims to be Tilopa," said the
hermit. Naropa found him sitting
by the fire and frying some live fish.
When the hermits saw this, they began
to beat the beggar angrily. The beggar
snapped his fingers and the fish
returned to the lake. Realizing that
the man was Tilopa, Naropa folded
his hands in prayer and begged for
instructions. But Tilopa left refusing
to acknowledge him.

Next day Naropa came upon a
vast field with many freaks, some
one-eyed, some blind, some deaf,
some mute, some lame and a corpse
that gently fanned itself. Upon see-
ing them one said,

"One eyedness as the quality of
many

continued on next page

BOOK REVIEWS

As It Is Volume II

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche

Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 2000

How can I presume to review
Anything by Tulku Urgyen.
Here's the review: "Read it! Read
it! Then practice it!" However, I'm
told I have to fill up more space for
the readers of this newspaper. So
here goes! Tulku Urgyen was a
Dzogchen master highly respected
by both Nyingma and Kagyu lin-
eage holders. He taught from the
depths of his understanding of Ati
Yoga. His discourses have been
collected in several books: Repeat-
ing the Words of the Buddha, Rain-
bow Painting, and the two volumes

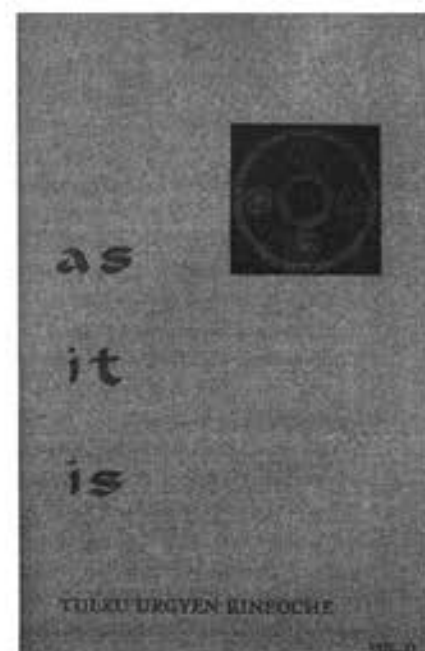
from "holding the idea of empti-
ness in mind" or "the sustained
attempt to feel empty", neither of
which is very useful, since both
are fabrications (p. 48). Concerning
the non-constructed, unfabricated
nature of this moment of contem-
plation, Tulku Urgyen gives an
example. If you want to touch
space, "you do not have to raise
your arm....you are already touch-
ing space....You do not have to
move your hand forward; the con-
tact is already occurring, and has
been your entire life. All you have
to do is recognize that it is taking
place" (p. 112).

Although the natural state,
pointed-out by the Master, is effort-
less, in order to train in this it
may be helpful to exert some
effort at the beginning, as in
the shine or shamatha practice
of tranquil abiding. "Our
basic state does not require
our making anything in order
to be as it is. The act of trying
to keep mental calm and quiet
is not the natural state; it is
trying to create a state of still-
ness. At the same time it is
helpful, because when the
mind becomes more quiet it is
easier to recognize. . .the
insubstantial nature of the
abider. . .you can see that it is
not an entity. That seeing is
the vipashyana aspect...
[which] does not require any
effort. It is the awake and
knowing aspect of your mind,
which is utterly transpar-
ent" (p. 114).

Recognizing the nature of
mind means "meeting your nature
head-on" (p. 117). "In the moment
of recognizing....simply allow it to
be, however it is....Don't ever
think....it has to look a certain
way... Don't think, "Hmmm,
maybe this is not exactly the nature
of mind. The nature of mind must
be more special than this"....the
moment you recognize you must
abandon all preconceptions. Mind
essence does not require our
improvement" (p. 119).

Another skillful means that
requires some effort is the develop-
ment stage of tantric visualization
practice. Tulku Urgyen compares
the development stage to doing
exercise. It requires effort and is
"not so easy". In contrast the com-
pletion stage is incredibly easy. Nevertheless, training in the devel-
opment stage is indefinitely of value
(p. 52). Similarly the relative bodhi-
citta is the constant companion of
the absolute bodhicitta. Tulku
Urgyen quotes the Karmapa: In the
moment of love, the empty essence
nakedly dawns. Tulku Urgyen
comments that this love can
either take the form of devotion to
enlightened beings or compassion
for unenlightened beings (p. 58).

Describing the traditional
tantric path Tulku Urgyen com-
ments that the ngondro, or prelimi-
nary practices, are used for purifi-
cation of obstacles. Next the yidam
practice suffuses your being with
blessings, and then you are ripe to
be "introduced to the natural face of
awareness" (p. 233). This is the tra-
ditional sequence. He comments
that in recent years many Masters,
including himself, have given the
pointing-out instructions right from
the beginning. In fact, Tulku
Urgyen was notable for freely and
repeatedly giving pointing-out.
Explaining this Tulku Urgyen cites
the prophecy that "At the end of the
continued on next page



of As It Is. All of his books are like
the pure milk of the Snow Lion to
be lapped up for nourishment. In
each of them Tulku Urgyen speaks
from his own experience, in clear,
accessible language (well translated
by Erik Pema Kusang), holding
nothing back. Volume One of As It
Is was reviewed in a previous issue
of The Mirror. Volume Two begins
with "pointing-out" instructions and
ends with a rousing exhortation to
practice Tulku Urgyen's final public
teaching, three months before his
death.

Tulku Urgyen compares the point-
ing-out instructions to seeing a
dim-witted person running around
wailing "I've lost myself! Where
am I?" Pointing-out is like stopping
the person and telling him, "You
are you" (p.38). Later he explains
the transmission this way: "When a
master teaches his students the
direct knowing of buddha nature, it
is the same as introducing a carni-
vore to the scent of the deer. Once
you have the scent, then you have
it. Just keep on sniffing it, like
tracking down prey" (p. 132).

Throughout the book, Tulku
Urgyen continues to point-out in
various ways. One that particularly
struck me was his description of
how a yogi practitioner perceives
an object. He or she "does not dwell
on the object, but recognizes the
nature of the subject" (p. 48). Later
he gives the following example: the
ordinary person sees a cup and
thinks, "This is a cup. There is a lid.
There are a lot of designs on it.
There is a little tea left." In contrast,
a yogi "in the moment of seeing a
cup recognizes the nature of mind
that sees the cup". Further concepts
are not produced in that moment,
and within the yogi's mind there is
no holding onto anything whatso-
ever (p. 148).

It is essential to distinguish
this spontaneous self-liberation

BOOK REVIEWS CON'T

Dark Age [our contemporary period], the teachings of secret mantra while blaze forth like wildfire" (p. 234). He explains further that nowadays students do not have as much time to prepare for the vital instructions, and are often only able to stay with the Master for a short time.

"I do not feel that there is anything inappropriate in giving the pointing out instructions to people. They can practice the preliminaries after. It is perfectly fine" (p. 235). In fact, he suggests, if one can practice the ngondro and the other preliminaries with "the correct view of recognizing mind essence" based on the pointing-out, it greatly multiplies the beneficial effects of the ngondro (p. 234).

Tulku Urgyen stress the importance of steady perseverance in practice, not alternating between pushing ourselves and then totally giving up. He gives the example of the unbroken flow of a river although the volume and intensity of the current may be greater at some points along the river route, the basic flow is never interrupted (p. 116).

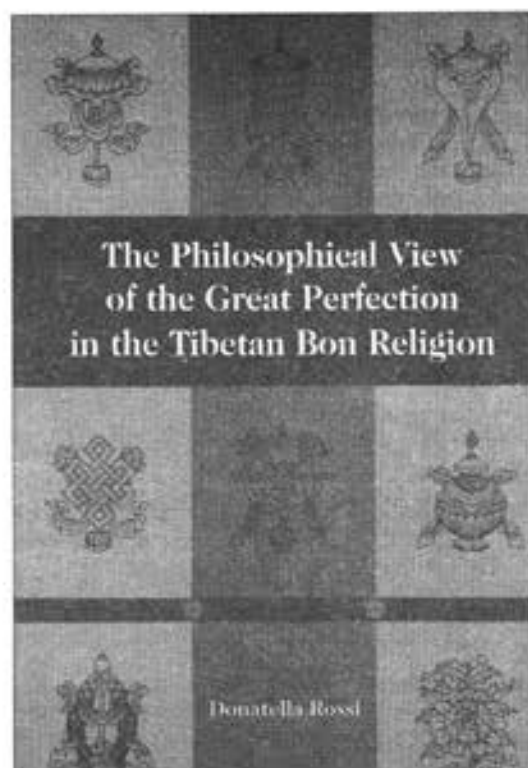
Tulku Urgyen also warns not to become "drugged on Dharma practice" reminding yogis that the essential meditative experiences of bliss, clarity and nonthought are not realization, but are actually the "very subtle form of the three poisons," passion, aggression, and stupidity (p. 237). However, Tulku Urgyen makes a very subtle point, which I'm still chewing over. Nonthought is a meditative experience, not rigpa. However, "in the true state of rigpa, there is no namtog" or thought (p. 189). Tulku Urgyen states, "It is essential to resolve the fact that there is no namtog whatsoever in the state of rigpa; it is impossible....A hair cannot remain in flame....Thinking only begins after marigpa sets in....When the expression moves as sherab [wisdom], in the same moment it seemingly moves, it is already liberated. There is no actual arising. This is a very important point" (p. 188-189). This is a very deep and subtle distinction, and I know I'm going to be meditating on that one for a long time!

by Paul Bail

The Philosophical View of the Great Perfection in the Tibetan Bon Religion

Snow Lion Publications, 1999
by Donatella Rossi

In this book Donatella Rossi has translated and annotated two important ancient Dzogchen texts from Bon, the native religious tradition of Tibet. The first of these consists in the "Twelve little Tantras" from the Zhang Zhung Aural Tradition of the Great Perfection, a text praised on several occasions by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu (for example, in "The Precious Vase" and in "Commentary to the Practice of Narag Tongtrug") as expressing the fundamental principle and really communicating knowledge of Dzogpa Chenpo. Her second translation comprises "The View which is like the Lion's Roar", belonging to the Three Cycles of Proclamations of the Great Perfection. These teachings were brought to Tibet and subsequently concealed them during Trisong Detsen's persecution of Bon in the eighth century.



Donatella's useful Introduction gives a broad overview of the history of Bon, as well as a brief study of the history and doctrines of the teachings of Dzogchen in Bon. There is also a history of the Bonpo Dzogchen lineages and their textual sources, with a detailed study of the three main transmission systems of Dzogchen within Bon. Her sketch of the major western works on Bonpo Dzogchen is particularly useful regarding the most recent publications.

The short section on methodology, that precedes a helpful examination of key Dzogchen terms, offers a succinct appraisal of the two texts presented in the present volume. Our author points out the canonical conformity of the first to standard Tantric pattern and classifications, which she surmises "would point to a definite acknowledgment of the Tantric notions developed out of mainstream Mahayana Buddhism". In fact much as in "The Supreme Source" Kunje Gyalpo affirms Dzogchen's freedom from Tantric classifications, in our present text Kuntu Zangpo defines Tantric classifications in order to express the freedom of Dzogchen from the efforts required in the eight other Bon vehicles of religious practice.

The second text, on the other hand, is wonderfully unencumbered by Tantric lucubrations, totally eschewing notions such as distinctions of Bodies, Wisdoms, etc. Donatella speculates whether this might reflect a target audience not very concerned in dogmatic speculations, or imply that these notions were so much taken for granted there was no need to refer to them at all. Or might it "be indicative of a point in time in the history of these doctrines when they were presented and practiced just as they were formulated, without need for legitimizing superimpositions"? As Donatella points out, in this text "one has the impression of being in the presence of a very human but certainly knowledgeable and accomplished instructor, who seems confident in the spiritual capacity of the pupils and provides them, in a simple and straightforward way, with the vital information that will finally allow them to plunge in the dimension of their quintessential being."

There follows a meticulous survey of the Dzogchen View in Bon, with close analysis and explanation of the crucial Dzogchen terms

"view" (lta ba), "basis of all" (kun gzhi), pure-and-perfect-mind (byang chub kyi sems), dimension and primordial wisdom (dbyangs dang ye shes). Also, of key notions such as "the beginning of transmigration" and "turning back to the source", all supported and elucidated by quotes gleaned from significant Bon Dzogchen texts probably here translated for the first time. She takes much of her explanatory material from two Commentaries, "The Explanation of the Twelve Little Tantras" and "The Commentary to the View which is like the Lion's Roar", as well as from important Bon temas from the Three Proclamations cycles such as "The Lamp that Clarifies the View".

The "Twelve Little Tantras" consists of explanations of a series of affirmations (given in "the basic chapter").

"The Basis of all (is) pristine Self-Awareness.

The Path (is) spontaneously perfected, without progression (and) without effort.

The Fruit is spontaneously accomplished as it is.

There is nothing to investigate with respect to the real sense.

There is nothing to meditate with respect to the real sense.

There is no conduct (to be adopted) with respect to the real sense.

The example for the Mind is (that it is) like the sky.

The token for the Mind is the Mind-itself.

The meaning of the Mind is the Reality.

In the unborn dimension (of) Reality,

Unobstructed Primordial Wisdom abides.

Single Essence without birth and interruption."

As for the explanations, they are full of precious insights. Concerning the fruit:

"The Mind-itself (is) from the origin Primordial Enlightenment.

The original wisdom is without cause....

(It) encompasses all enlightened (and) sentient beings, past, future and present.

(It is) beyond the distinction before (and) after realization....

The precious jewel (of) the Mind-itself is not found by looking for it elsewhere;

(it is) to be looked for in the mind by the mind.

(But) when it is looked for, (it) will not appear; (and) when (it is)

not looked for, (it) won't be lost either."

And, concerning meditation:

"Meditation referred to the profound state (of) the Great Perfection is not meditating (and thinking) 'this (is it)'.

Through meditation, (it) doesn't get clear; without meditation, (it is) neither clear nor obscured.

The contemplation of Kun tu bzang po (is) fresh, natural (and) unaltered; (it is) to remain in one's pristine, unaltered condition, without meditating and wandering."

With regard to "The View which is like the Lion's Roar", our text tells us:

"The greatly Compassionate Teacher has expounded (these) precepts of the View which is like the Lion's Roar as a blessing bringing (them) forth from the center of (his) Heart."

How is one to realize the state of Mind-itself? Our text says:

"(One) does not pursue conceptuality; (one) does not follow the delusions (of) characterization.

With respect to the Mind, no effort is to be undertaken.

With respect to the contemplation which is not conceived, (one) remains without concepts (and) without following feelings."

Donatella is to be greatly commended and thanked for her work in translating and commenting two important texts expounding the Dzogchen View in Bon, making available to all practitioners and students of Dzogchen and of Bon for the valuable insights it offers into the timeless truths encapsulated in its beautiful verses.

by Andy Lukianowicz

Naropa, continued from previous page

Blindness as seeing without seeing anything

Deafness as hearing without hearing anything

Muteness as speaking without saying something

Lameness as moving without being hurried,

Death is immobility as the breeze of the unborn state."

Thereafter everything disappeared. Naropa contemplated committing suicide in the hope of finding the master in a next life. When he was ready to cut his veins with a razor, a voice came from the sky, "How will you find the master If you kill the Buddha?"

Thereupon came a dark man wearing only cotton trousers, hair knotted in a tuft and with protruding blood-shot eyes. Naropa wept with emotion and knelt in front of him. Tilopa said, "Since you have met me in the form of a leper woman, we have never been separated. All visions you had were my manifestations but you have not recognized them because of your impediments." Tilopa taught him by showing him many symbols and without speaking a word and then said,

"Watch without watching

Look from the invisible to what cannot be grasped.

To see and not to see

Is freedom in and through itself."

Then Tilopa sat motionless like a log for several years. When at the end of each year, Naropa requested instructions from him, Tilopa made Naropa undergo twelve great acts of self denial. He asked him to jump from a tower, to jump in a sandalwood fire, to steal food from a celebration party, to jump into a dark and deep pool full of leaches, burned him with reeds,

made him run after a magical man carrying a load, throw a king and his bride from an elephant, steal the bride of a king, etc.

At the end of another year, Tilopa said, "Get a girl!" Naropa got a healthy and faithful girl. At first Naropa was very happy, then when he did not listen to what the girl said, she did not listen to what he said. He became lean, his skin rough and the took service with a smith. Tilopa came and asked him, "Are you happy Naropa?"

"I suffer by being constantly involved

With self dividedness in an apparent dual world."

Tilopa said,

"Naropa look for

samsara and nirvana unity.

Look into the mirror of your mind

There is the eternal bliss

The mysterious home of the Dakini."

and taught him the practice of the lower gate to actualize bliss.

After few days had passed, Tilopa came and said, "Naropa, how is that you renounced the world as a Bikshu and you are living with a girl?" and had Naropa hit his penis with a stone.

Again Tilopa acted as before for another year. When Naropa asked for instructions, Tilopa angrily said, "If you want my instructions give me your girl!" He gave the girl to the master and when she looked at Naropa smiling, Tilopa beat her saying she had come only for Naropa.

Tilopa sat motionless for another year and when was asked for instructions left for a desert. Naropa followed him for many days but could not catch up with him and almost died of thirst and hunger. Naropa offered a mandala to have instructions but found no flowers. Tilopa said, "Don't you have blood?" Naropa let blood gush from his arteries and cut his limbs to offer and fainted. Tilopa touched Naropa with his hand and revived him.

So it was after each of these trials that Naropa received the teaching on Vajrayogini, the one flavor of everything, the mystic heat, the illusionary body, the dream state, the clear light, the transference of consciousness and resurrection teaching, the intermediate state the great bliss and the ineffable goal of Mahamudra.

Thereafter Tilopa advised Naropa to act in a way beyond thoughts and words,

"The blind do not see

And the deaf hear not,

The dumb do not understand the sense

And the lame walk not,

A tree does not grow roots

And Mahamudra is not understood."

Naropa put cotton trousers, took a skull cup in his hands and set out as a mendicant and on inspiration from Tilopa acted for the benefit of others in compassion. He became the most famous and renown of the Mahasiddha. He was instrumental in bringing about a new and rich era of Buddhist thought in Tibet through his disciple Marpa, the translator. His life first of all symbolized that objective knowledge based on mere intellectual understanding removes one from the experience of the real and direct knowledge. As Naropa gives up the unemotional and intellectual attitude he cultivated as monk the world of possibilities opened in from of him and through the master's introduction he came to realize reality as it is.



SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE

Shang-Shung Institute -USA

SUMMER 2001 ART PROGRAM

Glen Eddy will be in residence at Tsegylgar where he will begin the thanka on the lineage of Goma Devi. Students in the Golden Vajra Art Guild work apprentice style in either small classes or one on one tutorials with Glen Eddy. Master painter and sculptor, Kelsang Lodoe Oshoe will also be in residence sometime this summer. For further information, please contact Glen Eddy at goldenvjra@yahoo.com

2001 TIBETAN MEDICINE PROGRAM

The Shang Shung Institute is pleased to announce that Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo will be in residence for one year as core faculty in the Tibetan Medicine program. In August 2001, the Three-Year Foundation Course will begin again at an accelerated pace. Held at the Rochambeau Lodge, each week long program will include a five day Foundation Course either beginning or followed by a 2-3 day advanced seminar on select topics which participants may elect to stay on for. Fees for the 5-day Foundation Course are \$650 including single occupancy housing at the Rochambeau Lodge for 5-day programs or \$900 for seven-day programs. Fees for the Weekend Advanced Seminars are \$325 including single occupancy housing. Some meals included. Courses limited to 10 participants.

The Rochambeau Lodge is located in a beautiful orchard near the Connecticut River surrounded by miles of hiking, cross-country skiing trails and a swimming pond. Fully appointed with all amenities, this family style lodge is an intimate, yet spacious, environment for the Institute's programs housing both faculty and participants together for optimal contact and intensive study. Scheduled dates are:

August 31-September 6, 2001

Year 1 Foundation Course only with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo

October 20-28, 2001

Year 1 Foundation Course /Oct 20-25

Advanced Seminar/Oct 26-28 (Topic TBA)

with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo

December 1-8, 2001

Year 1 Foundation Course/Dec 1-5

Advanced Seminar/December 6-8 (Topic TBA)

with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo

Visiting 2002 faculty

Dr. Nida Chenagtsang is scheduled to be in residence at the Institute for three weeks during the month of June, 2002. He is currently core faculty in the Shang-Shung Institute in Italy where he has developed an extensive curriculum in the External Therapies of Tibetan Medicine, particularly Tibetan Massage, Ku Nye.

June 2002

Two Week Residential Program in Tibetan Massage (Ku Nye) and External Therapies. Location TBA

Massage is considered to be one of the most important external therapies of Tibetan medicine. Not only does it contribute to the well being of the patient, but, if well applied with the right substances, it can also be a valid therapeutically support and greatly assist in the remedy of minor disorders.

In order fully to learn its different aspects, the whole course is made up of three levels. In the first level the student will learn how to apply oil (KU), how to move the joints, how to knead, rub and tap (NYE), how to treat the points and the therapeutic use of different points on the head, the back, the limbs and chest. The second level deals with all external therapies: the tapping technique with the stick, moxabustion, fomentation, horne, cupping, the golden needle, stone massage and moxa. The third level deals with all possible diagnostic methods and disease treatment through Ku Nye. Dr. Nida teaches in English.

FOUNDATION COURSE IN TIBETAN MEDICINE will have available all three years of the course on either audiocassette or CD format after July 15. Cost for the entire three year course with Dr. Thubten Phuntsog is \$1800 which includes the three volume text, "Elements for the Study of Tibetan Medicine," by Dr. Phuntsog and translated from the Tibetan by Elio Guarisco with English language editing by Dr. Mary Ryan. The course also comes with a comprehensive outline. This course is the only systematic study of Tibetan Medicine in English currently available for Westerners. There are approximately 75 (90 minute) tapes or CDs.

Contact information:

Shang-Shung Institute

PO Box 277

Conway, MA 01341

USA

Tel: 413-369-4928

Web site: www.shangshung-usa.org

Program Director, Jacqueline Gens

Tel 802-254-9114 or jgens@sover.net

for all inquiries and applications

Goma Devi Thangka

Sponsorship

The Shang-Shung Institute, USA & Glen Eddy

Among the many projects the Shang-Shung Institute in America currently sponsors is raising funds to support the work of Glen Eddy. The Institute would like to commence with the next large scale thanka commissioned by the Golden Vajra Art Guild - that of the lineage of Goma Devi associated with the Vajra Dance Lineage.

In the last few years, Glen has completed three such large scale Thankas - the Refuge Tree, Ekajati, and the Thirteen Primordial Masters. All of these thankas are executed with Glen's traditional technique of using hand-ground mineral pigments extracted in a painstaking and elaborate process rarely used today. This method imparts the distinctive palette seen in Glen's thankas. The size of these large scale paintings are three feet wide by five feet high with an additional handsewn brocade border which further enhances the dimensions.

The process involved in producing such a large scale thanka involves numerous stages such as first executing the proportional drawings and researching the various figures for which Glen has extensive knowledge. The Shang-Shung Institute in America is especially requesting at this time that funds for this special project be raised by a number of donors who take a special interest in the Vajra Dance lineage and wish to see this thanka realized in order to glorify the lineage. Patrons of over \$1000 will receive an original hand drawn deity of their choice.

This painting will be related to the Vajra Dance, which in its turn is related to the "Longsel Nyingtik" or the "Thigle of the Heart of the Luminous Universe of the Dakini." The painting will show the short lineage from the top central figures of inseparable Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri; then to Guyajana, the joyous dark blue dakini which represents the inner form of Simhamukha; then to Garab Dorje, the Master who introduced the knowledge of Dzogchen into our world; then to Laskyi Wangmo, Queen of Karma. The main figure will be Princess Goma Devi, who is one of the ancient twenty-one Semde masters. She sits in royal splendor appearing like a Tara. She is adorned with all of the thirteen Sambhogakaya ornaments. She sits on a lotus supported by a jeweled golden throne. Appearing from within her throne shines forth a luminous dance mandala. Below her throne on either side sit the glorious Padmasambhava and Mandarava. Between them and a little lower sits our own master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who received this wonderful treasure from Goma Devi in a series of dreams while sleeping in the Encampment of the Victorious Peak, Tsegylgar. Also at the bottom of the painting will be the form of the protectress Ekajati.

All donations are tax-deductible and can be either mailed to the Shang Shung Institute, PO Box 277, Conway, MA 01341 or wired into the Institute's bank account. For further information, please contact the Institute through Jacqueline Gens at 802-254-9114 or jgens@sover.net

News from the Shang-Shung Institute in America

The Shang-Shung Institute in America recently met with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at the Portland, Oregon retreat to review its annual budget and programming. Among the projects presented to Rinpoche and Fabio Andrico, of the International Gakyil, was a proposal to logistically handle Rinpoche's audio web casts and to develop the on-line capacity of the Tibetan Medical program. A more detailed presentation of the administrative structure of these web casts will be presented later over Norbunet.

The Institute currently funds the translation of, "The Light of Kailash" by Dr. Donatella Rossi as well as administers grants to Jim Valby through the Vairocana Fund and for Glen Eddy's Goma Devi lineage thanka through the Golden Vajra Art Guild.

A number of new projects are also underway including a training program for Tibetans in art restoration under the direction of Alex Siedlecki and Constance Silver. At the meeting in Portland with the Institute as well as during the California retreat, Rinpoche specifically requested that the Shang-Shung Institute in America create a Tibetan Cultural program for native Tibetans who upon completion of their program of study at the Institute in the US would return to Tibet.

The Shang-Shung Institute wishes to thank the generosity of its supporters and looks forward to your participation in either our programs or projects. All donations are tax-deductible. Credit card payments accepted.

For further information about specific projects or to register for programs, please contact the Institute at PO Box 277, Conway, MA 01431, 413-369-4928 or jgens@sover.net

Three Year Course in Tibetan Medicine Completed

Shang-Shung Institute, Italy

Twelve students completed the three year course in Tibetan Medicine, at a snowy Losar time in Merigar, under the auspices of the Shang-Shung Institute, Italy. The first year of the course began in 1998 at the initiative of Chögyal

Namkhai Norbu, was organized by Shang-Shung Institute and taught by Dr. Thubten Phuntsog, Dr. Nida Chenagtsang and translated by Elio Guarisco. Everyone is grateful for the opportunity to study this ancient medical system.

Shang-Shung Institute

Italy

Professor Das's visit

by Elisa Copello

During the intensive first level course on Ku Nye held at Merigar from April 24 to May 1, the Istituto Shang-Shung welcomed two visitors from the Ayurveda Institute in Florence: the director of the center and Prof. Das, an internationally known and eminent exponent of Ayurvedic medicine as well as a researcher and scholar on Tibetan medicine. The professor has written numerous texts on Tibetan medicine some of which can be found on the shelves of the Istituto's library.

During his brief stay at Merigar, Prof. Das met Dr. Nida Chenagtsang who showed him the collection of medical texts available in the library and asked him to give a short talk to the twenty participants of the Ku Nye course. Prof. Das agreed to the request and in a simple and clear way pointed out the benefits of Tibetan massage, very similar to the Ayurvedic for its balancing effect on the three humours and the energy of the elements.

Prof. Das emphasized the prevalently therapeutic approach of Western medicine compared to the approach of Tibetan medicine which tends more to prevention of disease. Paradoxically if a person becomes ill, the people who profit are the doctors, the pharmacists and the pharmaceutical companies while the only person at a disadvantage is the patient. Prevention of disease based on dietetic rules and behavior typical to Tibetan and Ayurvedic medicine can ensure continuing good health with all its advantages so that one will only require traditional cures very rarely. Today, Prof. Das went on to say, there is a progressive aging of the population and generally the elderly, rather than being considered as a testimony of the passage of time and the voice of wisdom giving precious advice, are viewed as being a "weight" on society because old age is frequently synonymous with illness and physical and intellectual decline.

In fact aging is prevalently due to two principal factors: a) the presence of "AMA" in Sanskrit or "MA SHU PA" in Tibetan within the body. These are substances which are not digested or assimilated and which are transformed into toxins which in time may degenerate and transform into tumorous cells due to the lack of digestive heat which is unable to digest the food ingested. b) the process of progressive oxidation of the body due to wrong habits in diet, behavior, mind and emotions. Prof. Das listed a series of damaging factors which can negatively effect our physical and mental health such as the deafening noises at a disco, too much television, lack of a sense of religion or no interest in a spiritual search, an unbalanced diet, repressing normal functions of the body such as sneezing, yawning, etc., and not freely showing our own opinions but expressing our-

continued on page 11

asia

asia projects for developing education and Tibetan culture

by Alice Fauci

Alongside existing projects for the economic, social and health development of the Tibetan population in the Himalayas, A.S.I.A. is promoting several new ones particularly important for promoting education and Tibetan culture. They include a Scholarship Project, the creation of an astrology school at Mindroling monastery, the adoption at distance of monks and children at the monastery, publication of Tibetan texts and manuscripts and commercializing traditionally produced incense.

Scholarship Project.

This project is the answer to one of the most frequent requests of the local Tibetan community of Qinghai, in particular in the Dangche area which ASIA has come to know extremely well during years of collaboration on multisectorial projects (educational, health, economy). The Scholarship Project will provide economic support for students to attend university courses or professional training. For many years ASIA has taken the responsibility to maintain those students particularly in need. Now, however, a decision has been taken to utilize funds available in Italy and other countries to finance scholarships according to the procedure for the adoption at distance project.

The scholarships will promote professional and university training for the most needy and deserving students who will be selected not only on the basis of their economic and family situation but will also be selected on the basis of their knowledge of languages, the type of studies they wish to undertake and their motivation and performance. Besides Chinese and English, knowledge of written and oral Tibetan will be of prime importance as will a strong motivation to participate in preserving their own culture and contributing to the development of the economic and social conditions of the Tibetans. Study in the following fields will be encouraged: teaching at the primary, middle and high school levels, traditional and allopathic medicine, law, translation, I.T. and traditional Tibetan arts such as music, painting, crafts, etc. If the short term objective is to give the Tibetans the possibility of building a future for themselves by completing their studies and learning a trade, the long term aim is also to develop capacity building at a local level and train professionals who will be important resources for the local communities and for ASIA who is working and collaborating with them.

Through a scholarship, a student will be able to cover the costs of his or her course and other expenses including travel, board and lodging up to a maximum of RMB 10,000 per year, equivalent to USD 1239.16. In case the economic burden is heavy, the scholarship could be shared among two or more sponsors and given only when the whole estimated cost has been covered.

The Tibetan coordinator for the

project will be in charge of the first selection of candidates and of the supervision. Every scholarship holder will be expected to correspond regularly with his or her sponsors to inform them about how their studies are progressing and to send school reports or notes from their teachers from time to time.



Mindroling Monastery

At the moment, ASIA proposes financing scholarships for the following cases which have been selected and pointed out by the local coordinator:

- Tsepal Gyal is a Tibetan student who, thanks to ASIA, has been able to continue his studies after the death of his father (see his letter to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and ASIA published with this article). In order to complete his course at the Tibetan - Chinese Bilingual Administrative Management Division of Southwest Minority College in Chengdu (Sichuan) he requires a scholarship of 10,000 RMB (about USD 1239.16)

- Yunchen Lhama is an English teacher at the Dangche primary school built by ASIA in 1997. In order to do a three year training course in teaching Tibetan at the Qinghai Minority Teachers College in Chabcha (Qinghai) he needs a scholarship of RMB 6,050 per year for two years (about USD 749.70).

- Kunga Drakpa Gyaltsen needs a scholarship of RMB 10,000 per year for three years to attend a course in commercial English at the Beijing University for Minorities in Beijing.

- Palkhar Gyal, a music teacher at the Dangche primary school, would like to study at the Department of Music and Dance at the Central University for Ethnic Minorities in Beijing. The course is very expensive because it involves additional costs for musical instruments and in order to follow the course, Palkhar Gyal needs RMB 14,500 (about USD 1796.78). This estimate of costs only takes into consideration those costs connected with the course and does not include other expenses such as board. Accordingly ASIA has

decided to take exception in this case and move beyond the fixed limit of RMB 10,000 for a scholarship and look for sponsors who are able to cover the entire amount.

- Palbhium Gyal is a doctor at the clinic of traditional medicine built by ASIA in Dangche. With a schol-

arship of RMB 6,750 per year (about USD 836.43) he would be able to specialize at the University of Traditional Medicine in Lhasa.

- Taktso Kyid is deaf and dumb. After losing her father and being abandoned by her mother, she was cared for by her elderly grandparents who are not able to support her at a special school for deaf-mutes any longer. Thanks to a sponsor who has covered her scholarship, Taktso Kyid will complete the last three years at the Qinghai Special School and be autonomous in the future.

The Astrology School at Mindroling Monastery

The Mindroling Monastery is situated in the south of Lhasa. As the most important Nyingma monastery in central Tibet, Mindroling was founded in 1676 by Tertön Terdak Lingpa, a famous master who had the Fifth Dalai Lama as a disciple. Mindroling was one of the principle teaching centers for laic government officials and for numerous monks who came from the smaller monasteries of Kham and Amdo to study Buddhist philosophy and medicine.

To the teaching of the master Terdak Lingpa and his brother and disciple Lochen Dharmashri we owe the development of astrology which, in ancient times as now, plays a very important role in the daily lives of the Tibetans. Unfortunately during the Cultural Revolution the monastery was seriously damaged, the school was destroyed and forced to stop all its activities. Today there are very few monks or lay people who have any knowledge of astrology. There are, however, so many people who arrive each day from all over central Tibet to ask for ritual practices (phowa),

on occasions of marriage and funerals and before taking important decisions, that the monks are unable to satisfy all the requests. Since the few holders of this knowledge are found at Mindroling monastery, Lama Gyurmed has presented ASIA with a request for funding of about USD 20,000 to

build an astrology school so that this ancient and important science will not be lost.

The Adoption at Distance project

The Adoption at Distance project at Mindroling monastery has grown from a sponsorship program for monks and village children started by Lama Gyurmed Rabgyes two years ago with the support of many people in Italy and other countries. Since the sponsorship program

Mindroling, include the costs of an office in Lhasa as well as local staff. As with other adoption at distance projects for monks, support will not go directly and exclusively to the monk being sponsored but to the benefit of all the monks at the monastery. Adoption at distance of children is aimed at the continuing of their education even though, of course, the family and indirectly the local community will reap benefits.

Publishing Project Norbu Tibetan Series

Among the projects aimed at preserving Tibetan culture, the publishing activities of ASIA over several years deserve a special mention. Different texts of particular value have been published, from the epic poetry of Gesar of Ling to the history of the monasteries of Qinghai, from traditional medicine to Amdo cooking. Now this activity has been formalized with the signing of an agreement with the Beijing Editorial Section of Tibetan Language. The aim of the project is to publish the Norbu Tibetan Series which includes highly valuable manuscripts that are in bad condition, books out of publication, modern books on astronomy, medicine and astrology, works of relevant academic value, educational works for children as well as translations of scientific and technical books.

The works to be published will include:

- 'The history of the Bon religion of Zhang Zhung and Tibet' by Kun-sang Lodroy, from the famous Bonpo monastery of Yundrung Ling in central Tibet. The fruit of ten years of research, this work concentrates on the origins of the Bon religion;

- 'White Lotus Flower: Astronomical Instruction', a classic text on Tibetan astronomy dating back to 1447;

- 'Four Tibetan Medicine Texts in Bon Religion', which may be considered the first text on Tibetan medicine.

- 'History of Buddhist Tantrics in Rebong', the history of tantrism in Tibet which has survived up to today only in Rebong in the Amdo region. The foreword to the books will be done by Prof. Namkhai

Norbu, while Prof. Tsering Thar of the Religion Institute of China Center for Tibetan Studies will be the editor. The total costs for each book will not exceed RMB 30,000. ASIA is undertaking the publication of at least three books for 2001 for a total of RMB 90,000, about USD 11152.41.

Project for Commercializing Tibetan Incense

The agreement recently signed between ASIA and the Shambala

The incense named Khangdrun Drib Sel is the most special incense in the world. All the Zogchen Communities can use this incense to make offerings to the Buddha and deities and for treating and preventing ailments cause by devilments.

NAM KHAI NORBU
12/30/97

became increasingly larger and involved considerable management difficulties in part due to the delicate political situation in Tibet, Lama Gyurmed asked ASIA to include it among the other Adoption at Distance projects. He suggested that he remain as a local reference point for the project.

The Adoption at Distance Project involves a financial commitment of USD257.14 per year. This amount also covers administration costs for the project which, in the case of

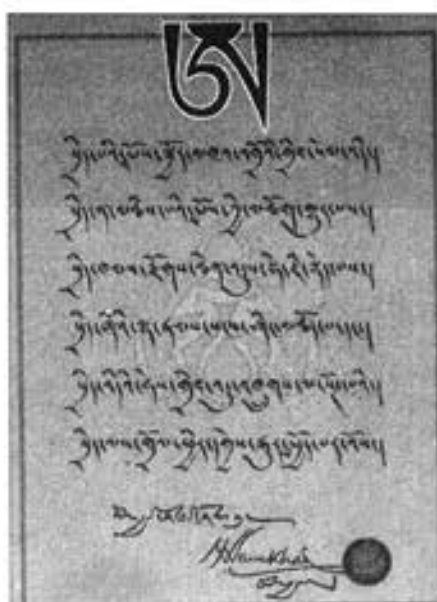
Company for the production and sale of Tibetan incense in the West also has a great value in terms of the preservation and development of Tibetan traditions. The history of Tibetan incense is very old and dates back to the 8th century, the era in which Padmasambhava arrived in Tibet for the first time. From that time on Tibetan incense has been used in all the monasteries including the Potala Palace. The preparation of the famous Khangdrü incense, however, seemed to have been lost forever until the Zhambala Company discovered the ancient procedure for producing this special incense according to the original instructions and with the best ingredients such as sandalwood, magenta, saffron, cinnamon, camphor, musk and crocus. In the agreement the Zhambala Company undertakes to prepare the incense according to traditional methods by using pure ingredients without chemical additives; ASIA will take care of its distribution in the Dzogchen community in the West and will use the profits from sales to realize development projects and the reconstruction of the monasteries in Tibet, thus encouraging the cultural, social, and health development of Tibetan people.

Khangdrü Incense is sold in cardboard boxes each of which contains two packets of 40 incense sticks each, one made with red sandalwood, the other with yellow. The cost is USD 9.52 per box.

Surgery for Life Project.

This initiative recently promoted by ASIA deserves a special mention. More and more frequently the doctors working on the health projects of ASIA in Tibet notice serious surgical cases which are inoperable in the local hospital. Very often these are children with congenital malformations, cardiopathy, etc., who, without a surgical

A.S.I.A. is looking for funds to realize all these projects. If you can please help us, you'll help A.S.I.A. to help Asia.



For information:

A.S.I.A. onlus -
Via San Martino della Battaglia, 31
00185 - Rome, Italy
Tel. 06-44340034
Fax 06-44702620
Email: HYPERLINK
mailto:info@asia.onlus.org
info@asia.onlus.org
or
HYPERLINK
mailto:adozioni@asia.onlus.org
adozioni@asia.onlus.org

Donations and offerings:

Monte dei Paschi di Siena CC n.
3893.50
ABI 01030 - CAB 72160
58031 Arcidosso (GR), Italy

CC Postale 89549000

For Adoption at Distance and Scholarships:

Monte dei Paschi di Siena CC n.
5622.72
ABI 01030 - CAB 72160
58031 Arcidosso (GR), Italy

CC Postale 78687001

Thar was my father's intimate friend. Before long, Tsering Thar was transferred to work in Beijing. He has been contacting with my family still in Xining. My family was in a quite poor economic situation. Since my mother had no job and my younger brother and I were attending school, the whole family was dependent on my father's salary. In addition, because my mother was physically very weak and always ill, the burden upon my family was very heavy. Tsering Thar kept up regular correspondence with my father and never stopped caring about us.

I began to attend senior high school in a Tibetan Middle School in Huangnan Prefecture after graduation from junior middle school. Three years later, I entered the Southwest Minority College. Shortly after this, my kind father passed away and my family was put into deep sorrow.

It was time for me to return to school soon after my father's death, but my family was unable to pay my tuition. It was just at that time, Tsering Thar timely sent grant-in-aid from A.S.I.A. to my home. My family members were moved to tears again and again. I'm grateful to Tsering Thar, to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, to A.S.I.A. and all the people who have cared about and assisted me. It's hard for me to express my gratitude to all of you with words.

Currently I'm studying in grade 98 Tibetan-Chinese Bilingual Administrative Management Division under the Department of Tibetan Languages, Southwest Minority College. The courses offered include: (1st term of the 1st year) Tibetan Grammar, Modern Chinese, Selection of Tibetan Literature, National Theories and National Policies, Non-Professional English; (2nd term of the 1st year) Basic Law, History of Chinese Revolution, Modern Chinese, Tibetan Grammar, Selection of Tibetan Literature, English, Computer; (1st term of the 2nd year) Administrative Management, English, Selection of Historical Tibetan Masterpieces, Brief Introduction of General Linguistics, Comprehensive History of the Tibetan People, Folk Literature; (2nd term of the 2nd year) Public Relations, English, Selection of Historical Tibetan Masterpieces, Political Economics, Practical Writing; (1st term of the 3rd year) Western Economics, Finance, Science of Secretary, Introduction of Deng Xiaoping Theory, Selection of Historical Tibetan Masterpiece; (2nd term of the 3rd year) Writing of Official Documents, Introduction of Journalism, Chinese-Tibetan Translation, Buddhist Philosophy and Psychology. I will complete my study in two Terms (one year).

Finally, I wish and strive to become a Tibetan with a firm will, a kind heart and a strong sense of national self-respect like my father and contribute my efforts to my own nationality. Once again, I wish Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche good health and happiness. I wish all kind people happiness and health.

Best wishes,

Student: Tsepal Gyal
Feb. 25, 2001

Letter from Student Tsepal Gyal

Dear Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and A.S.I.A.:
I'm a Tibetan student that has received your financial aid. Hereby, I, with the highest Tibetan etiquette, kowtow to you and thank you for your assistance.

My hometown is Tongren County (Rebgong), Qinghai Province. My father worked in Qinghai Minority College after receiving his master's degree in this school. My family moved to Xining from Tongren after my father began to work. As my father's only postgraduate classmate, Tsering

Dr. Das, continued from previous page

expressing ourselves in a way which does not correspond with our real feelings.

Preventing the beginning of these two factors which can damage our old age and well-being is entrusted to our awareness and, without doubt, Tibetan massage can contribute to ensuring a state of good health. This is because the substances in the different massage oils penetrate the body through the pores and contribute to eliminating toxins while the different massage techniques applied to the muscles and points remove energy blocks, improving the function of the internal organs and relaxing the mind making it less subject to the conditioning of disturbing emotions.

Prof. Das concluded his talk by underlining the great affinity between Ayurvedic and Tibetan massage most of all in their preventive role which can impede the onset of many disturbances.

The conference was short, but the students demonstrated an incisive and lively interest and received (even though there was really no need) a confirmation of the validity of Ku Nye as a preventative and curative instrument.

A heartfelt thanks to Prof. Das for his unexpected and highly enjoyable talk but also to Dr. Nida who for some time now has been spreading this ancient therapeutic art with so much passion and enthusiasm.

Shang-Shung Institute, Italy

Program Update 2001

Audio and Video Archives

The activities which are priority and on which we want to concentrate the greater part resources are saving and cataloguing the audio and video cassettes as well as the library texts. Two experts are busy full time in the audio-video sector and one person part-time in the library. Before the end of the year we should complete the work on saving the audio cassettes and texts, while we hope to have saved about a third of the video recordings.

The Istituto is planning to restructure and enlarge their working space at Merigar which has become inadequate because of the development of activities. Work in the ex-carpentry shop will start to make it suitable to house the archive while waiting to be transformed into the consulting room for the library.

Other Activities

At Merigar Two a **classroom** will be created for the courses and a space for medicine and external therapies (we have already found a generous sponsor).

Activities which have already been consolidated will continue, such as the **courses at Merigar and in Italian cities and abroad**. New exhibitions will be organized and the ISS is studying the possibility of one in Siena and another in Imola.

The **purchasing of the medical thankas** will go ahead in order to complete the collection which lacks twenty-three pieces, some of which are ready in Lhasa.

Another two **herbal products** will be created to widen the possibility of improving our well being according to traditional Tibetan medicine. The ISS will try to find a way to distribute these products in herbal shops and chemists.

We will start to **produce a video** which will include three Thuns.

The **Art Department** is looking into a program to invite Tibetan monks to Italy for a period to study restoration techniques which they can apply and spread in Tibet.

Fundraising

Here we would mention that in order to carry out the above mentioned activities the ISS needs considerable funds for buying equipment and compensation of those who work full time.

The provisory financial balance in 2000 is 233 million lire received, costs of 193 million lire with a balance of 40 million lire which will let us continue for a few months.

Of the money which came in about 65 million lire was from donations and memberships and 42 million from the courses, exhibitions, sale of cassettes and herbal products.

We ask you to help the Istituto Shang-Shung to preserve and spread Tibetan culture by taking out membership to the ISS (ordinary members Lit.30.000, sustaining members Lit.300.000) and if possible sending donations for:

The Digital Archive Project Purchasing the Medical Thankas New books for the library

Istituto Shang-Shung
Podere Nuovissimo
58031 Arcidosso (GR), Italy
Tel. 30 0564 966941
Fax 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net
Web: www.istitutoshangshung.org
c/c 5764.48 at Monte dei Paschi di Siena
Arcidosso branch,
58031 Arcidosso (GR), Italy



Student Tsepal Gyal

operation, have a very small possibility of survival. ASIA is creating a fund which will allow them to be operated in Italy in specialized hospitals. There are already two children who urgently require surgical operations, one seriously affected by congenital cardiopathy, the other by a malformation of the ankle. Without an operation they would not live long and would be condemned to a life of great sacrifice and suffering. If you would like to promote this initiative, please participate in creating a fund with voluntary contributions which will be destined exclusively for this project.



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NEWS

merigar

MERIGAR CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 9-10
Introductory Course to Dzogchen Teaching

With Igor Legati

This course is mainly for newcomers or those who would like information and clarification on the origins and development of the Dzogchen teaching and the Community. The course is free.

July 6-10

Short Dzogchen Teaching Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The retreat starts on July 6 at 4 pm. The cost of the retreat will be Lit.400.000 with discounts for paid-up members. Payment can be made by installments (see below). It is advisable to book early since many people are expected.

July 12-16

Yantra Yoga Course for Beginners with Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico

Starts on July 12 at 4 pm and finishes at 1 pm on July 16.

Cost Lit.280.000 with 30% discount for members.

Please book a place before June 30 with a down payment of Lit.50.000. If there are less than 10 participants the course will be canceled.

July 18-22

Yantra Yoga Course for Advanced Students

with Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico

Starts on July 18 at 4 pm and finishes at 1 pm on July 22.

Cost Lit.280.000 with 30% discount for members.

Please book a place before July 10 with a down payment of Lit.50.000. If there are less than 10 participants the course will be canceled.

July 28 - 30

Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas Course

for Advanced Students

with Rita Renzi

Starts on July 28 at 5 pm with two sessions each day on July 29 and 30. Cost Lit.210.000 with 30% discount for members.

Please book a place before July 18 with a down payment of Lit.50.000. If there are less than 10 participants the course will be canceled.

August 1-8

Dance of Song of the Vajra Course

Second Part for Beginners

with Adriana Dal Borgo

Starts on August 1 at 5 pm. Cost Lit.490.000 with 30% discount for members.

August 1-8

Dance of Song of the Vajra Course

for those who know the steps

with Prima Mai

Starts on August 1 at 5 pm. Cost Lit.490.000 with 30% discount for members.

For both the Dance Courses partici-

pants should book before July 20 with a down payment of Lit.50.000. If there are less than 10 participants the course will be canceled. Maximum 20 participants, 10 for the male part and 10 for the female.

August 10-19

Long Dzogchen Teaching Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The retreat starts on August 10 at 4 pm.

The cost of the retreat will be Lit.900.000 with discounts for paid-up members. Payment can be made by installments (see below). It is advisable to book early since many people are expected.

August 30 - September 5

Training Course for instructors of the Vajra Dance 1st level

Given by Prima Mai and Adriana Dal Borgo

Cost Lit.600.000 without discounts.

The course is reserved for those who know the whole of both the male and female parts of the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas and the Om A Hum Dance.

Participants must be paid-up members of the Association and send a written application to the secretary at Merigar before August 15, 2001.

SANTI MAHA SANGHA

August 21-23

Base Level Exam

Booking required at Merigar

August 24-28

First Level Training

with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

starts August 24 at 4 pm.

Cost Lit.400.000 without discounts

September 23-25

Second Level Exam

Booking required at Merigar

September 26-30

Third Level Training

with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

starts September 26 at 4 pm.

Cost Lit.400.000 without discounts

PAYING BY INSTALLMENTS

This summer Dzogchen Community members will have the possibility of paying for the retreats of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Merigar in three installments. This offer is reserved for members who have renewed their membership for 2001.

The first installment which will be one third of the total amount should be paid by the end of April 2001.

The second part at the beginning of the retreat.

The third by the end of October.

More information can be had by contacting the office at Merigar.

MERIGAR, 58031 ARCIDOSSO (GR), ITALY

Tel. 39 0564 966837

Email: merigar@amiata.net



Merigar's Twenty Years

Festivities to celebrate Merigar's twentieth birthday will take place on July 5th starting at 10.30am. In the presence of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu a welcome will be given to the local authorities and all those who wish to participate on the occasion.

In the Gonpa, following a talk by the Master, several speakers will illustrate the current situation, objectives that have been or are yet to be realized at Merigar, at the four Gars, at the Ling, at ASIA and the Istituto Shang-Shung. This will include the showing of slides.

Following the presentation there will be a picnic for all to enjoy and in the afternoon guided visits and a children's show given by theater actors. At 6pm there will be a theatrical event for both big and small put together by Community artists.

Flavia Tomassini of the Merigar Gakyil

Getting It Right

by Patricia Monti Gracis
Gekö of Merigar

The summertime when the Merigar Gakyil and Gekö will change is drawing near and, as the present gekö, I've been asked to write something about my experience at Serkhang (the yellow house). There are, of course, very many things to say but I would like to concentrate on the main points.

Last year when I was elected gekö I asked Chögyal Namkhai Norbu if he thought I would be able to do the job. He replied, "Of course you will! You just need to have patience and don't get too annoyed and wound up." Simple.

To these three principles, which are - I can assure you - essential just to begin. I would like to add another without which the job of the gekö would have become very hard. I think it is necessary to feel love towards the people, the place, the things, the house, everything you are dealing with. A sense of protection to maintain, preserve and help grow. This is how it was for me and I immediately felt that I was at home. All I could do was use the same criteria that I used with my family and multiply it according to the circumstances. In that way

my work and relationships were very satisfying.

I enjoyed making Serkhang as welcoming as possible, from the smallest things (the toilets!?) to the verandah, the dining room, preparing food, the Christmas festivities, Losar and so on. I tried to be close to the people who are around Merigar. I really loved every thing exactly as though it was mine but without the attachment that arises from material possession or emotional dependence. It didn't mean that there were some difficult moments but at the end of the day I understood that you work more with yourself than with others. People who create obstacles or provocations put us face to face with ourselves. Sometimes we don't like this.

Here at Serkhang I have been very happy. I've enjoyed not ever knowing when I wake up in the morning how the day will go, which is one of the stimulating and vital experiences of being gekö. In all these months I have never regretted my decision to be gekö.

On a more concrete level I would like to say that if one of you wants to be the gekö, he or she should know how to work and be helped in the job. It's good to be organized but also flexible, sometimes you have to take decisions at the right moment and trust yourself without becoming arrogant. And, of course, you cannot delegate your responsibilities to others.

In my experience the best thing to do in order to get others to collaborate is to give an example. If the gekö does the right thing, so will others.

MERIGAR - KARMA YOGA AND SANTI MAHA SANGHA

Following Rinpoche's message published on the last issue of The Mirror and sent through Norbunet to all Gakyils, all European Gakyils are invited to start registering the hours of service (voluntary activities for which the practitioners receive no money) offered to the Dzogchen Community. In other words, you should write down the number of hours of Karma Yoga performed by any practitioner, in particular by those who are interested in Santi Maha Sangha training, and before every examination session you should send these registrations to Merigar.

In the meantime some changes have occurred about what is considered as Karma Yoga:

1. All voluntary activities offered to

the Community are considered Karma Yoga, not only manual activities. Rinpoche gave as example answering to questions he received, that Gakyil commitment or transcription activity, when commissioned by the Community, can be considered Karma Yoga. Rinpoche said that even large donations of money can be considered Karma Yoga because it is a way of helping the Community.

2. Even though these activities can be performed not only in a Gar or a Ling they must be commissioned by the Gakyil or in general by the Dzogchen Community.

Whoever is interested in participating to these activities can contact Merigar or any other local Gakyil. For further information please con-

tact:

Cristina Leonardo (Merigar Red Gakyil) cris.leonardo@tiscalinet.it
Igor Legati (Santi Maha Sangha coordinator) edizss@tiscalinet.it

The enrolling for the next Santi Maha Sangha examinations in Merigar is open. The candidates should be members of the Dzogchen Community and up-to-date with the payment of their membership card. We remind you that a written application should be sent to the office of Merigar by July 30th.

Email: merigar@amiata.net
Fax 0039-0564-968110

Merigar Gakyil

Kun Sal Ling

Province of Brescia, Italy

We would like to inform everyone that there is a beautiful retreat place which was visited by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1992. It is called Kunsalling and is situated in the province of Brescia, Northern Italy, about 1350 meters above sea level and in the mountains between two lakes and at the border of the Trentino region of Italy. There are two houses on the land and it is very quiet, isolated and ideal for personal retreats. There is a website where you can see photos of the Ling: <<http://digilander.iol.it/midal/Kunsalling.htm>>

All are welcome! For more information contact: Fulvio Ferrari, Tel: 0365 825165 or Mauro Coglio 0328 2943177.



Northern Motion Pictures Dzogchen Dreaming A documentary film featuring Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

by Russell Richardson

Synopsis of July 2000 shoot in Merigar, Tuscany.

In issue 54 of The Mirror there was an interview with Russell Richardson and Dorota Czermer regarding the making of this film.

With a very compact crew of just two technicians and former BBC and Discovery network team Richard Coldman and Martin Hedley, we arrived in Arcidosso for the retreat of July 2000.

We began shooting on the last day of the retreat and were accorded the rare permission to film the transmissions and the sacred songs. Our interviews with Rinpoche took place over the following week.

The first session took place in the library (Casa Rossa) where Rinpoche spoke about his life, his childhood, his recognition as a tulku, his time in Derge and his monastic studies in Buddhism. He then explained how he met his primary Dzogchen master Changchub Dorje and talked of the Chinese

occupation of Tibet in a frank and disarming manner, as well as going over his personal involvement with the Chinese people and government. On a less formal note, he digressed onto the importance of educating children in the modern world. We were all very happy how our initial filmed contact worked out.

Over the next days we also shot a lot of material at Merigar; architectural details, stupas, imagery and so on. Rinpoche was invited to lunch at a nearby villa, and (fortunately!) the weather was wonderful, so the meal took place outside. Over three hours Rinpoche talked about his experiences and hopes, and also about some of his unfulfilled hopes, the informal and relaxed occasion shows a side of Rinpoche that we realize few are privileged to see.

Rinpoche also went at length into some of the subjects he had raised in the library and most specifically, the origins and meaning of the Vajra dance. Indeed, he gave us explicit instructions to film this dance, something which has never been permitted before.

Accordingly, with the collaboration of the dancer and teacher Prima Mai, we filmed not only the Vajra Dance, but also the Song of

Six Lokas. The resulting footage is already pre-edited and is breathtaking. This took place in the mandala room of the "cappanone".

Other conversations with Rinpoche followed, as well as talks with Adriano Clemente, and members of the audio visual staff at Merigar. We have secured access to all of the video and film archives of Rinpoche, including his trips to Tibet.

Though we met and discussed further, our last day of filming took place in the Gonpa, where in addition to discussing at length the difficulties Westerners have in following Dzogchen, Rinpoche also gave us (a first!) a full guided tour of the iconography of the Gonpa.

In all, we have nearly twenty hours of footage which will be edited down to the standard length of 90 minutes. Having chosen to shoot on professional broadcast standard video, the image and sound are of extraordinary quality, and we are confident that the resulting film will be not merely the definitive work on Rinpoche and his teachings, but will also be visually captivating.

With your help we will have a first version ready for screening at this summer's retreat.

There are four considerations that are believed to be the source of these ancient healing methods. The first is that in the Tibetan culture they believe that there were many beings who lived before humans here on the earth, known in general as the Dyrurang Masang. Many methods are believed to have been passed on from the wisdom of these beings. For example, in the Bon creation myths, the five elements are found, which are the basis for Tibetan medicine and Ku-Nye. The origin of these beings themselves, born of space and from eggs, is also found. The second is that many methods are believed to come from the clarity of highly developed practitioners. Through their meditations they discovered the properties of many herbs and of the five elements, which they could not have discovered any other way. These people were hermit yogis, called Trang Sung and are considered to be the founders of various religions. References to them are found in the Tantras. Just to cite one example, Tibetan embryology was established 4 -5,000 years ago, well before the advent of the x-ray, and is almost the same as modern embryology. The Trang Sung got this information through their meditations. The third way is through the principle of observing nature, its principles and animals. For example using hot springs as a way to soothe and heal, or the observed actions of many animals to heal themselves using certain plants. These were slowly developed over time. Then the fourth is learning through one's own experience, particularly diet and behavior. As an example of this there are one hundred herbs found in the modern Four Medical Tantras that only grow in Tibet.

It is thought that first "Ku" was developed, which means "application". For example, from observing the herbs mentioned before that the animals use to heal their wounds. Then "Nye" was added, meaning "rotating, kneading and tapping" or "all actions of massage". They were first used separately and then incorporated into a single system.

Ku-Nye, like the Tibetan medical system, is based on the five elements of space, air (or wind), fire, water and earth. These are found in many texts and also in observable phenomenon as the basis of all matter. In Tibetan embryology, the essential energies of these elements form the different parts of the body and organs, which are then treated accordingly. From these elements the three humors of Bile, Phlegm and Wind are formed. It is these three tendencies which are primarily considered as criteria when analyzing pathologies in Tibetan medicine and of course in Ku-Nye. Although the names are similar to the ones used in the Western medieval medical tradition, the qualities and functions ascribed to each of these categories can be very different from the ones we know.

As the basis for Tibetan medicine and Ku-Nye are identical, Ku-Nye is a good introduction to Tibetan medicine. Conversely, Tibetan medicine can be imple-

Vajra Dance Clothes

by Adriana Dal Borgo



It all began at Namgyalgar a year ago (maybe a very long time ago and in other places though that is another story), after breakfast when we were watching the strange multicolored Australian birds on the grass in front of the house and the sneaky show of the iguana one sunny morning we were starting the Dance of the Vajra when the Master "casually" said, "Look, the clothes should be more or less like that," indicating what Federica was wearing.

It was summer time several months later at Merigar when Rinpoche gave his manuscript to Adriano with the explanation and designs for the clothes for the Vajra Dance. While he was translating the text Federica and myself took points, unable to hide our joy at discovering and creating little by little a picture of the eagerly awaited clothes.

As with the Mandala and the Dance, this is a teaching terma from the Master, a dream which dates back to 1992. One of his special dreams. It was not easy to make sense of his words and transfer the Tibetan terms into recognizable form.

During the successive retreat at Tashigar over Christmas, however, the first set of clothes was ready to be shown to the Master who asked me to wear them for the Dance course. At Tashigar (a really fortunate Gar!), where Rinpoche had just empowered two new Mandalas with teaching and practice. It was here that the clothes were inaugurated taking everyone in the Gonpa by surprise while Fabio immortalized the comments of the dancers on video.

I cannot start to describe the play on form, the alternating colors, the sound of the silk and little bells

... you will have to see this marvelous outfit for yourself!

It is the same for men and women: a shirt, trousers, jacket, short skirt (yes, even a little skirt). The only thing that is different is the colors: the men have a sky blue jacket instead of turquoise; a white shirt instead of a vermilion, etc. Each dancer will wear the outfit that corresponds to the part he/she is doing: if a pamo does the male part of the Dance, he/she should wear the pavo's colors and vice versa.

The Mandala, the Dance and now the clothes ... these unexpected yet precious gifts of the Master reveal themselves to our ordinary senses through sounds, colors and movements but leave us to discover another world, another dimension through our intuitive senses. There are no practice manuals, neither have any practitioners had a great deal of experience that we can learn from. It is up to us to discover this "other world", gradually developing clarity and experience through the practice.

While I danced at Tashigar what really struck me was the continuity of the clothes with the mandala: one was the reflection of the other, an infinite resonance of colors like a game with mirrors.

It could not be other than all perfect, harmonic, integrated.

When the Mandala is complete.

The project: Federica and myself are involved in producing the clothes. We have done some research and found a place to produce them as well as good quality material. We will soon start production and for this we ask the collaboration of everyone so that this Teaching of the Master may bring benefit to all sentient beings.

Any offer over \$400 will entitle the donor to a set of clothes for the Dance!

mented through Ku-Nye when resources such as medicines are lacking. In any case Ku-Nye is much more than a simple release of tension from the muscles. It is also particularly recommended for problems related to rLung (or wind) which in Tibetan medicine are equivalent to what we call psychological problems. From what I can see, this is really the prevalent pathology in our modern society. Therefore, basing myself on this simple logic, Ku-Nye could be very useful in our society. A good Christmas present for the one who already has everything.

Whoever wishes to contribute should send their donation to:

Adriana Dal Borgo
account no. 7086,09
Monte dei Paschi di Siena,
Arcidosso 58031 (GR), Italy.

For further information please contact Federica or myself at
Federica@compuserve.com
Adrianadalborgo@compuserve.com

KU-NYE MASSAGE

by David Ruiz

On the eight-day intensive Ku-Nye course at Merigar much more than our muscles and physical bodies were relaxed and activated. Ku-Nye also works on a very deep level of energy and heals very intimately. If you are going to receive a Ku-Nye massage, although I realize it may sound dramatic, get ready for an experience that may change your life. If you would like to study Ku-Nye, take into account that it is intimately linked to the Tibetan medical tradition and could require some study. There are four main therapeutic approaches in Tibetan Medicine: behavior, diet, medicine and the five external therapies.

Ku-Nye is the most important of the external therapies in Tibetan medicine, and in fact the most ancient of these. Its origins seem to go back to the Stone Age. Sticks and stones that are very similar to those used as instruments today in Ku-Nye have been found on archeological sites in Tibet dating back to that period. Of primary importance is the fact that the roots of Ku-Nye, along with the entire Tibetan medical system seem to be indigenous to Tibet and not imported from China or India in the eighth century, as many scholars believe. Their origins can be traced to the *gSo rig bum bzhi*, an ancient Bon text attributed originally to Shenrab Miwo, the master of Bon, who lived twenty centuries before Christ. There are also some texts found in a cave in China that clearly state that the origin of Ku-Nye is the kingdom of Shang Shung, an ancient, almost mythical pre-Buddhist Tibetan kingdom. Parallel to this, the origins of the Bon shamanic oral tradition itself, an intrinsic part of Tibetan pre-Buddhist culture, can be traced back 6 - 8,000 years.

In later editions the *bum bzhi* was re-written and adapted to its times, where it acquired a markedly Buddhist vocabulary and flavor. It was also added to from other sources, such as the Chinese or Indian medical traditions; hence the popular misunderstanding, that the Tibetan medical tradition, and Ku-Nye along with it, has its origins in these cultures.

It is thought that first "Ku" was developed, which means "application". In this case application of oil, movement of the joints and application of heat. Then "Nye" was added, meaning "rotating, kneading and tapping" or "all actions of massage". These actions are applied on the muscles, skin, tendons and points of the patient. There are approximately 250 different points on the body, which can be treated to cure different disorders. In the case of specific problems, the therapist works on designated points and meridians. The points are rotated or tapped with the fingers or various types of sticks and stones. It is believed that Ku and Nye were first used separately and then incorporated into a single system.



Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Austria

Friday, October 25, 2002 to Sunday, October 27, 2002

We would like to inform you that our master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will hold a Dzogchen retreat next year near Graz, Austria. Further information will be sent out in time.

Gakyil of Styria, Austria

Email: <mailto:dzogchen@utanet.at> dzogchen@utanet.at

Web: <http://www.dzogchen.at> www.dzogchen.at

Breath is a Rendezvous with Life

by Tibor Blaga and Zsolt Somogyvari
Hungarian Dzogchen Group

Things develop fast sometimes. Oliver Leick from Austria, was invited for the third time in twelve months, again, to Budapest by the new Hungarian Dzogchen Group. He taught two Yantra courses, on April 27th to the 28th for "older students" and the 29th to 30th for beginners.

We started the course with the medium Thun, to renew the connection with our Precious Master and its transmission, concentrating upon the mantra of Ekajati. The older practitioners learned the Tsandul exercises and the Tsandul breathing, and the Second Group of Yantras, so they can do all the practices the manual booklet contains.

The beginners learned the nine purification breathings, the five Tsigjong and the eight Lungsang which were taught during three sessions. Some "olders" took part in the beginners' course, and since they learned a lot of new details, they felt as if they were beginners again.

Oliver emphasized the great importance of breathing in his explanations, and the observation of breath. From the explanation of breathing with simple words he went on to the essential points of Yantra Yoga, so it was understandable for the beginners too.

During these days we also had the possibility to clarify some important questions on Santi Maha Sangha Base level practices.

The four day course was concluded with a big Ganapuja, where all the thirty-eight participants were welcome. Finally, a postcard for Rinpoche was signed by everyone, and then, since "Life is like a meeting on the marketplace" and impermanence is present also in Budapest, the friendly company broke up.

Thank you Rinpoche, thanks Oliver, and everybody who has contributed to this event.

LONGDE CABIN PALDENLING, POLAND

Another stage of our Master's project is about to be realized; the first Longde Cabin will be built in Poland. The Cabin will be constructed according to Rinpoche's precise instructions and undoubtedly will be of great benefit to all practitioners in the whole world who want to realize this way of practice.

The Cabin will be located at the top of the mountain near the Polish retreat center, Paldenling.

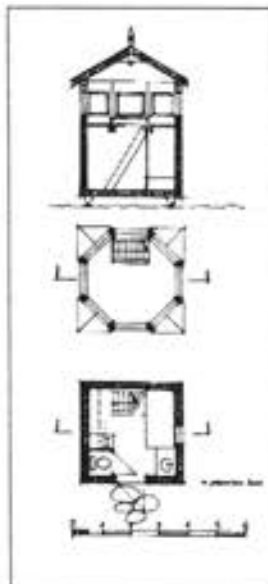
Everybody is invited to participate – we now have a chance to make our best do help finishing the project. In order to succeed, we need to gather \$6000US by July, 2001.

For donors:

All donors' tickets will be placed in a lottery (among others you can win a two-week stay in Paldenling, figures of Buddhas and deities, ritual objects, etc.). All who donate \$100 and more will receive a ticket for a free retreat in the cabin.



Bank account:
Bank Śląski w Katowicach Oddział w Krakowie
nr.10501445-2246385047
Wspolnota Dzog-czen w Polsce
ul.Rakowicka 21/3
31-510 Krakow
SWIFT: SKAT PL PK



Publication in Austria

The Gakyil of Vienna, Austria, is about to publish, in German, the teaching given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on the text "Daki Mantri" by Thangtong Gyalpo in Gutenstein, Austria, in June 1998. It will be a booklet of about 120 pages.

Price information and orders please contact:

The Vienna Gakyil at
dzogchen.wien@gmx.at or
Peter Sochor, Gotzgasse 2/10, A-1100 Wien, Austria

Transmission on the Day of Garab Dorje

Prague, Czech Republic
by Lukas Chmelik

Thirty-five people, including ten new ones, gathered on Friday morning to receive the direct transmission from the Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Prague (Czech Republic). It took place on one of the upper floors of a very nice tower from the beginning of the century, where there is a tearoom now. Everything was well prepared and the transmission went smoothly. Only because of the lack of space some of the older practitioners were not able to see the video with Rinpoche, but otherwise everything went well. After the transmission practice we did a Ganapuja and discussed Community matters. How many beings Rinpoche helped and benefited with his transmission through his unique idea unlimited by distance. Best wishes to all!

SHANG SHUNG EDIZIONI

Longsal Teachings - Vol. 1

Lire 30.000 US\$ 20

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

The Longsal Cycle is the collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's rediscovered teachings. This Volume 1 contains three Upadesha received through dreams, including the histories of their discovery over a period of time ranging from 1959 to 1983. These terms are entitled: The Yoga of Prana for Clarity and Emptiness, The Upadesha of the Oral Transmission of Thangtong Gyalpo, The Root Upadesha on the Vajra Bridge of Longde.

Commentary to Narag Tongtrug Practice

Lire 15.000 US\$ 10

"This practice pertains to the Anuyoga tradition and its related method to achieve the final goal that is the state of contemplation tied to the Dzogchen teaching. It is considered very important, above all, in order to purify negative karma and obstacles connected with breaking samaya with the teaching."

These oral instructions, given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Merigar in July 1996, are based on a short text of the master Lochen Dharmashri.

Longde Teachings Based on the Original Texts by Vairochana and Dzin Dharmabodhi



M. HEINEN

German International Publications Committee Update

by Karin Heinemann

A white and peaceful landscape covered with snow was what we discovered coming to Furthwangen. Furthwangen is a place located in the Black Forest in Germany not far from the Swiss border. Here the first official meeting of all the four members (Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger, Birgit Gewehr, Matthias Winter and Jakob Winkler) of the German speaking IPC manifested at the 3rd and 4th of March, 2001. The German blue Gakyil was represented by Karin Heinemann. The aim of the meeting was mainly to clarify open points concerning the process that projects to take form their beginning until they are published in German language by the two publication houses of the Dzogchen Community, Shang Shung Oddiyana /Germany (Gerd Manusch) and Shang Shung Edition Austria in Styria/Austria (Oliver Leick), by the Gakyils of Austria/Vienna or Switzerland or in collaboration with big public edition houses.

We structured the necessary steps, starting with the inspired person who wishes to realize a certain text in German language, etc. up to the manuscript, well checked in particular the accurate correspondence of the translation with the original source. Well corrected and checked, it becomes authorized with an IPC code number. Then it is ready to be formatted and printed by the publishing houses.

A package of different lists was compiled to help the translators and those who are correcting the texts: list of qualified persons for help; list of the three kinds of articles for Sanskrit names and expressions with their grammatical gender, since German has like Sanskrit three genders; list of common mistakes and misunderstandings, who occurred in the past frequently; the copy of the latest best glossary for German Dzogchen vocabulary, we can recommend; as well as the Tibetan English Glossary of Tibetan terms and names for the Dzogchen Community by Jakob Winkler.

Marta Heinen supported us with delicious meals and loving care in her and Matthias's new cozy home.

We finished quite inspired to continue our work.

Lire 20.000 US\$ 13

These teachings, given at Namgyalgar in 1997, contain the instructions for the Longde practice of the Four Das according to the original texts written by Vairochana and Dzin Dharmabodhi. Several drawings illustrate precisely the positions for the practice.

The Precious Vase - Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

Lire 35.000 US\$ 25

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

The Base text, that constitutes the foundation of knowledge and experience of the practice of Dzogchen, devotes a large amount of space to the Sutra and Tantra traditions and at the same time it also contains specific instructions that enable practitioners to realize the authentic state of Dzogchen. Revised and corrected edition according to the last changes made by Rinpoche. It contains also an updated list of the practices required for the SMS Base examination.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Longsal Teachings - Vol. 2

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

The Longsal Cycle is the collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's rediscovered teachings. This Volume 2 contains three Upadesha received through dreams, including the histories of their discovery over a period of time ranging

from 1957 to 1989. These terms are entitled: The Opening of the Gate to the State of Ati, The Upadesha of Introduction to the State of Ati (this text was published before separately) and The Upadesha for the Self-Liberation of the Six Lokas.

The Dzogchen Community Principles and Guidelines for Practitioners and Gakyil Members

In a meeting of the International Gakyil a decision was made to put together a basic guide on the Dzogchen Community and its activities using Rinpoche's own comments as the main source of information, together with some other individual observations and helpful suggestions. The guidelines which are outlined in this book are therefore intended to be a useful general aid, particularly to new Gakyil members.

All the prices are in Italian lire and US dollars. Postage and packaging: in Europe add Lire 4.000 per order; outside Europe US\$ 4 every three books. To order please send the list of books you require by letter e-mail Send an International Postal Money Order, Eurocheque in Italian Lire (from Europe) or a check (not less than US\$ 30 or equivalent) to Comunita Dzogchen (Shang Shung Edizioni), 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy.

Tel. 0564 966039

E-mail: ssed@amiata.net



tsegyalgar

Tsegyalgar National Collaboration of the Dzogchen Community in North America

by Will Shea

Yellow Gakyil, Tsegyalgar &
Tsegyalgar Representative

At the National Gakyil meeting in Marin, California, in January, 2000, it was decided to form a group of representatives from Gakyils and groups of practitioners across North America to develop communication and collaboration. A committee consisting of Patrick Tribble and Anastasia McGhee of Northern California, Joan Casey of Bellingham, Washington State, Paula Barry and Will Shea of Conway, and Ed Goldberg of New York, has been formed to begin the process. The primary purpose will be to share information. This can lead to more interaction and interdependent problem solving. The committee is not intended to hold any jurisdiction over local Gakyils or groups of practitioners.

We propose that each local Gakyil or group of practitioners and the Tsegyalgar Gakyil nominate a representative. All parts of our Community are invited and encouraged to join. You do not have to be in an area that has an active Gakyil. This person will be the responsible liaison with the Tsegyalgar Gakyil and other Gakyils and communities.

The initial responsibilities of representatives will be:

—Local community representatives will forward local news, Gakyil meeting minutes, news and suggested agenda items to Tsegyalgar and other Gakyils as

needed/desired. The representative of the Tsegyalgar Gakyil will forward meeting minutes, etc., to the local representatives.

—Local community representatives will relay communications from the Tsegyalgar Gakyil and other regions to local practitioners, respond to communicated questions and issues, and act as the general liaison for local practitioners and their opinions. The representative of the Tsegyalgar Gakyil will relay communications to the local representatives, and respond to questions from the local representatives, acting as a general liaison for the Tsegyalgar Gakyil and their opinions.

Additional responsibilities may be added as the process unfolds.

If you would like to participate in this process of improving our methods of collaboration and in creating an expanded vision of Tsegyalgar, please respond to me with the name and email address of a representative from your Community. Please let us know if you have any further questions or suggestions.

To contact other committee members:

Will Shea - will_s@hotmail.com
Anastasia McGhee - anastasiacghee@hotmail.com
Patrick Tribble - Patdc1@aol.com
Joan Casey - jwatts@nas.com
Paula Barry - Paulades@javanet.com
Ed Goldberg - edw_goldberg@hotmail.com

Schedule of Jim Valby Santi Maha Sangha Retreats

July 14-21, 2001 Tsegyalgar
SMS Base Level Practice Retreat
July 22-29, 2001 Tsegyalgar
SMS First Level Practice Retreat
October 3-10, 2001 German
SMS Base Level Practice Retreat
October 12-16, 2001 German
SMS First Level Practice Retreat
October 19-26, 2001 Kunselling
SMS Base Level Practice Retreat
October 27-31, 2001 Kunselling
SMS First Level Practice Retreat
Jan 28 - Feb 2, 2002 Tashigar
SMS Base Level Practice Retreat
Feb 4-8, 2002 Tashigar
SMS First Level Practice Retreat
Feb 9-12, 2002 Tashigar
SMS Second Level Practice
Retreat

Base Level Retreats:

The four daily sessions are: 8:30-10am, 10:30-12, 4:30-6 (Yantra Yoga), 6:30-8pm. Anybody who has attended a retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or participated in one of the three universal transmission practice days may participate in our SMS Base Level Practice Retreat where we will focus on the essential theory and practice of Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen as transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his book named "The Precious Vase - Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha". Jim

Valby, a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982, will lead this retreat.

First Level Retreats:

The four daily sessions are: 8:30-10am, 10:30-12, 4:30-6, 6:30-8pm. Anybody who has taken the SMS First Level training with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu may participate in our SMS First Level Practice Retreat where we will focus on the essential theory and practice of Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen as transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in the SMS First Level training. Jim Valby, a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982, will lead this retreat.

Second Level Retreats:

The four daily sessions are: 8:30-10am, 10:30-12, 4:30-6, 6:30-8pm. Anybody who has taken SMS Second Level training with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu may participate in the 8:30am, 10:30am, and 4:30pm sessions where we will focus on the essential theory and practice of Dzogchen Semde as transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in the SMS Second Level training. Jim Valby, a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982, will lead this retreat.

USA

Santa Fe, New Mexico
Blue:
Susan Harris, President
Anne Dankoff, Vice President
Huisun Kim

Red:

Craig Fields, Secretary
Denise Coady
Josefa Candelaria

Yellow:

Susie Marlow, Treasurer
Ellen Halbert
Julia Deisler

Advanced Yantra Yoga at Tsegyalgar

Conway, MA, USA
October 12th - 21st, 2001
with Fabio Andrico and
Laura Evangelisti

For more information
contact:

Tsegyalgar
Tel: 413 369 4153
Fax: 413 369 4165
Email: 74404.1141@compuserve.com

PASSAGES

Died
Estrella Kohoutek Esperanza
Candelaria
Dec. 10, 1973 - Mar. 26, 2001
Daughter of Josefa and Ambrosio
Candelaria (Josefa is a student of
Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche living in
Albuquerque, New Mexico)
Sister of Nico Candelaria
Estrella passed away at home after
been diagnosed with leukemia in
January, 2001. She was born with
an extra chromosome and lived at
home throughout her life.



Contacts for Jim's SMS Retreats:

Tsegyalgar:
Andrea Nasca, Secretary
Tel: 413 369 4153
Email: 74404.1141@compuserve.com
Fax: 413 369 4165

Germany:

Jakob Winkler
Email: Jakob.Winkler@t-online.de

Kunselling, UK:

For any information on venue and
cost of participation please contact:
Amely:
Tel: 0208 3498 6253
Email: amely@globalnet.co.uk

Tashigar, Argentina:

Ricky Sued:
Email: rsued@onenet.com.ar

Tsegyalgar Practice Schedule 2001

JUNE 16-17

RUSHEN PRACTICE WEEKEND at Buckland

JULY 14-21

SANTI MAHA SANGHA
Base Level Training with Jim Valby

JULY 22 (Sunday)

FIRST FUND RAISING GOLF TOURNAMENT

JULY 22-29

SANTI MAHA SANGHA
First Level Training with Jim Valby

JULY 29

TRANSMISSION VIDEO
Guru Padmasambhava's day

AUGUST 10-12

VAJRA DANCE PRACTICE WEEKEND at Buckland

AUGUST 18-19

SHINE PRACTICE WEEKEND at Buckland

SEPTEMBER 1-3

BI-COASTAL GAKYIL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 8-9

RETREAT WITH CHOKYI NYIMA

SEPTEMBER 22-23

SEVEN SEMDZIN PRACTICE WEEKEND at Buckland

OCTOBER 4-8

VAJRA DANCE RETREAT (Tentative)
Song of Vajra (first part) with Prima Mai

OCTOBER 12-21

YANTRA YOGA TEACHERS TRAINING RETREAT
with Fabio Andrico & Laura Evangelisti

NOVEMBER 10-11

SIX LOKAS PRACTICE WEEKEND with Jim Valby
Transmission Video
Day of Adzom Drugpa 10th (Saturday) at 7am.

DECEMBER 8-9

GREEN TARA PRACTICE WEEKEND
Birthday of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu (Birthday Party !)

PASSAGES

Goodbye "Dutch"

After nearly dying dozens of times in the past ten years, our Vajra brother "Dutch" really did, on Thursday, May 17th in Middlebury, Vermont. Dutch's given name was Frederick Wehage, pronounced "Vahaga". His college tennis coach had such a hard time pronouncing it correctly, he gave him the nickname "Dutch", and it stuck with him for life.

Dutch has a special place in my heart as he was the immediate cause of my meeting Rinpoche and, even before that, he taught me some preliminary practices and tried to explain a little about Dzogchen. After an intense few months living together under unusual circumstances, we moved to different areas, with different lives and only met at retreats or other gatherings at Tsegyalgar in Conway. Each time we met, Dutch would give me a long, warm embrace, kiss my cheek and whisper "hello darlink", with his best Marlene Deitrich accent. "Ä! I'd know he hadn't changed."

In my time with him I learned a little about his life. Before the term "alternative lifestyle" came into being, Dutch lived it. And, as with anything else, this had its positive and negative aspects, both of which Dutch displayed marvelously.

On the positive side Dutch had a great sense of humor, seeing and describing things in his own unique way. He was incredibly well-read in many fields including science, medicine, philosophy, religion and psychotherapy... a great person to enjoy dinner conversations with. However, he wasn't much help paying the bill. He was addicted to reading New York Times and, as a result, he was very well informed about current events. Unfortunately, this led to a kind of conspiracy paranoia, usually involving the U.S. government and big corporations. After hearing him expound on an issue it was difficult to disagree with his conclusions, however, I usually left feeling like I knew more than I wanted to about the situation and could feel the kind of helplessness he felt about dealing with his own conclusions.

While I knew him, Dutch never seemed to be able to handle the basic things in life, like earning money, having a reasonable place to live and food to eat. Things were always a little topsy turvy. A wonderful metaphor for his existence was the time a wheel fell off his car, while traveling to a retreat in Conway. Occurrences like that were almost routine.

Yet, he had many amazing and wonderful relationships and offered very real support to his friends. I will always remember his devotion to his teachers, first Kalu Rinpoche and then Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He listened, reflected and meditated well and shared his understanding with others in a very generous and open way. It's hard to believe, he's really done it this time.

by John LaFrance



tashigar & south america

NEW GAKYILS

ARGENTINA

Cordoba
Red - Adriana Battisti
Blue - Sergio Oliva
Yellow - Miguel Elguero
Gakyil's address: cordobagakyil@sinectis.com.ar
Adriana's address: 1565@arnet.com.ar <mailto:1565@arnet.com.ar>
Sergio's: yeshe@sinectis.com.ar <mailto:yeshe@sinectis.com.ar>
Miguel's: elguero99@hotmail.com <mailto:elguero99@hotmail.com>

Tashigar
Red:
Daniel Carabante
Martin Bortagaray

Cristian Cabral
Yellow:
Noe Riner, Treasurer
Ingrid Lucke
Will collaborate actively: Luida
Duri, Silvia Altamiranda
Blue:
Ricky Sued,
Griselda Galmez, Director
Marisa Alonso, acting Secretary

New Gekö:
Delia Dos Santos

PERU

Lima
Yellow:
Renee Castro
(reneecastro@hotmail.com)
Susana Belaunde (subelaunde@yahoo.com)
Carmela Aldave
(aldave19@latinmail.com)

Red:
Cecilia Larrabure (cecilialarrabure@yahoo.com)
Ismael Merino
(imerino1@terra.com.pe)
Jaime Sibila
(jsibila44@hotmail.com)

Blue:
Yone Catalan
(yonecatalan@hotmail.com)
Deborah Trahttemberg
(detra@terra.com.pe)
Luis Chiang
(chiang@zonanueve.com)

Telephone numbers in Lima:
2641502 (Deborah)
4474136 (Yone)
4971785 - 8826581 (Jaime)

ChNN Teaching continued from page 3

on a physical level. That kind of teaching is related more with our physical level. But it doesn't mean that we don't need our level of energy or voice or mind. Of course we need all, they go together always. But mainly it is related with the physical level. This is one characteristic of this path of teaching.

Another path and characteristic of teaching is Tantrism. In this case, what does Tantra mean? Tantra is Sanskrit and means continuation, without interruption. Something continuing, mainly our energy. How does it continue? Because through energy we have manifestation. But from where did this manifestation originate? This, of course, is our real condition, emptiness. So in Tantrism, these two are called emptiness and clarity. From emptiness manifests clarity.

How we can understand that? It's very easy. For example, if we observe ourselves, our thoughts, our minds, how does our mind manifest? The mind manifests with thoughts. When we are observing thoughts they disappear. We look, where is thought, how is thought? From where did this thought originate? Where did this thought disappear to? We can do research, but we can't find anything. What we find always is emptiness. Why do we always find emptiness? Because the source of all this manifestation is emptiness. We are getting there. Even if we can't find anything, it doesn't mean that now all thoughts disappear. Immediately another thought arrives. We are thinking, "Oh, I can't find anything."; that is thought. You observe it, and that disappears, and you can't find anything. But the thought immediately arises. This is our real nature. Our real condition.

In Sutra teaching, there is not much emptiness and clarity. Only emptiness. Why? Because Sutra is more related to the physical level, so its nature is emptiness. It has nothing very much to do with energy or dealing with energy. In Tantrism, the main point of the path is the energy level. So that is how the teaching developed, how Buddha taught, how he communicated. Originally through manifestations; not like Sutra teaching. In the Sutra teaching, one day Buddha is going

somewhere and teaching and people are listening. Tantrism is not like that. Who followed Tantrism from the beginning? People who already had such kind of realization. For example, we say in India, in ancient history, there were many kinds of Mahasiddhas. Mahasiddhas mean people who are realized. So Mahasiddhas receive this kind of teaching through their vision, but when Mahasiddhas receive a teaching through vision, it doesn't mean that all people at that place can receive that teaching. They couldn't see it because manifestations are not on a physical level. Manifestations are the nature of elements and we can't see the nature of elements. We do not have that capacity, in general. If we can see, it means we have such realization or have developed our clarity. So the teaching comes transmitted that way.

Many principal teachings of Tantrism came through manifestations, not always by Buddha explaining something; not through oral teaching. Just by manifestation, with manifestation, the knowledge and understanding were received through clarity. So with this characteristic teaching, later when realized beings like Mahasiddhas transmitted to ordinary people, they listened to the teacher, received that empowerment with visualization, and entered in the pure dimension with this idea. That is called entering into a transformation method. It is not an ordinary way. Being in the transformation state, for example, our being, our existence, is not in the ordinary way, but we manifest how some enlightened being manifested, like Hevajra, Kalachakra, some these kinds of manifestations. Also the individual has then many different kinds of functions like five elements, five emotions, etc., and they all have movement and actions. So all this manifests like deities in personified form. And our dimension, not our ordinary impure dimension, manifests as a pure dimension and that is called a mandala.

So when we are learning Tantrism, through the figures of deities and mandalas is how we enter. For example, how do we enter into a state of transformation? When the teacher gives initiation it means they introduce that, bring that in because we can't directly

have contact with enlightened beings like Hevajra or Buddha. We do so through manifestations. So we go slowly, slowly and enter with this method. That means that the people who follow this kind of teaching have a little more capacity than the ordinary person, because ordinary people do not so easily understand what it means to enter into transformation, or transforming, or working with our energy. Our energy level is more complicated than the physical body. The physical body we can see, we can touch, we can have contact with concretely. For example, if someone is coming, immediately we can understand and recognize who that person is. How can we recognize? Because we see the physical body, not because we see the energy of that person. If that person has no physical body, only an energy level, and they come here and present themselves in front of us, we couldn't see them. So you see, for seeing or discovering that, we need that capacity. That is why Sutra and Tantra are different.

Tantrism is called the path of transformation. Transformation means that we have mainly five emotions and when we include the five emotions, we include three root emotions. These three emotions then transform into wisdom, three wisdoms. Which way do they transform? For that reason there are manifestations like deities, wrathful manifestations, peaceful manifestations, and joyful manifestations. Three kinds. Why do we need three kinds? Because we have three different emotions. Attachment, anger and ignorance. Ignorance doesn't mean that we have no education, but ignorance means we are ignorant of our real nature, we do not know it. That means we are missing clarity. So there are three kinds of manifestations to transform these three emotions. It is not sufficient that we only know that that method exists and we can transform. For having the capacity to transform, firstly we receive initiation, introduction on the path, we apply and become really familiar with these methods, and then maybe we can transform.

For example, when we are angry with someone, if we increase that anger in an ordinary way, that is the cause of samsara. The cause

Tseggyalgar Land Update
by Paula Barry for Tseggyalgar

On May 23rd, Tseggyalgar went to trial against the town of Buckland in our final legal proceeding in a long struggle to be able to use our Sacred Buckland Land.

Tseggyalgar wishes to thank everyone who practiced for the success of our court case. It has been our intention to use the Buckland land to build retreat cabins and create possibilities for the continuation of the practice and teachings.

The trial went well, our case was presented in a strong manner and our legal team was clear and organized. Our witnesses were clear and direct. The arguments of the Town did not appear strong or substantial.

Now, there is a waiting period of thirty days while the transcripts of the trial are being prepared. Then the two sides file a summary statement which the judge reviews; she will then come out to the land some time in July and will issue a 'finding of fact' which hopefully will conclude this whole issue in our favor.

We ask that you keep us in your practice. We will continue to update you when we have news.

of suffering. It can create so many problems. But we can transform it, transform it by manifesting the wrathful form of Vajrapani, for example. If we are familiar with that when we feel really angry, instead of impure vision, thinking I am here, he is there, he makes me angry, now I am angry, we can transform. Immediately we transform into pure vision, pure dimension and then we manifest wrathful Vajrapani. So once we have changed our physical body and energy, we can continue. We can have more benefit now from transforming anger. When we are very peaceful, we don't have any problems, we pretend to be very angry and manifest as wrathful, but we don't feel really very much. When we are really angry we can feel it.

Renunciation, Transformation and Self Liberation

So that is the way. That means in Tantrism when we feel angry we do not stop it, we do not block it, but continue in pure vision, not impure vision. Not that we manifest Vajrapani to fight with him or her. That is impure vision. So this is more or less characteristic of the path of Tantrism; transformation. I have told you already, Tantra means without interruption, continuation. Continuation, clarity, and emptiness, that is our nature. We discover that. We know that, and then by being in that state we can get in the real knowledge through clarity or emptiness. So these are the two paths related with body, the aspect of body, and aspect more of the energy level of speech.

Then we have the path mainly related with our mind. That is the kind of teaching like Dzogchen. What is Dzogchen? Dzogchen is not Tantra or Sutra. Dzogchen is a method which goes directly to the level of mind. Through mind to nature of mind. So the characteristic of the path also is not transformation, not renunciation, but is called self-liberation. What does that mean, self-liberation? Self-liberation means, for example, in Sutra, if we have some problem, to overcome that problem we need some kind of antidote. For example, when we are angry, then we try to do a visualization, or apply something, like compassion. This is the antidote. If there is a fire, the antidote is water. We need water. If we put water on fire, then there are less problems. That is an example. This is characteristic of Sutra. In Tantra, we transform. For example, when we are angry, we do not look for an antidote, but we transform. What is the difference? When we say transform, transforming means transforming emotions or passions, something in general we consider negative, but its nature is the same nature as wisdom. There are not

two different natures, they only manifest in different ways. Two aspects. The pure and impure aspect. The pure aspect manifestation manifests like wisdom. Impure, in this case, become emotions, passions. But the nature is the same.

For that reason, in Tantrism they use the example of gold. Gold has value, gold is considered a very precious object. So we can take an ornament of gold, like a statue of gold, and make a statue of Buddha, a golden Buddha, and then everyone thinks there is a very nice golden statue of Buddha. Particularly people who follow Buddhism, they have devotion and think this is a very nice golden Buddha, and bring flowers, incense, offer something, and pray, etc. We do this. But then, this statue of Buddha can be transformed one day because someone doesn't like having a statue of Buddha but they like gold. They can transform it and make another ornament or something; they can make an ashtray, a golden ashtray. Very elegant. The nature of gold does not change, it is always the same gold, but now the aspect has changed. In this case, no one is going to pray, or offer flowers or incense, but now they throw cigarettes or something dirty inside. That is an example. This is a very important example in Tantrism to make an understanding of what transformation means. The nature has not changed.

There is not this explanation in Sutra. We say, for example, Buddha seed, Buddha nature. Everybody has it. But it doesn't mean that it is related with our energy level. This is a Tantric aspect. So in the Sutra teaching, if we have emotions we consider that negative. We throw them away, and they have no value. We do not think they have the same nature as wisdom. So you see, the point of view is different. When we apply Tantrism, transformation becomes very important, to transform into pure vision; like the mandala, deities, five wisdoms, etc. In this case it is very important that the practitioner has an idea of pure and impure vision, since they are transforming.

In Dzogchen, when we say self-liberation, we don't need that. In Dzogchen, we know very well we are in samsara, also samsara is impure condition. But we don't need to consider, "Oh, this is impure vision, now we need to transform into pure vision." This is a Tantric point of view. In Dzogchen, pure or impure vision, there is no difference. It is the same.

Transcribed by Anastasia McGhee
Edited by Naomi Zeitz

NEWS FROM THE
DZOGCHEN
COMMUNITY
OF NAMGYALGARby Soraya Kassim
Namgyalgar Regional Coordinator

Over the last year the Namgyalgar Gakyil has had a number of challenges and foci for our work. Of course the ongoing process of physically developing what is still a very young Gar; the work to organize continuing Collective Practices at our land in Tilba, including a hugely inspirational three week Santi Maha Sangha retreat with Jim Valby; the present focus of preparing for a major tour of Australia by Dr. Nida Chenagtsang teaching Tibetan Medical Analysis of Dreams, and Ku Nye, coming up this September/October; and so the list of "activities" goes on. This is all important and exciting work, but the subject of this issue's message from Namgyalgar is more about what is happening in our regions.

The focus on the regional practice activity of Namgyalgar has been an important part of our process of consolidating the Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community - after a very intense time of many months last year of having our precious Master with us. Of course, it is natural after the busy-ness of our time with Rinpoche for people to want to sit back and rest, and to return to work and family and all the responsibilities which have been "set aside" for many months while practicing with the Master. People leave the Gar, return to their respective cities and countries, and struggle with the hardest practice of all: daily life. And so as a Gakyil it was important that we "return" with them.

What this has meant has been the establishment of a fledgling network of "regional contacts" in every major center in Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Northern NSW, Cairns, Adelaide, Canberra, the Blue Mountains, Geelong, the Tilba area around the Gar, and even physically isolated places with only one or two practitioners such as Alice Springs, and Kempsey), as well as three loca-

tions in New Zealand, two in Taiwan, two in Japan, Singapore, Thailand, and New Caledonia. Through these contacts, who sometimes form part of Regional Gakyils, we have been communicating as a Gar.

One major focus for our communication has been the Worldwide Transmission practices. Many issues have arisen for us from these practices like how to publicize them? What leadup activities are necessary for newcomers? How do we support newcomers in the Community after they receive Transmission? The process has been an iterative one with a lot of collaboration and hard work from the Regional Contacts who have taken on the responsibility to: protect the copyright and the sanctity of the tapes, organize the local practices, and do the support and follow up work. In some places across Namgyalgar this has been particularly difficult as there may not be many (or in one or two cases, any) long term or senior practitioners living in the area to support newcomers. So we are developing, by trial and error, the most appropriate processes to support and protect the Teachings across the regions. Many ideas are being implemented: the showing of a general video of Rinpoche on Introduction to Dzogchen as a public introduction a month or two before the Transmission practice; followed by the opportunity to join in Community practice sessions and explanation evenings, in the lead up to the evening when we show the first half of Rinpoche's Transmission video explaining the practice; and finally the day (or evening) of the practice itself. After this there is, of course, the ongoing support of collective practice groups, practice tapes and books. Not everything goes smoothly in our circumstance of volunteer energy, but we are learning!

In the meantime, there is the process of building collective practice groups and Sanghas across the regions. And there is a great deal of inspiring energy there: weekly Yantra practice in Geelong, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and on the Gar's land at Tilba; weekly Vajra Dance practice in Sydney,

Melbourne and Canberra; weekend long retreats of Vajra Dance and other practices on the North Coast, in Brisbane and Cairns and on the Gar land; weekly and/or Tibetan Calendar collective practices in every major center both in Australia and across Oceania; picnics for Losar in many regional centers; a collective "virtual library" of books which are personally owned by practitioners around Brisbane but freely shared with Vajra kin; Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga courses in Sydney, Brisbane, the North Coast and Cairns, as well as on the Gar land. This is the energy of Namgyalgar.

We are a far flung Gar, with differences as large as our similarities. From Taiwan I hear the news courtesy of Peter: "We have more than one hundred people who have received Rinpoche's teachings during these years. But, as you know, most of us are just the beginners of the teachings. We have two retreats here (one locates in Taipei, the other is at Kaoshiung). We practice the short Thun every Tuesday in Kaoshiung's retreat and two times a month on Saturday in Taipei. We usually have ten to twenty people doing the practice together." And from New Caledonia there is news from Marie, "We have been able to organize a dance session in Noumea on March 17th. Noumea's Karate Club's tatami was very soft and smooth to dance on with the tyvec mandala. Perfect feel. Tropical rain during the seven Thuns we had. Japanese karate master's photo overseeing the whole thing. Big old wooden fans going tchouk tchouk. Only Brigitte was there but all the Karate's French champions' pictures said it: we were the warriors of light dancing that night. Johnson baby powder puffed out from the mandala upon opening it along with some of the dust from Tilba's hall from Namgyalgar's Gonpa and all the bugs that tried to dance on it while it wasn't dry yet." However many of us there are, and as busy or set upon or threatened we are by the circumstances which we face, Practice continues in the region of Namgyalgar.

More News from
Namgyalgar

Gekö of NAMGYALGAR

LEAVING. Jonathan Schaeffer has finished his vibrant 11 months of service and said farewell to all the "Garlings," as he calls us, reporting that since the SMS Retreat with Jim Valby the retreat caravan and Gawaling have been in constant use for personal retreats. This is a huge increase from times during the winter when he wondered if Namgyalgar was his private retreat center. Local practices on the Gar are now also very well attended events. There are practices at least twice weekly, one being a special practice including explanations for newcomers by our more experienced practitioners, Jean and Angie. There are also regular Yantra and Dance Practices as well as Karma Yoga projects.

INTERMEDIATE. Speaking of Karma Yoga, Maggie Camfield has done a wonderful job filling in as "acting gekö" bringing her indefatigable energy and ceaseless commitment to Karma Yoga to the task beautifying the Gar even while it is in its transitional construction phase. The results were palpable at the Easter Semdzin Retreat where participants remarked appreciatively on the difference. Maggie's efforts have inspired others, including now part time local residents Ron and Angela Goettinger, who along with other local stalwarts are scrubbing, sweeping, and creating order where before mostly construction chaos reigned. Jean Macintosh steadfastly continues to plant and care for the Gonpa Garden which

is now blooming with lovely native flowers in spite of drought and visits by Seymour, the neighbor's friendly but huge and stubborn bull. At every break during the monthly Gakyil meetings Gakyil members can be seen rushing outside to

weed, dig, sweep and in general burn up any tension from their intense indoor mental focus on these energetic physical Karma Yoga Tasks.

NEW. Our new Gekö, Tony Mugg has just arrived, fresh from an intensive period in Melbourne where he was finishing up his Yellow Gakyil role by helping install a new accounting system. Tony, an experienced Namgyalgar dweller, knows exactly what challenges he faces in his new role, having lived and worked at the Gar for extended periods of time over the years. Tony has not only challenges to look forward to, but also new conditions. One of Jonathan's legacy's to the Gar has been the improvement of the Gekos fairly primitive living conditions, transforming the Gekö Caravan by firstly moving it to a more sunny and congenial spot with lovely views, and secondly by fitting it out with new cushions, curtains, carpet and other such creature comforts we ordinarily take for granted. Another of his legacies was helping create real awareness of just how lonely it can be, and just how much hard work is required to be the Gekö in such a remote place.

So the Gakyil was inspired to develop, along with the local community, a new vision and plan for assisting and supporting the Gekö in this most vital role. Local people have committed to take up specific tasks, working with the Gekö on a regular basis. The Gakyil now has a special Gekö Support Committee as well, which will be continuously reviewing with Tony how we are progressing in our vision. What is our vision? A Gar which remains looking and feeling like a sacred place, even while under construction. A Gekö who is as much cared for and supported by the Gakyil, local Community and Gar as he (or she) cares for and supports us.

Collecting Stories

Video History of Namgyalgar
by Leanne Williams

We are collecting material for a history of Namgyalgar. Maybe you have memories, stories, pictures moving or still, evocative music or text or paraphernalia involving or depicting the initial or ongoing growth, physical or spiritual of the Australian Gar or your growth, experience or impressions while at Namgyalgar.

Maybe you helped with building or did your exams or a retreat here. Maybe you observed others quietly (or not so quietly) contributing great things or sweet little things! Maybe you know of participants/individuals I should look up. Maybe you live far away and have a passionate desire to come here you could tell us what it is that attracts you. Whether you have something to be used in final video or not, we'd like to share your perspective in the end. This will add to the fullness of the flavor of our story.

Contact:

Leanne Williams, Gakyil, Namgyalgar.

Email: lianlian@asitis.com.au

Post: Attention Leanne, c/o Namgyalgar, PO Box 14, Central Tilba, Australia 2546

Seeking Pen Friend

Svetlana Suvorova from Siberia, Russia seeks a Dzogchen pen friend from New Zealand. Svetlana is 29 years old and would like to find some friends her age or older who are interested in Dzogchen and live in New Zealand. She is a member of the Dzogchen Community in New Zealand and speaks English and French fluently.

Postal address is: 664056, Irkutsk, PO Box 3406, Russia

Email address: lotos_sveta@mail.ru

Telephone: 3952/590697

VAJRA DANCE COURSE
JULY 5th to 8th

Whidbey Island, Washington, USA

Anastasia McGhee will teach a Course of the Vajra Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas.

This course is open to both those who have received transmission from

Rinpoche, and those who have not yet had that opportunity. For someone who is really interested in practicing the Vajra Dance but who has not had the possibility or interest to receive the transmission of Dzogchen teachings, he or she can learn the Vajra Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas.

The Course will begin on the evening of Thursday July 5th to Sunday July 8th. There will be a maximum of 10 male and 10 female practitioners.

Contact: Erica Moseley at emaho@whidbey.com for information

N O R B U N E T

To subscribe to the mailing list of the
Dzogchen Community:
norbunet@xs4all.nl



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CONTACTS

VISIT THE MIRROR
WEBSITE AT
WWW.MELONG.COM

The new A.S.I.A. site is now accessible at: <http://www.melong.com/asia>

ARGENTINA
Tashigar*
C.C. No.1-5155
Tanti
Pcia. de Cordoba
Tel: 3541 498 356
Email:
tashigar@datacoopcordoba.com.ar

AUSTRALIA
Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community of Australia*
Vicki Forscutt - Secretary
PO Box 14 Central Tilba,
NSW 2546
Tel. and Fax: 61 02 4473 7668
Email: namgyalg@acr.net.au

Gar
Gekoes of Namgyalgar
Tel: 61(0)2 4473 7770
Email: garland@acr.net.au

Jan Cornall
President, Namgyalgar
273 Australia Street
Newtown NSW 2042
Tel: 61-2- 9557 1378
Email jan@arrakis.com.au

Soraya Kassim
Namgyalgar Regional Coordinator
96 Warialda Street
Kogarah NSW 2217
Tel: 61-2-9593 0696
Mobile 0413 013690
Email: soraya@optusnet.com.au

AUSTRIA
Peter Sochor
Dzogchen Community of Vienna,
Austria
Götzgasse 2/10, A-1100
Wien, Austria
Tel: +43-1-602 91 16
Email: dzogchen.wien@gmx.at

Oliver F. Leick
Dzogchen Community of Styria,
Austria
Gschmaier 139, A-8265 Gr.Steinbach
Tel.&Fax: 03386-8571 or 0676-3221365
Email: dzogchen@utanet.at
Homepage: www.dzogchen.at

BELGIUM
Katia Lytridou
16, rue Paul Goedert
L-3330 Crauthem Luxembourg
Tel: 352 366591

BRAZIL
Muriella and Washington Malaga
Rua Pedro Pedreschi 71
02372-000, Sao Paulo
Tel-fax: 55-11-69536072.
Email: wmalaga@vol.com.br

CANADA
Peter Dimitrov
305 - 11806 88th St.
Delta, BC V4C 3C5

Eve-Marie Breglia
107 Armadale Ave.
Toronto, ONT M6S-3X3
Tel: 416 767 5252
Email: CHOD@cintegration.com

CZECH REPUBLIC
Centrum Lotus
Komunita dzogchenu
Dlouha 2

11 000 Praha 1
Czech Republic
Tel.: 0042-02-24 81 47 34
Email: zelenjl.hsp@mail.cez.cz

Milan Polasek - Yellow Gakyil
Tel: 00 42 0 604 878 100
Email: milanpolasek@hotmail.com

DENMARK
Anne-Grethe Nyeng
Fax: 45 33 11 32 43
Email: vejviser@post5.tele.dk

ESTONIA
Maret Kark
Sade T 9
EE2400
Tartu
Tel: 372 7 380 038
Email: maretk@ut.ee

FINLAND
Kaisa-Liisa Puonti
Visantie 19
05400 Jokela
Tel: +358 9 4172818
Fax: +358 9 140321
Email: puoka@myy.helia.fi

FRANCE
Association Dzogchen,
Dejam Ling, Le Deves
F30570 St Andre de Majencoules
Tel: 33-(0)467824490
Email:
DzogchenFr@compuserve.com

GERMANY
Dzogchen Gemeinschaft
Helga Betz
Lindemannstr. 12 40237
Dusseldorf
Tel & Fax: 49 211 682657
Email: Dzogdus@aol.com

GREAT BRITAIN
Amely Becker
15A Langdon Park Road
London N6 5PS
Tel: 020 8348 6253
Email: amely@globalnet.co.uk

GREECE
Panayotis Stambolis
Marinou Antypa 38
14121 N. Iraklio
Athens
Tel: 30 1 2713765
Fax: 30 1 3411856

Nikos Liberopoulos
18-20 Roikou st, 11743
Athens
Tel: (+301) 9215901
Email: libero@otenet.gr

Northern Greece
Harris Pantelidis
Maria Giakoumakou
V.Olgas 84B

54643 Thessaloniki
Email: xaris@spark.net.gr

Thanos and Dina Svoronos
Analipseos 32
54643 Thessaloniki

HOLLAND
Ada de Boer (red Gakyil)
J.W. Frisostraat 44
9717 EP Groningen
Tel/fax: 31 503188606 (fax requires
a call prior to sending)
Email: droomnet@bart.nl

ISRAEL
Noa Blass
Biltmore Street 15
62194 Tel Aviv
Tel & Fax: 972 3 605 75 43

ITALY
Merigar* Comunita Dzogchen
Clara Juliano - Secretary
Arcidosso, 58031 GR, Italy
Tel: 39 0 564 966837
Fax: 39 0 564 968110
Email: merigar@amiata.net

Azamling
Moreno Marcato
Via Culasso 2
14053 Canelli
AT 0141

JAPAN
Tsugiko Kiyohashi
5-11-23 Shimomeguro Meguro-Ku
Tokyo
Tel: (office) 81 3 3712 7507
Fax: 81 3 3716 7248

Junichi Chigira
Email: jchigira@jp.oracle.com

LATVIA
Padmaling
Beljutins Elena
Lepju 5-55
Riga LV 1016
Tel: 371 -2-437343
Fax: 371-7-187233
Email: nirvana@apollo.lv

LITHUANIA
Antanas Danielius
Str. Baltupiyo, 47-69
Vilnius, 2057
Tel: 37 2 776824

Dorjeling
PO Box 1183
LT-2000 Vilnius
Email: Lituania@takas.lt

LUXEMBOURG
Katia Lytridou
16, rue Paul Goedert
Creuthem L-3330

MALAYSIA
Tham Wye Min
8669C Klebang Kechil 75200
Melaka
Tel: 60 35 6162

Kwok Kee Chang
11-A Jalan Jujur, 1/5
Taman, Bakti Ampang
Selangor, W. Malaysia
Tel: 60 3 9847167

MEXICO
Comunidad Dzogchen de Mexico
Reforma 199, piso 2
Col. Cuauhtemoc
c.p. 06500
Mexico, DF
Tel: 546 32 81
Tel & Fax: 566 83 04
Email: amatlan@Intranet.com.mx

Lennart Aastrup
Nino Artillero 33
Tepoztlan, Morelos
Tel: 52 73950192

NEPAL
Vikki Floyd
G.P.O. Box 8974
CPC 069
Thamel
Res.Tel# 00977-1-270106
(after 8.00 p.m.)
vikki@floyd@hotmail.com

NEW ZEALAND
Rosemary Friend
7 Radnor Street
North East Valley
Dunedin S. Island
Tel: 64 3 4730886
Fax: 64 3 4779463

Email: rosejeri@earthlight.co.nz

NORWAY
Gordon Cranmer
4157 Utstein Kloster Mosteroy
Tel: 47 4 514705

Community Website:
<http://go.to/dzogchen.no>

PERU
Comunidad Dzogchen del Peru
Dzogchen Community of Peru
Juan Bustamante (Hota)
Enrique Palacios 1125-C, Miraflores,
Lima 18, Peru
Tel: 445 5003, Fax 447 2984, cel 946
7542
Email:
Comunidad_Dzogchen_Peru@yahoo.com

POLAND
Cezary Wozniak
31-510 Krakow
Ul. Rakowicka 21/3, Poland
Tel: 48 12 21 7835
Email: cwozniak@bci.krakow.pl

PORTUGAL
Vitor Pomar
Fonte Salgada 713-Z
8800 Tavira
Portugal
tel 081 323780
Email: vitorpomar@mail.telepac.pt

Lydia Ferrera
Rua da Nazare 2
Vila Facaia
2560 Torres Vedras
Portugal
Tel:351 - 61 - 911235

RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Kunsangar address is:
"Sosnovi Bor",
Bolshedvorskoe Lesnichestvo,
Poselok Bolshie Dvori,
Pavlovo-Posadski raion,
Moscow reg.,
Russian Federation
Tel./fax: (007-096-43) 21156
Email:
kunsang@gar.dzogchen.art.ru

Moscow Dzogchen Community,
Publishing group Shang-Shung,
Moscow and Shang-Shung Institute,
Moscow:
Puteysky tupik, dom 4/2, stroyenie 4,
Moscow, 103064, Russia
Email: Moscow_DC@rinchen@online.ru
Member: Andrew Wright
<andw@ipcom.ru>

Lyuda Kislichenko: home phone/fax:
095-3251378 (Secretary)
Gregory Mokhin: office phone/fax:
095-2673484, (SMS contact)
Email: mokhin@bog.msu.ru

Buryatian Community "Kun-
drolling"
c/o Maria Fedetova 50 years of Octo-
ber prs. 44-26
Ulan-Ude 670034
Buryatia
Email: dudka@buriatia.ru

Olga Tsvetkova
Kostromskoi Prospect 58/31
St. Petersburg 194214
Tel: 7 812 5538121
Fax: 7 812 1307070

Denisova, Tatyana
2-Y Microraion-14 apt.3
Elista, Kalmikiya 358000

Vladivostok DzogchenCommunity

Kuleshova Natalia
Tobolskay 12, KV.20
Vladivostok, 690066
Email: putnik@figaro.vtlg.marine.ru

Russian Email addresses:
Vladimir Karpinsky:
vk@azpubl.msk.ru
Vladimir Maikov:
maikov@dataforce.net
Updated information about any
events in Moscow (Russia) region is
on the <http://scil.npi.msu.ru/pub/reli-gion/dzogchen> <Moscow Dharma
Pages> (dzogchen) site.

SERBIA/EX YUGOSLAVIA
Ivana Radicevic Karaman
Otona Zupancica 36
11070 Novi Beograd
phone + 011/ 604 115
email dakini@EUnet.yu

Jelena Zagorcic
Koste Jovanovica 9
11000 Beograd
Tel: 11- 467437

SINGAPORE
K C Ong
Tel: 96789428
Email: titad@pacific.net.sg

Goh Jong Tai
Tel: 5624644

Tan Yan Tee
Email: yantee@singnet.com.sg

SLOVENIA
Changchub Ling
PO Box 19 SL-62250 Poetovio
Tel: 386 62 222523
Fax: 386 62 29874

SOUTH AFRICA
Jerry Smith
10 Dan Pienaar Ave.
Florida North, Gauteng,
South Africa
Tel: 011 672 7250

SPAIN
Dzogchen Community, Spain
Apt. Postal 46220
28028 Madrid

SWEDEN
Alexander & Pernilla Dobronravoff
Främlingsvägen 45
126 48 Hagersten
Stockholm
Tel: 08 744 27 17
Fax: 08 508 20 134
Email: dobronravoff@telia.com

SWITZERLAND
Monique Leguen
12 D ch.Maisonneuve
CH-1219 Chateleine
Tel/fax : 0041-22-7973721
Email: leguen@informaniak.ch

TAIWAN
Armim Lee
Tel: 886-2-23250697
Fax: 886-2-23258857

Sophia Wu
Email: twinklingstar@hotmail.com

THAILAND
Geoffrey Blake & Lynne Klapceki
33 Soi Lang Suan - Ploenchit Rd
Bangkok 10330
Tel. 66 -2-2543555 or
Tel. 66-2-2545532 or
Tel. 66-2-2549061 (direct line)
Email: gblake@mozart.inet.co.th

UKRAINE
Valery Botsula

Komandarma Korka St.
42-59 Kharkov
310186

USA
Tsegylgar*
Andrea Nasca-Secretary
P.O. Box 277
Conway, Mass. 01341
Tel: 413 369 4153
Fax: 413 369 4165
Email:
74404.1141@compuserve.com

Dzogchen Community of Alaska
Martha Quinn
9210 Long Run Dr.
Juneau, AK 99801
Tel: 907 790-1908
Email: quinnm@mail.jsd.k12.ak.us

Lynn Sutherland
5717 N. Washtenaw Ave.
Chicago, IL 60659
Tel: 773 784 4168
Email: lynnsuth@aol.com

Dzogchen Community West Coast
Carol Fields
755 Euclid Ave. Berkeley, CA 94708
Tel: 510 559 9753
Fax: 510 524 0933
Email: aha@dzogchencommunity-west.org
Website: www.dzogchencommunity-west.org

Dzogchen Community of New Mexico
c/o Jim Casilio
751 Airport Rd
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
Tel: 505 473 7176
Email: jcasilio@ix.netcom.com

Anne Dankoff
27 Vereda Mesita
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
Tel: 505 466 4280
Email: adankoff@nets.com

New York Dzogchen Community
307 Prospect Place
Apt 1C
Brooklyn, NY 11238
Tel: 718.398.0584
Email: ed.goldberg@thinkinc.com

Susan Indich
129 Kaelepu Dr. Kailua
Hawaii, 96734
Tel: 808 261 3469
Fax: 808 524 4342
Email: indichcol@aol.com

Jerene
P.O. Box 2181
Kealahou, HI. 96750
Tel: 808 323-9714
Email: jerene@aloha.net

Barbara DeFranco
Tel: 808 328 8084
Email: paleaku@kona.net

VENEZUELA
Pablo Lau Rivera
Lhundrubgar Pba. Res. Pedermales
Av.
Paez Montalban II
1021 Caracas
Tel: 58 2 4421434
Fax: 58 2 340643
Email: abloa@hotmail.com

Elias Capriles
Apartado Postal 483
Merida 5101
Tel & Fax: 58 74 440026
Email: elicap@ciens.ula.ve (most used)
eliascapriles@latinmail.com

Merida Dzogchen Community
Apartado Postal 483
Merida 5101
Fax: 58 74 447550
58 74 440026
Email: guia@bolivar.funmrd.gov.ve

REFLECTIONS

The Fulfillment of a Dream at Tashigar Nord

by Angelika Pottkaemper

The sun and the turquoise sea, white beaches, palm trees and a soft breeze. Far away from the big cities with their traffic, noise and speed; this Robinson life was my dream too, a perennial desire for happiness.

I wanted to live in a "cabana" on the beach under the palm trees, gazing at the ocean and horizon, listening to the waves, never getting enough of the blue, the white, the green and the yellow of nature, and being overwhelmed by the glowing red of the sunset.

"Dreams are foam!" was the constant reproach in my German school, to cut through any juvenile day-dreaming. Italy celebrated the "dolce far niente", and New Age America proclaimed: "Never give up your dream!"

I was infiltrated multi-nationally. I chatted along with a nihilistic touch in German and I loved to do nothing "a l'italiana" while my heart was in American, dreaming of Robinson's island.

Then I met Rinpoche in a book, *Dzogchen, The Self Perfected State*. I was stunned. The teachings poured into me like into an empty vessel. Ten years earlier I already had bought "Il Cristallo e la Via della Luce", however Italian was still like a secret language and so the Master remained hidden for me. Now there was no choice, I had to meet him! The next retreat was one week later in Hawaii. The tickets were outrageously expensive. I had read that Marpa offered all his gold to Naropa, to receive the precious teachings, but I only heard a whispering internal voice, "You are totally crazy! It is far too expensive!" Obviously I seemed to be too poor, and so I stayed home. My God! This poverty mentality is a killer!

One year later I read in *The Mirror* that in the Caribbean Sea on Margarita Island, a retreat center would be built and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche himself would spend the winter months there. People would build "cabanas" and practice together. Again I was stunned. The master whom I revered already so fervently would live on my Robinson Island!

"Never give up your dream!" Long live America!

Next day I booked Frankfurt-Portlamar for the Easter Retreat, 2001. I did not even ask for the price. I bowed to Marpa. Thank you Great Yogi! How rich I felt.

Until leaving for Margarita, I learned everything about the disadvantages of building a "cabana" nine hours of flight away from Germany, in a tropical third world country, the heat, the mosquitoes, the South American mentality, Mafia infiltration, political instability, medical care, etc. And what if a world war would burst out? One has to sit forever on that island, until death! And yes, where was I going to die? In the New or in the Old World?

I was nearly knocked over by my thoughts! But I felt my heart,

the American part of it. I imagined the Master, and I close by, sitting in front of the ocean under palm trees that move in the wind, and he would teach me how to live the true "far niente", *lhundrub*, and through his authentic presence would dispel all my fears and doubts, and would

greeting our group of one hundred twenty people. Some had tears in their eyes, so much longing.

The open space of the meditation hall was decorated with fresh purple bougainvillea flowers, everywhere colors, it was as if sitting in a great natural *thigle*.



View from the land

challenge me to discover and recognize my true nature. And also, why not die on a Robinson Island, cremated, and then the ashes being spread into the turquoise sea by my Vajra brothers and sisters?

When I put my foot for the first time on my dream - island, disappointment fell over me. No trace of Robinson, no romantic scene! Everything looked rather brownish burnt. Where were the palm trees? Five pieces had been planted beside the little runway to welcome thousands of tourists. Ridiculous!

"Dreams are like foam!", whispered a disgusted voice, but I would not give in that easily. At least the temperature was ideal and the breeze delicious. No mosquitoes showed up and the inhabitants smiled, seemingly without second thoughts. The immigration procedure was the same like in Nepal and is a first class opportunity to remember Shantideva and his chapter on patience. At the exit the usual bargaining about the fare with the taxi drivers, which needs "common prajna", unless one prefers idiot compassion. Generally living costs are 70% less than in Old Germany. While being driven, better let go attachment to traffic rules.

After 45 minutes drive over "the Pearl of the Caribbean", Margarita's nick name, to the Beach-Retreat-Hotel, I had made sure that this "Pearl" owned potential for its true nature: if the land is watered, beautiful, colourful, exotic flowers and trees grow abundantly, and palm trees, of course. The beaches are white and the sea is blue-turquoise.

Later I sat under the tropical stars on the beach, sipping fresh pineapple and papaya juice. I listened to the waves and the background voices, Spanish, English, French and Italian and suddenly I had an attack of blissful attachment to this magic-fleeting life. I let it happen for a while, then thought a bit of shunyata and enjoyed the bittersweetness of the night.

Rinpoche appeared the following day at 10 o'clock. How dignified he walked, smiling and

THE MIRROR

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Main Office:
PO Box 277
Conway, MA 01341
USA
Tel: 413 369 4208
Fax: 413 369 4165
Email:
NaomiMirror@compuserve.com

European Office:
The Mirror
Merigar
Arcidosso
58031 GR
Italy
Tel & Fax: 0564 966039
Email: ssed@amiata.net
Email:
LizMirror@compuserve.com

Editorial Staff:
Naomi Zeitz,
Tsegylgar
Conway, MA USA

Liz Granger,
UK

Tiziana Gottardi,
Merigar
Arcidosso, Italy

Literary Editor:
John Shane

Advisors:
Adriano Clemente
Anna Eid
Barbara Paparazzo
Des Barry
Jim Valby

Layout & Design:
N. Zeitz

Illustration:
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INTERNATIONAL GAKYIL NEWS

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THE PROJECT: "COMPLETE WORKS OF CHÖGYAL NAMKHAIR NORBU"

Almost a year passed from the moment the International Gakyil started the fundraising campaign for this project with the aim to guarantee the most accurate translation of the Tibetan texts written by our Master through the work of Adriano Clemente. Now we are happy to announce that two books containing several Rinpoche's term teachings of the Longsel Cycle are forthcoming, as well as a revised edition of the Santi Maha Sangha Base text "The Precious Vase". Meanwhile many other translations are going on, as for instance the original Vairochana text on Yantra Yoga with Rinpoche's commentary, the revision of Santi Maha Sangha Levels 1 and 2 texts, the new SMS Level 4 text etc. This appeal to our practitioners' generosity and awareness got an excellent answer which fairly exceeded the goal we established in advance. In a single year we collected the sum of US\$40,000 to which each Gar contributed in the following way:

Merigar 75%
Kunsangar 9.5%
Tseggyalgar 5%
Tashigar 3%

It must be noted that more than 80% of these donations are not long-lasting or permanent donations, therefore in order to assure the success of this project in the future we have to insist in raising funds unrelentingly. The result of this first year is really comforting and meaningful: it clearly reveals that a deep awareness of the importance of an accurate translation of Rinpoche's precious works is steadily growing in all practitioners of our Community. In the name of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and the Dzogchen Community as a whole we would like to thank wholeheartedly all the donors for their great generosity:

May the pure Dzogchen teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu spread everywhere in the world!

The International Gakyil
Igor Legati, supervisor of the Project

NGAK MANG INSTITUTE PROJECT

The Ngak Mang Institute was founded with the aim of doing research and preserving the teachings of the Ngakpa tradition of Tibet. If you visit our web page <http://www.ngakmang.org> you can read information on the main activities, aims and projects of the Institute.

One important and crucial project is the collection and publication of all the texts currently available on the Vajra Kilaya system, the most essential body of Ngakpa practices. You can find texts belonging to this cycle of teachings in all the different schools of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, particularly in the Nyingma and Sakya traditions. The aim of this project is to gather the Kilaya texts into a single collection, making them available to Tibetan Monasteries, institutions, scholars, researchers, single students and aspirant Ngakpas and ensuring their preservation. The Kilaya system is of particular importance as it represents a key for the understanding and application of all the other systems of Tantric Deity practice.

The collection will include almost fifty major works of the Kilaya system. To collect, enter into the computer, edit and publish each text will require approximately \$2,500 US for a total of \$125,000 US. We shall be very grateful if any individual or institution could cooperate in this project by sponsoring the publication of the Kilaya collection, sending contributions to the following Bank account references:

Rita Renzi, Ngakpa Mang Institute,
Current account number: 6904
Bank: Monte dei Paschi di Siena,
Arcidosso 58031 GR, Italy.
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CAB:72160

Thank you in advance for your help and understanding.



- nothing new in the west -

Venerable Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche

Modern World:
Buddha Nature,
Buddha Way

Wednesday, August 29th -
Monday, September 3rd
(Labor Day Weekend)
Graymoor, Garrison, New York
(1 hr from NYC - via public
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The immediacy of his style is particularly effective in cutting through habitual patterns of the western intellectual mind. The retreat is open to those new to meditation as well as to senior students.

Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche is a holder of the Drukpa Kagyu lineage, a genuine modern yogi, an extraordinary teacher in the Dzogchen style, and a renowned artist. He was born in 1946 and recognized by His Holiness the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa while still in his mother's womb. He is the 8th in a line of Choegyal Rinpoches from the Dugu region of Tibet, all of whom spent much of their lives in retreat and were extraordinary artists. He was a close disciple of H.E. Khamtrul Rinpoche and has studied with many great masters. Currently Rinpoche is active in numerous projects including the rebuilding of his monastery in Tibet and the re-establishment of Tibetan arts and culture through work in Tashi Jong, India, and at his center in Nepal. His art has been exhibited around the world and will be shown at Tibet House in New York City, September 6th until November 6th, 2001.

For information and registration:

Email: nicolb@juno.com or Tel: 914-631-3457

Cost for all meals, accommodations and facility use

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Register early, limited space available

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THE CRYSTAL AND THE WAY OF LIGHT Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen

by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, compiled and ed. by John Shane
176 pp., 23 line drawings, 30 b&w photos, #CRWALI \$16.95



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Also available: *The Supreme Source*, *Yantra Yoga*, *Dream Yoga* and *the Practice of Natural Light, Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State*.

See our website for a complete listing of books on Dzogchen.

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PO Box 6483 • Ithaca, NY 14851
800-950-0313 • 607-273-8519
tibet@snowlionpub.com
www.snowlionpub.com



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